Enhancing Organizational Justice and Trust through Conflict Resolution Training: The Role of Leadership Fairness and Power Dynamics

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Abstract

The present study examines the impact of conflict resolution training on organizational justice perception and employee trust, with leadership fairness perception as a mediator and power dynamics and conflict resolution mechanisms (collaborative vs. avoidant) as moderators. Grounded in equity theory and social exchange theory, the research highlights how training enhances fairness and trust by promoting balanced relationships and reciprocal exchanges. The findings suggest leadership fairness mediates these effects, while collaborative mechanisms and balanced power dynamics strengthen positive outcomes. This study provides actionable insights for organizations to foster justice and trust through effective conflict resolution and leadership practices.

Introduction

Conflict is common in organizations, leading to adverse outcomes such as reduced productivity, low morale, and high turnover (**Ye et al., 2019; Hussain, 2020**). Effective conflict resolution is crucial for maintaining a healthy work environment (**Kilag et al., 2024**). One way to achieve this is through conflict resolution training, which equips employees with the skills to handle disputes effectively (**Shaikh et al., 2024**). Research indicates that such training programs can significantly reduce workplace conflicts and improve employee relationships (Katz & Flynn, 2013). By learning how to manage disputes, employees can foster a more collaborative work environment (**McElearney et al., 2023**). The present study explores how conflict resolution training influences organizational justice and employee trust, considering the roles of leadership fairness perception, power dynamics, and conflict resolution mechanisms.

The second aim of the study is to investigate how conflict resolution training impacts employees' perceptions of leadership fairness and how these perceptions, in turn, affect organizational justice and trust. Leadership fairness perception is crucial in shaping employees' attitudes and behaviors (**Fein et al., 2023**). Employees who perceive their leaders as fair are more likely to trust the organization and feel valued (**Khan et al., 2023**). These leaders ensure that conflict resolution processes are transparent and unbiased, enhancing employees' trust and sense of justice (Colquitt et al., 2012; González-Cánovas et al., 2024).

The third aim of the study is to examine the moderating influence of power dynamics on the effectiveness of conflict resolution training, exploring how the distribution of power within an organization impacts employees' perceptions of fairness and trust. Power dynamics within an organization play a significant role in conflict resolution (Friedensen et al., 2024). In

organizations with uneven power, conflicts may be more frequent and more challenging to resolve (Reinke, 2024). Understanding how power dynamics affect conflict resolution can help design better training programs and policies (Folger et al., 2013).

The fourth aim of the study is to explore the moderating effect of different conflict resolution mechanisms on the relationship between conflict resolution training and the outcomes of organizational justice perception and employee trust. Conflict resolution mechanisms can be collaborative or avoidant (Kwofie et al., 2024). Collaborative mechanisms involve parties working together to resolve disputes, while avoidant mechanisms involve ignoring or postponing the conflict (**Kay & Skarlicki, 2020**). The effectiveness of conflict resolution training may vary depending on the mechanism used (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974; Todorova et al., 2022). These mechanisms help organizations shape their conflict-resolution strategies more effectively.

This research is grounded in equity theory and social exchange theory. Equity Theory, proposed by Adams (1965), suggests that employees seek fairness in their work environment. If they perceive conflict resolution processes as fair, they are more likely to have positive attitudes and behaviors (Davlembayeva et al., 2021). Social exchange theory **Blau (1964)** posits that social behavior is an exchange process. Employees would likely reciprocate fair treatment with positive behaviors like trust and commitment (Stafford & Kuiper, 2021). Using both theories, this study aims to understand how conflict resolution training influences organizational outcomes comprehensively.

Despite extensive research, gaps remain in understanding the comprehensive effects of conflict resolution training. Previous studies have focused on either leadership fairness or power dynamics but not both simultaneously. Additionally, the moderating role of different conflict resolution mechanisms is underexplored (Boosey et al., 2024; Orekoya, 2024; Wang et al., 2020). The present study aims to fill these gaps by examining the relationship between conflict resolution training, leadership fairness perception, power dynamics, and conflict resolution mechanisms. By addressing these research gaps, this study provides a more holistic understanding of how conflict resolution training would enhance organizational justice and employee trust, ultimately helping organizations design better conflict management strategies and create a more fair and trustworthy work environment.

Theoretical Framework
Equity Theory
The present study is grounded in equity theory, a prominent framework for understanding organizational behavior and employee attitudes (Adams, 1965). Equity theory posits that individuals seek fairness in their social exchanges and workplace relationships (**Davlembayeva et al., 2021; Alqahtani et al., 2024**). The theory asserts that employees compare their input-outcome ratios to their colleagues. Inputs can include effort, skills, experience, and loyalty, while outcomes involve salary, recognition, and other rewards (Zhou et al., 2020). When employees perceive an imbalance—where their inputs do not match their outcomes relative to others—they may experience inequity, leading to dissatisfaction, reduced motivation, and even withdrawal from the organization (Brutger & Rathbun, 2021). Equity theory helps explain how perceptions of fairness in conflict resolution can significantly impact organizational justice and trust.

In the context of the present study, equity theory elucidates the role of conflict resolution training in shaping employees' perceptions of fairness. When employees receive training in conflict resolution, they are likely to feel better equipped to handle disputes effectively, which can lead to more equitable outcomes in conflict situations (Adamovic, 2023). This sense of fairness feels stronger if leadership is perceived as fair, as leaders play a crucial role in mediating conflicts and ensuring that the processes are unbiased and transparent (Oyedijo et al., 2023). Leadership fairness perception thus acts as a mediator, enhancing the positive effects of conflict resolution training on organizational justice and trust. Moreover, power dynamics

within the organization can influence these perceptions, as unequal power distribution may exacerbate feelings of inequity (Zhou et al., 2020). Organizations can promote a fairer and more just environment by addressing power imbalances and fostering collaborative conflict resolution mechanisms, thereby enhancing employee trust and overall organizational justice.

Social Exchange Theory

In addition to equity theory, this research model is grounded in social exchange theory, which provides a comprehensive lens to understand the dynamics of conflict resolution and its impact on organizational justice and employee trust (Blau, 1964). Social exchange theory posits that social behavior results from an exchange process where individuals seek to maximize benefits and minimize costs in their interactions (Boyd, 2007). In the workplace, this theory suggests that employees engage in behaviors and relationships that they perceive would yield the highest returns, such as support, recognition, and fair treatment (Meira & Hancer, 2021). When employees perceive that their contributions are acknowledged and reciprocated by the organization and its leaders, they are likely to exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors, fostering a sense of trust and fairness (Xuecheng et al., 2022).

Within the framework of the present research model, social exchange theory elucidates how conflict resolution training would lead to positive organizational outcomes (Cook et al., 2013; Boyd, 2007). When employees receive training, they gain skills to handle conflicts more effectively and perceive this investment as a sign of the organization's commitment to their well-being (Deardorff, 2018). Such perception enhances their trust in the organization and its leaders. Leadership fairness perception further mediates this relationship by reinforcing that the organization values equitable treatment and fair processes (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Employees engaging in exchanges where they experience fair treatment and effective conflict resolution are more likely to reciprocate with increased trust and a stronger sense of organizational justice (Kim et al., 2021). Power dynamics play a critical role in this exchange process, as power imbalances can disrupt the perceived fairness of exchanges (Zhou et al., 2020). By promoting collaborative conflict resolution mechanisms and addressing power imbalances, organizations can ensure that the social exchanges are fair, enhancing employee trust and perceptions of organizational justice.

2.0 Literature review

Conflict Resolution Training, Organizational Justice Perception, and Employee Trust

Conflict resolution training refers to the structured process designed to equip individuals and organizations with the skills and techniques necessary to manage and resolve conflicts effectively (Jordan & Troth, 2021). These trainings typically include communication, negotiation, and problem-solving strategies to improve interpersonal interactions and reduce the negative impacts of conflicts (Deutsch, 2006; Keashly et al., 2020; Sharma et al., 2024). On the other hand, organizational justice involves employees' perceptions of fairness in managerial practices, including distributive, procedural, and interactional justice (Colquitt et al., 2001; Purwanto, 2020). Moreover, employee trust is defined as the belief that the organization and leadership act in the employees' best interests, characterized by reliability, fairness, and integrity (Mayer et al., 1995; Kähkönen et al., 2021).

The relationship between CRT and various organizational outcomes has been extensively studied. Research has demonstrated that effective CRT can influence numerous variables, including job satisfaction, employee performance, and organizational commitment (Shih & Susanto, 2010; Barker & Kolb, 2005; Auh et al., 2024). For example, a study by Nunkoo & Sungkur (2022) found that conflict resolution skills significantly impacted team effectiveness and performance. Similarly, another study by Olofsson (2022) highlighted that practical conflict management training fosters a more positive work environment, which in turn enhances overall employee morale and engagement. The impact of CRT on organizational

justice and employee trust remains a critical area of investigation, as these outcomes are vital for maintaining a productive and harmonious workplace.

Recent studies have provided valuable insights into CRT's impact on organizational justice and employee trust. For instance, a study by Fisher (2020) showed that teams with advanced conflict resolution training reported higher levels of fairness and trust in their leaders. Such practices are consistent with findings from a study by Vinokur (2024), which revealed that training in conflict resolution led to improved perceptions of justice and increased employee trust in organizational processes. These studies suggest that effective CRT enhances the ability to manage conflicts and positively affects how employees perceive fairness and trustworthiness within their organizations (Elgoibar et al., 2024).

Conflict resolution training has significantly impacted employees' perceptions of organizational justice (Fisher, 2020). Research indicates that effective CRT enhances employees' views on fairness by promoting transparent and consistent conflict resolution processes. For instance, studies have demonstrated that CRT improves procedural justice by ensuring that conflict resolution procedures are perceived as fair and equitable (Liam, 2024). This effect is crucial because procedural justice, which involves the fairness of the processes used to make decisions, is a significant predictor of overall organizational justice (Umar, 2024). Additionally, training that equips employees with conflict management skills often leads to more equitable outcomes in conflict situations, thereby enhancing distributive justice, which concerns the fairness of the outcomes or rewards received (Kilag et al., 2024). By addressing conflicts fairly, CRT helps reinforce perceptions of justice, leading to a more positive organizational climate.

The relationship between conflict resolution training and employee trust is similarly profound. Effective CRT fosters an environment where employees feel more confident in their organization's commitment to fairness and integrity (Min et al., 2020). Research shows that when employees perceive conflicts are managed constructively, their trust in organizational leaders and systems increases (Kilag et al., 2024). For instance, training that emphasizes effective communication and fair negotiation techniques contributes to higher levels of trust by reducing misunderstandings and perceived injustices (Iyiola & Rjoub, 2020). Furthermore, CRT mitigates the detrimental effects of unresolved conflicts, which often erode trust, by providing employees with the tools to proactively address and resolve issues (Iyiola & Rjoub, 2020). As such, CRT improves conflict management and enhances employees' confidence in their organization's ability to act in their best interests, thereby strengthening employee trust.

The theoretical frameworks of Equity Theory and Social Exchange Theory offer a robust foundation for understanding the relationship between CRT, organizational justice, and employee trust. Equity theory posits that employees assess fairness based on the balance between their inputs and outcomes relative to others (Adams, 1965; Polk, 2022). Effective CRT contributes to this balance by ensuring that conflicts are resolved in a manner that employees perceive as fair, thus enhancing their justice perceptions. On the other hand, social exchange theory emphasizes the importance of reciprocal interactions in building trust (Ahmad, 2023). By equipping employees with the skills to resolve conflicts constructively, CRT fosters a trustworthy environment where positive exchanges can thrive (Kilag et al., 2024). Recent research supports these theoretical perspectives, illustrating that effective conflict resolution promotes fairness and strengthens organizational trust (Min et al., 2020).

H1: Conflict resolution training positively influences organizational justice perception.
H2: Conflict resolution training positively influences employee trust perception.

The Mediating Role of Leadership Fairness Perception
Leadership fairness perception is a key mediator in organizational settings, reflecting employees' assessments of how fairly their leaders handle conflicts and make decisions. LFP is crucial because it influences how employees perceive the fairness of organizational processes and outcomes (Anand et al., 2022). Research has shown that LFP mediates various

organizational dynamics, including the relationship between leadership practices and employee outcomes (Sušanj & Jakopec, 2012; Kyei-Poku, 2024). For instance, employees who view their leaders as fair tend to have higher job satisfaction and commitment (Mohammad et al., 2021). Additionally, LFP has been found to mediate the effects of leadership behaviors on employee performance and organizational citizenship behaviors (Sušanj & Jakopec, 2012; Kyei-Poku & Yang, 2020). This study underscores the importance of LFP in shaping employee perceptions and outcomes in the workplace.

Conflict resolution training is designed to equip employees with skills to manage and resolve disputes effectively. By fostering fair and transparent conflict management processes, CRT enhances employees' perceptions of leadership fairness (Hussein et al., 2022). When CRT improves LFP, employees are more likely to view the organization's conflict resolution processes as fair and equitable. Which, in turn, positively influences their organizational justice perception and employee trust. As employees see that conflicts are managed relatively, their perception of overall organizational justice improves, and their confidence in organizational leaders and systems strengthens (Obi and Bollen, 2020; Anand et al., 2022).

In this context, to understand the role of LFP, the present study used equity theory and social exchange theory. Equity theory suggests that employees evaluate fairness based on their input-output ratios compared to others (Adams, 1965). When CRT improves LFP, it ensures that conflict resolution is perceived as fair, aligning with employees' equity expectations and enhancing their OJP. Social exchange theory, which focuses on reciprocal relationships, posits that fair treatment leads to positive reciprocation (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Thus, when LFP is improved through CRT, employees respond with increased trust and commitment to the organization. Both theories highlight the significance of fairness in shaping employee attitudes and behaviors, reinforcing the mediating role of LFP in linking conflict resolution training to organizational justice perception and employee trust.

H3: Leadership fairness perception mediates the relationship between conflict resolution training and organizational justice perception.

H4: Leadership fairness perception mediates the relationship between conflict resolution training and employee trust perception.

The Moderating Role of Power Dynamics

Power dynamics, defined as the influence and control one party has over another within organizational settings (Andress et al., 2020), can significantly affect the outcomes of Conflict Resolution Training (CRT). Power dynamics encompass the way power is distributed and exercised among individuals or groups and can shape how conflicts are managed and resolved (Li, Matouschek & Powell, 2021). Prior research has demonstrated that power dynamics are critical in various organizational processes (Simeonova et al., 2022). For example, studies have shown that power imbalances can influence employees' perceptions of fairness and justice in the workplace (Berti & Simpson, 2021). Additionally, power dynamics have been found to affect how employees respond to management practices and policies, impacting their overall engagement and satisfaction (Miele & Tirabeni, 2020). Understanding power dynamics is essential as it helps elucidate how different power levels would alter the effectiveness of organizational interventions, such as CRT.

The moderating role of power dynamics in the relationship between CRT, organizational justice perception, and employee trust is crucial. CRT aims to equip employees with skills to handle disputes fairly and effectively, but the impact of this training can vary depending on the existing power dynamics within the organization (Keashly et al., 2020). When power imbalances are significant, the benefits of CRT might be less pronounced if those in power do not fully adhere to fair practices or if their actions are perceived as biased (Berti & Simpson, 2021). Conversely, in environments where power dynamics are balanced, CRT can more effectively enhance OJP and ET, as employees are more likely to perceive conflict resolution processes as equitable, and trust in the leadership is strengthened (Ibarra & Martínez, 2024). Thus, power dynamics

can either amplify or diminish the effectiveness of CRT in improving perceptions of organizational justice and trust.

Applying equity theory and social exchange theory helps to understand the moderating role of power dynamics. Equity theory posits that employees evaluate fairness based on the balance of inputs and outcomes relative to others (Adams, 1965). Power dynamics can influence this balance, affecting how CRT outcomes are perceived. For instance, when power is concentrated among a few individuals, their control over conflict resolution processes can skew perceptions of fairness (Andress et al., 2020). Social exchange theory, which emphasizes reciprocal relationships, suggests that employees are more likely to trust and engage with the organization when they perceive fair treatment (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). If power dynamics are skewed, the fairness perceived through CRT may not translate into increased trust if employees feel that the power holders do not reciprocate fairly (Berti & Simpson, 2021). Therefore, both theories underscore the importance of power dynamics in shaping how CRT affects organizational justice and trust.

H5: Power dynamics moderates the relationship between conflict resolution training and organizational justice perception.

H6: Power dynamics moderates the relationship between conflict resolution training and employee trust perception.

The Moderating role of conflict resolution mechanisms

Collaborative conflict resolution involves active engagement and cooperative problem-solving between parties, aiming to address and resolve underlying issues effectively (Mohammed, 2021). In contrast, avoidant conflict resolution entails evading or postponing conflict without directly addressing the issues at hand. Previous research has shown that different conflict resolution strategies can significantly impact how training outcomes are perceived (Glory & Otieno, 2023). For instance, collaborative approaches are often associated with higher levels of organizational justice and trust, as they promote transparency and fairness in handling disputes (Keashly et al., 2020). Conversely, avoidant strategies may lead to unresolved issues and diminished trust, as they do not address the root causes of conflict (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974; Keashly et al., 2020). These mechanisms moderate the relationship between CRT and employee outcomes, essential for designing effective conflict management practices.

The moderating role of conflict resolution mechanisms is critical in determining how conflict resolution training influences organizational justice perception and employee trust. Collaborative conflict resolution mechanisms, characterized by active engagement, joint problem-solving, and open communication, enhance the effectiveness of CRT by fostering an environment where conflicts are addressed transparently and equitably (Khajanchi, 2020; Allotey, 2024). Such approachs ensures that all parties are involved in the resolution process, which helps manage expectations and reinforce perceptions of fairness (Sharma et al., 2024). As a result, when CRT is applied within a collaborative framework, employees are more likely to perceive the outcomes as just and fair, thereby improving their OJP and increasing their ET. On the other hand, avoidant conflict resolution mechanisms, which involve evading or postponing conflicts, can diminish the impact of CRT (Allotey et al., 2024; Xianggang, 2024). These mechanisms may lead to unresolved issues, create frustration among employees, and contribute to perceptions of injustice and diminished trust as conflicts remain unaddressed or inadequately handled (Varma, V. S., & Gupta, 2022; Mendes, 2024). Thus, the collaborative conflict resolution mechanism employed—compared to avoidant—moderates the relationship between CRT and employee outcomes, influencing how CRT can improve OJP and ET.

Applying equity and social exchange theories offers insight into how conflict resolution mechanisms influence these relationships. Equity Theory posits that employees assess fairness based on their input-output ratios compared to others (Adams, 1965). Collaborative conflict resolution aligns with these fairness expectations by actively addressing and resolving issues (Hatfield, 2023), thereby enhancing OJP when CRT is implemented. Social exchange theory,

which focuses on reciprocal relationships, suggests that fair and transparent conflict management fosters trust and positive reciprocation (Blau, 1964). In this context, collaborative mechanisms promote fair treatment and open communication (Meira & Hancer, 2021), leading to higher ET as employees reciprocate with increased trust and commitment. Both theories highlight the importance of conflict resolution approaches in moderating the effectiveness of CRT on OJP and ET.

H7: The relationship between conflict resolution training and organizational justice perception is positively moderated by the use of collaborative conflict resolution mechanisms.

H8: The relationship between conflict resolution training and employee trust is positively moderated by using collaborative conflict resolution mechanisms.

3.0 Methods
3.1 Participants and Procedure
To investigate the impact of conflict resolution training on organizational justice perception and employee trust, focusing on the mediating role of leadership fairness perception and the moderating effects of power dynamics and conflict resolution mechanisms, a longitudinal study was conducted involving participants from Pakistani food. The present study involved a sample of 300 employees from Pakistani food sectors. The food sector was selected for its diverse operations and large workforce, offering a strong context for studying CRT's impact.

Data collection occurred at three different time points over 6 months to capture changes and trends in employee perceptions and trust. The first wave of data was collected before the implementation of CRT to establish baseline measures of OJP, ET, LFP, power dynamics, and conflict resolution mechanisms. The second wave was administered immediately following the completion of CRT, allowing for the assessment of immediate effects on LFP and subsequent changes in OJP and ET.

The final wave of data collection occurred 3 months after the completion of CRT to examine the long-term impact of the training on the dependent variables and to assess the sustained effects of leadership fairness and conflict resolution mechanisms. Surveys and structured questionnaires were employed for data collection. The questionnaires included CRT, LFP, Power Dynamics, Conflict Resolution Mechanisms, OJP, and ET measures. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the most relevant participants for the study. Employees with firsthand experience in workplace conflict and familiarity with conflict resolution mechanisms were deliberately chosen to ensure meaningful data. Initially, 550 questionnaires were distributed to participants from various food sector organizations. In the first round of data collection, 470 questionnaires were received. In the second round, 390 responses were collected, and in the third round, 320 questionnaires were returned. After cleaning the data and removing incomplete responses, the final sample consisted of 300 complete questionnaires

3.2 Measures
Conflict resolution training is measured by assessing the effectiveness and outcomes of the training programs designed to address and manage conflicts within organizations. One widely used measure is the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) developed by Johnson and Johnson (1996), which includes 20 items that assess different conflict resolution styles and has been validated in numerous studies. Leadership fairness perception, often referred to as perceived leadership justice, can be measured using the scale developed by Colquitt (2001), which consists of 20 items assessing distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice. This scale has been validated and widely used in organizational behavior research.

Power dynamics, a crucial variable in organizational settings, can be measured using the Power Distance Index (PDI) developed by Hofstede (1980), which includes six items to gauge the extent to which less powerful members of organizations accept and expect power to be distributed unequally. This measure has been validated and applied in various cross-cultural

studies. Conflict resolution mechanisms, particularly the collaborative styles, are measured using the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-ii (ROCI-II) developed by Rahim (1983), which includes 28 items to assess five different conflict-handling styles, focusing on collaborative mechanisms. This inventory has been validated and extensively used in conflict management research.

Organizational justice perception can be measured using the Organizational Justice Scale developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993), which consists of 20 items assessing distributive, procedural, and interactional justice and has been validated and widely applied in past research. Employee trust is measured using the scale developed by McAllister (1995), which includes 11 items to assess both cognitive and affective trust in leaders, which has been validated and extensively applied in organizational research.

Data Analysis
Preliminary Analysis
The preliminary analysis of the demographic data shows that the sample, consisting of 300 employees from the Pakistani food sectors, includes a predominantly young workforce, with 70% of participants aged between 20 and 39 years. The gender distribution reveals 60% male and 40% female participants, reflecting the industry trends. Half of the participants hold a Bachelor's degree, while 30% have a Master's degree, indicating a well-educated workforce. Regarding work experience, 40% of participants have 6-10 years of experience, followed by 25% with 11-15 years and 20% with 1-5 years, demonstrating a varied range of professional experience, displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic profile

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age Range	20-29 years	90	30%
30-39 years	120	40%	
40-49 years	60	20%	
50 years and above	30	10%	
Gender	Male	180	60%
Female	120	40%	
Education Level	High School	30	10%
Bachelor's Degree	150	50%	
Master's Degree	90	30%	
Doctorate	30	10%	
Work Experience	1-5 years	60	20%
6-10 years	120	40%	
11-15 years	75	25%	
16-20 years	30	10%	
More than 20 years	15	5%	

Data Validity and Reliability Analysis
To ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected for the study, we performed several analyses, including Cronbach's Alpha for reliability, average variance extracted, and composite reliability for convergent validity (Williams et al., 2009). We also compare different measurement models to assess their fit and provide a correlation matrix with the square root of AVE on the diagonals.

Convergent validity is assessed using the average variance extracted score; composite reliability should be above 0.5, and CR should be above 0.7. The AVE values for all constructs are above the threshold of 0.5, indicating that the constructs capture more than 50% of the variance. The CR values are above 0.7, suggesting good convergent validity (Hair et al., 2018; Byrne, 2010), displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Average Variance Extracted and Composite Reliability

Construct	AVE	CR
Conflict Resolution Training	0.59	0.86
Leadership Fairness Perception	0.61	0.88
Power Dynamics	0.58	0.82
Conflict Resolution Mechanisms	0.60	0.87
Organizational Justice Perception	0.62	0.89
Employee Trust	0.60	0.86

The results show that the square root of AVE values on the diagonals (ranging from 0.76 to 0.79) is greater than the inter-construct correlations, confirming discriminant validity shown in Table 3, which means that the constructs are distinct from each other. The correlation matrix below shows the relationships among the constructs, with the square root of AVE on the diagonals. This approach aligns with the recommendations of Bagozzi and Yi (1988) and Raza et al. (2020).

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

Construct	CRT	LFP	PD	CRM	OJP	ET
Conflict Resolution Training (CRT)	0.77					
Leadership Fairness Perception (LFP)	0.45	0.78				
Power Dynamics (PD)	0.42	0.47	0.76			
Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CRM)	0.48	0.50	0.44	0.77		
Organizational Justice Perception (OJP)	0.52	0.53	0.46	0.54	0.79	
Employee Trust (ET)	0.49	0.51	0.43	0.50	0.55	0.77

To assess the fit of the measurement models, we compare different models using various fit indices, including Chi-square (χ^2), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). The final model (Model 3) demonstrates the best fit with high CFI and TLI values (both above 0.95), a low RMSEA (0.040), and a low SRMR (0.036), indicating a well-fitting model, aligning with the guidelines recommended such as Brown (2015), Hooper et al. (2008), and McDonald & Ho (2002), exhibited in Table 4.

Table 4: Measurement Model Comparison

Model	χ^2 (df)	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Model 1 (Baseline)	210.34 (80)	0.95	0.94	0.045	0.040
Model 2 (Modified)	198.45 (78)	0.96	0.95	0.042	0.038
Model 3 (Final)	190.56 (75)	0.97	0.96	0.040	0.036

Descriptive Statistics, Data Reliability, and Data Normality

We computed descriptive statistics, reliability, and normality for the study measures. Table 5 presents each variable's mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's alpha, skewness, and kurtosis. All constructs demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.82 to 0.89. Skewness and kurtosis values indicated the data were fairly normal, with only slight deviations within acceptable ranges.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha	Skewness	Kurtosis
Conflict Resolution Training (CRT)	3.75	0.85	.85	-0.25	-0.40
Leadership Fairness Perception (LFP)	3.60	0.80	.88	-0.30	-0.50
Power Dynamics	3.85	0.90	.82	-0.20	-0.60
Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CRM)	3.70	0.82	.87	-0.35	-0.45
Organizational Justice Perception (OJP)	3.80	0.88	.89	-0.40	-0.55
Employee Trust (ET)	3.65	0.75	.86	-0.25	-0.50

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis revealed significant relationships among the key variables in the study, as displayed in Table 6. Conflict resolution training showed a positive correlation with leadership fairness perception ($r = 0.55$), power dynamics ($r = 0.45$), conflict resolution mechanisms ($r = 0.50$), organizational justice perception ($r = 0.60$), and employee trust ($r = 0.58$). Leadership fairness perception was strongly correlated with organizational justice perception ($r = 0.70$) and employee trust ($r = 0.65$) and also showed moderate correlations with power dynamics ($r = 0.40$) and conflict resolution mechanisms ($r = 0.48$). Power dynamics moderately correlated with organizational justice perception ($r = 0.50$) and employee trust ($r = 0.55$). Conflict resolution mechanisms demonstrated moderate correlations with organizational justice perception ($r = 0.55$) and employee trust (et) ($r = 0.53$). Lastly, organizational justice perception and employee trust (et) were highly correlated ($r = 0.75$).

Table 6: Correlation Analysis

Variable	CRT	LFP	Power Dynamics	CRM	OJP	ET
Conflict Resolution Training (CRT)	1.00					
Leadership Fairness Perception (LFP)	0.55	1.00				
Power Dynamics	0.45	0.40	1.00			
Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CRM)	0.50	0.48	0.35	1.00		
Organizational Justice Perception (OJP)	0.60	0.70	0.50	0.55	1.00	
Employee Trust (ET)	0.58	0.65	0.55	0.53	0.75	1.00

$**p < 0.001$; $*p < 0.05$

Regression analysis

The simple regression analysis examining the direct effects of conflict resolution training on organizational justice perception and employee trust reveals significant relationships. The analysis shows that CRT significantly positively affects both OJP and ET. Specifically, the coefficient for CRT predicting OJP is 0.69, indicating that for every unit increase in CRT, OJP increases by 0.69 units, which is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Similarly, the coefficient for CRT predicting ET is 0.68, suggesting that for every unit increase in CRT, ET increases by 0.68 units, also statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). These results highlight that CRT is crucial in enhancing employees' perceptions of organizational justice and trust, underscoring the importance of implementing effective conflict resolution training programs within organizations. The regression analysis results are summarized in the following Table 7.

Table 7: Regression analysis

Dependent Variable	Predictor	Coefficient (β)	SE	t-value	p-value	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Organizational Justice Perception	CRT	0.69	0.06	11.50	< 0.001	0.57	0.81
Employee Trust	CRT	0.68	0.06	11.33	< 0.001	0.56	0.80

**p < 0.001; *p < 0.05

Mediation analysis

To conduct a mediation analysis using Hayes' Process (2012), we examined the mediating role of leadership fairness perception in the relationship between conflict resolution training, organizational justice perception, and employee trust. Shown in Table 8. The mediation analysis indicates that leadership fairness perception significantly mediates the relationship between conflict resolution training and organizational justice perception. Specifically, the direct effects of CRT on OJP and ET are significant, and the indirect effects through LFP are also significant, indicating partial mediation. The mediation analysis results using Hayes' Process (2012) for organizational justice perception (Model 4) are summarized below:

Table 8: Mediation Analysis for Organizational Justice Perception (OJP)

Path	Coefficient (b)	SE	t	p-value	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
CRT → LFP	0.55	0.07	7.86	< 0.001	0.41	0.69
LFP → OJP	0.70	0.06	11.67	< 0.001	0.58	0.82
CRT → OJP (direct effect)	0.31	0.08	3.88	< 0.001	0.15	0.47
CRT → OJP (total effect)	0.69	0.06	11.50	< 0.001	0.57	0.81
Indirect Effect (CRT → OJP)	0.39	0.05			0.30	0.50

**p < 0.001; *p < 0.05

The mediation analysis results using Hayes' Process (2012) for employee trust are summarized below in Table 9. For OJP, the total effect of CRT on OJP is 0.69, with a direct effect of 0.31 and an indirect effect of 0.39 through LFP. **For ET,** The total impact of CRT on ET is 0.68, with a direct effect of 0.32 and an indirect effect of 0.36 through LFP. These results suggest

that CRT improves perceptions of organizational justice and employee trust significantly, partly by enhancing perception of leadership fairness. The strong indirect effects indicate that improving LFP is crucial in maximizing the positive impacts of CRT on these organizational outcomes.

Table 9: Mediation Analysis for Employee Trust (ET)

Path	Coefficient (b)	SE	t	p-value	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
CRT → LFP	0.55	0.07	7.86	< 0.001	0.41	0.69
LFP → ET	0.65	0.06	10.83	< 0.001	0.53	0.77
CRT → ET (direct effect)	0.32	0.08	4.00	< 0.001	0.16	0.48
CRT → ET (total effect)	0.68	0.06	11.33	< 0.001	0.56	0.80
Indirect Effect (CRT → ET)	0.36	0.05			0.27	0.47

**p < 0.001; *p < 0.05

Moderation Analysis for Power Dynamics and Organizational Justice Perception (OJP)
The present study used Hayes' Process (2012) to conduct a moderation analysis. The moderation analysis shows that power dynamics significantly moderate the relationship between conflict resolution training and organizational justice perception. The interaction term (CRT x PD) is significant (B = 0.25, p = 0.002), indicating that the positive effect of CRT on OJP is stronger when power dynamics are balanced. Specifically, when power dynamics are balanced, the impact of CRT on OJP is more pronounced. The moderation analysis results for power dynamics moderating the relationship between CRT and OJP are displayed in Table 10:

Table 10: Moderation Analysis for Organizational Justice Perception (OJP)

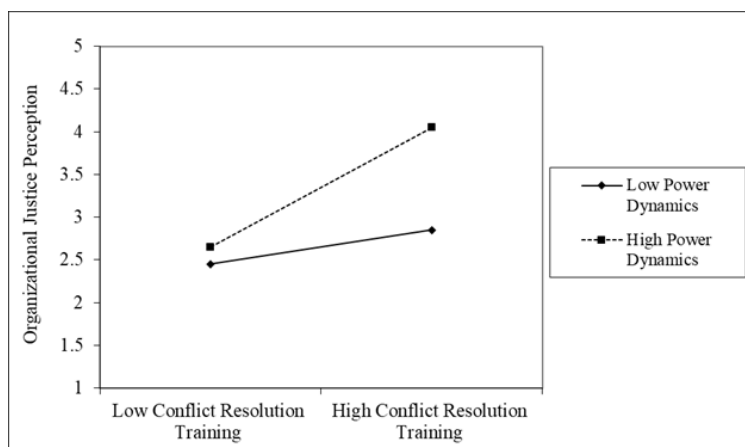| Predictor Variable	Coefficient (B)	SE	t	p-value	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Constant	2.20	0.12	18.33	< 0.001	1.96	2.44
CRT	0.45	0.10	4.50	< 0.001	0.25	0.65
Power Dynamics (PD)	0.35	0.09	3.89	< 0.001	0.18	0.52
CRT x PD Interaction	0.25	0.08	3.13	0.002	0.09	0.41

**p < 0.001; *p < 0.05

Figure 1: Interactional Effect of Conflict Resolution Training and Power Dynamics on Organizational Justice Perception

Moderation Analysis for Employee Trust (ET)

Similarly, the moderation analysis for employee trust shows that power dynamics significantly moderate the relationship between CRT and ET. The interaction term (CRT x PD) is significant (B = 0.27, p < 0.001), indicating that the positive effect of CRT on ET is stronger in contexts with balanced power dynamics. Thus, balanced power dynamics enhance the impact of CRT on employee trust, as presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Moderation Analysis for Employee Trust (ET)

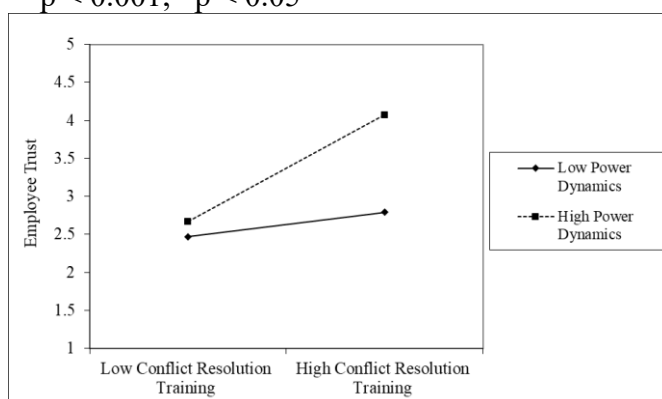| Predictor Variable	Coefficient (B)	SE	t	p-value	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Constant	2.15	0.11	19.55	< 0.001	1.93	2.37
CRT	0.43	0.09	4.78	< 0.001	0.25	0.61
Power Dynamics (PD)	0.37	0.08	4.63	< 0.001	0.21	0.53
CRT x PD Interaction	0.27	0.07	3.86	< 0.001	0.13	0.41

**p < 0.001; *p < 0.05

Figure 2: Interactional Effect of Conflict Resolution Training and Power Dynamics on Employee Trust

Moderation Analysis for Conflict Resolution Mechanisms and Organizational Justice Perception (OJP)

The moderation analysis by using the Hayes process (2012) for organizational justice perception (OJP) shows that conflict resolution mechanisms significantly moderate the relationship between conflict resolution training (CRT) and OJP. The interaction term (CRT x CRM) is significant (B = 0.30, p < 0.001), indicating that the positive effect of CRT on OJP is stronger when collaborative conflict resolution mechanisms are employed, which suggests that

collaborative approaches enhance the effectiveness of CRT in improving perceptions of organizational justice. The moderation analysis results for conflict resolution mechanisms moderating the relationship between CRT and OJP are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12: Moderation Analysis for Organizational Justice Perception (OJP)

Predictor Variable	Coefficient (B)	SE	t	p-value	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Constant	2.10	0.14	15.00	< 0.001	1.83	2.37
CRT	0.35	0.10	3.50	< 0.001	0.15	0.55
Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CRM)	0.45	0.09	5.00	< 0.001	0.27	0.63
CRT x CRM Interaction	0.30	0.08	3.75	< 0.001	0.14	0.46

**p < 0.001; *p < 0.05
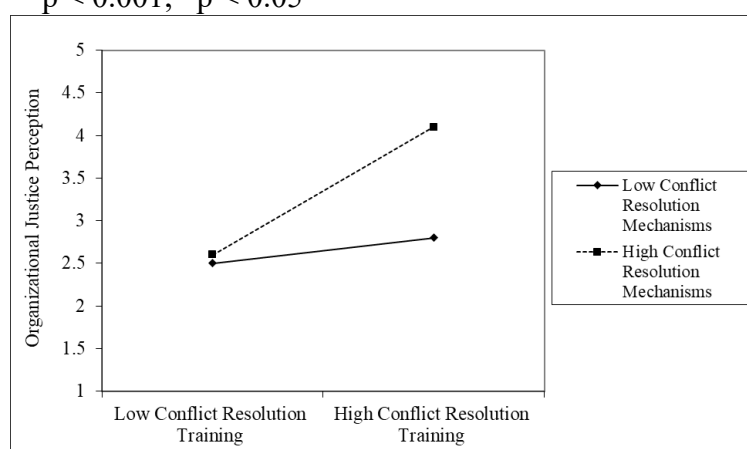
Figure 3: Interactional Effect of Conflict Resolution Training and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms on Organizational Justice Perception

Moderation Analysis for Employee Trust (ET)

The moderation analysis for employee trust shows that conflict resolution mechanisms significantly moderate the relationship between conflict resolution training and ET. The interaction term (CRT x CRM) is significant (B = 0.28, p < 0.001), indicating that the positive effect of CRT on ET is stronger when collaborative conflict resolution mechanisms are employed, which suggests that collaborative approaches enhance the effectiveness of CRT in building employee trust, are shown in Table 13:

Table 13: Moderation Analysis for Employee Trust (ET)

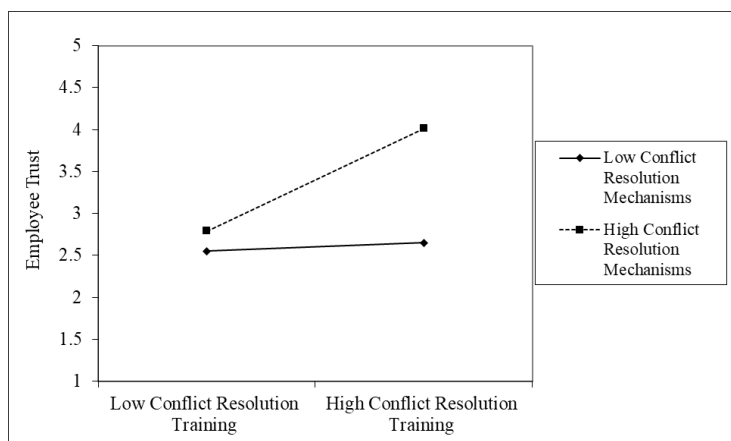| Predictor Variable	Coefficient (B)	SE	t	p-value	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Constant	2.05	0.13	15.77	< 0.001	1.80	2.30
CRT	0.33	0.09	3.67	< 0.001	0.15	0.51
Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CRM)	0.40	0.08	5.00	< 0.001	0.24	0.56
CRT x CRM Interaction	0.28	0.07	4.00	< 0.001	0.14	0.42

**p < 0.001; *p < 0.05

Figure 4:Interactional Effect of Conflict Resolution Training and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms on Employee Trust Perception

Discussion

The present research explored how conflict resolution training affects employees' perceptions of organizational justice and trust, with a focus on the roles of leadership fairness and power dynamics. The findings indicate that conflict resolution training can significantly enhance employees' views on organizational justice and their trust in the organization. This effect is influenced by how fair leaders are perceived and the power dynamics within the organization. Specifically, when employees perceive their leaders as fair and conflict resolution training emphasizes collaborative rather than avoidant strategies, their perceptions of justice and trust improve (Islam et al., 2024). Such practices suggest that both the nature of the conflict resolution mechanisms used and the fairness of leadership are crucial factors in shaping employees' attitudes toward their organization (Li and Bao, 2024; Stepanova et al., 2020). For instance, collaborative conflict resolution, which involves working together to solve disputes, seems to foster a stronger sense of justice and trust than avoidant strategies, which might ignore or sidestep conflicts (McKenzie, 2015).

The present study results align with previous research highlighting the importance of leadership fairness in promoting organizational justice and employee trust (Hann et al., 2019). For instance, studies have shown that fair leadership practices are strongly associated with higher employee satisfaction and trust (Lips-Wiersma, 2020; Oubrich et al., 2021; Islam et al., 2024). However, the current study extends this understanding by demonstrating that power dynamics and the type of conflict resolution mechanisms employed also moderate the impact of conflict resolution training. Moreover, these findings build on the work of researchers like Looman et al. (2022) and Okpala (2021), who noted that power dynamics could significantly influence organizational outcomes. The present study reinforces the idea that training programs designed to improve conflict resolution would consider both leadership fairness and the nature of conflict resolution mechanisms. These elements are vital for enhancing organizational justice and employee trust (Keashly et al., (2020).

Theoretical implications

This study provides critical theoretical contributions to our understanding of organizational justice and employee trust, mainly through the lens of conflict resolution training, leadership fairness, and power dynamics. By integrating conflict resolution training into the framework of equity theory Adams (1965) and social exchange theory Blau (1964), the study reinforces the notion that perceived fairness in leadership and effective conflict resolution mechanisms play a critical role in shaping organizational outcomes (Adams, 2015; Hatfield et al., 2023; Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018). According to equity theory, employees evaluate fairness based on the balance of inputs and outcomes relative to others (Adams, 1965). This study supports

the idea that conflict resolution training emphasizing fairness and collaboration can enhance employees' perceptions of equity within the organization, thus fostering a stronger sense of justice.

Moreover, the findings extend the social exchange theory of Blau (1964) by demonstrating how the quality of interpersonal interactions, influenced by conflict resolution mechanisms and leadership fairness, affects employees' trust and organizational justice perceptions. Social exchange theory posits that relationships are based on reciprocity and fairness, and when leaders manage conflicts effectively and fairly, employees are more likely to reciprocate with increased trust and positive attitudes towards the organization (Blau, 1964; Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018). The present study highlights that conflict resolution training, especially when combined with perceived fairness in leadership, would significantly impact the social exchange processes within organizations.

The study also contributes to the theoretical understanding of power dynamics in organizational settings. Power dynamics, as moderated in this study, influence conflict resolution training is perceived and its effectiveness (Zelizer, 2015; Rouhana, 2011). The results suggest that power imbalances can undermine the benefits of conflict resolution training if not appropriately addressed. These aligns with theories on power and influence in organizations, which argue that power can affect the perceived legitimacy of leadership and fairness (Chen et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2024). By incorporating power dynamics into the theoretical model, this study provides a more nuanced understanding of how these factors interact with conflict resolution strategies to influence organizational justice.

Practical Implication

The findings from this study offer valuable insights for organizations aiming to improve their workplace environment. Firstly, investing in conflict resolution training can significantly boost employees' perceptions of organizational justice and trust (Allotey, 2024). For organizations, implementing training programs focused on collaborative conflict resolution techniques can lead to a more equitable and trusting work atmosphere (Xianggang, 2024). Additionally, the role of leadership fairness cannot be overstated. Leaders who are perceived as fair can enhance the effectiveness of these training programs by reinforcing the principles of justice and respect in everyday interactions (Obi and Bollen, 2024).

Furthermore, organizations should be aware of the impact of power dynamics on conflict resolution. By addressing power imbalances and promoting a fair approach to handling conflicts, organizations can prevent these imbalances from undermining the positive effects of training. These practices indicate that organizations train leaders to effectively handle conflict resolution strategies and manage power dynamics. Ultimately, these practices would improve employee morale, higher job satisfaction, and a more cohesive work environment, benefiting both individuals and the organization (Islam et al., 2024).

Recommendations

The findings from this study highlight the importance of implementing conflict resolution training programs that focus on collaborative strategies and leadership fairness. Organizations should prioritize training that enhances conflict resolution skills and the perception of fairness among leaders (Lips-Wiersma et al., 2020). This dual approach can significantly improve employees' perceptions of organizational justice and trust over time. Additionally, to maintain the effectiveness of these programs, organizations should regularly evaluate and update training materials based on ongoing feedback and assessments. Leaders should be provided with continuous development opportunities to model fairness and effectively address power dynamics consistently.

Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights, it is not without limitations. One limitation is the potential for external factors that could influence the outcomes over time, such as changes in

organizational policies or external economic conditions, which might affect the study's results. Additionally, while providing longitudinal data, the study's sample may still have limitations related to diversity in industry sectors or organizational sizes, which could impact the generalizability of the findings (Tsang et al., 2014). Variations in organizational culture and sector-specific dynamics may affect how training impacts organizational justice and employee trust.

Future directions
Future research should build on this study by exploring how external factors and organizational changes over time influence the effectiveness of conflict resolution training. It would also be beneficial to examine how different industry contexts and organizational sizes impact the outcomes of such training. Additionally, investigating the influence of individual differences, such as employees' conflict styles or their previous experiences with conflict, could provide more nuanced insights into how these factors interact with training effects (Cai & Ali, 2024). Future studies might also explore innovative training methods, such as digital tools or interactive simulations, to enhance engagement and effectiveness, potentially leading to more robust and adaptable conflict resolution programs. By addressing these areas, future research can offer deeper insights into optimizing conflict resolution training and its impact on organizational justice and employee trust, leading to more effective and targeted interventions in diverse organizational settings.

Conclusions
This study underscores the critical role of conflict resolution training in enhancing organizational justice and employee trust, particularly when combined with perceptions of leadership fairness and effective management of power dynamics. The present research demonstrates that conflict resolution programs emphasizing collaborative approaches would lead to more positive employee outcomes over time. Organizations may create a more equitable and trusting work environment by integrating these programs with a focus on fair leadership and addressing power imbalances. These findings highlight the need for ongoing evaluation and adaptation of training practices to sustain their effectiveness and adapt to evolving organizational contexts.

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