

The Role of Corporate Social Performance (CSP) on the Talent Attraction: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

Talent Management is found to significantly impact the organizational competitive performance and thus, has received increased research and practitioners' attention over the past two decades. The shortage of talent has pushed the corporates to a war for talent which focuses on attracting, engaging and retaining the right talent over competitors. The strategies of attracting the right talent therefore have become the vital first step in Talent Management. The existing literature suggests Corporate Social Performance (CSP) to facilitate attracting the right talent. However, the literature emphasizes the need for context specific research to identify factors influencing talent attraction. Meantime, if and how CSP assists talent attraction in Sri Lankan context has received very limited attention.

Against this backdrop, this paper focuses on understanding the role of CSP on talent attraction in the Sri Lankan context. The paper aims to develop a conceptual framework which will bring meaningful insights to investigate the relationships between organizations' CSP, and their ability to attract the right talent. Drawing from the literature the paper first identifies different factors influencing talent attraction, the dimensions of CSP and the level of impact CSP has had on talent attraction in other contexts. Second, the conceptual framework is presented. Third, the paper suggests an experimental design which can be used in empirical studies along with recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Corporate Social Performance, (CSP), Talent Attraction, Talent Management

INTRODUCTION

Talent Management (TM) has been among the hot topics subjected to many research and discussion for the past two decades. Understanding the significance, the ‘war for talent’ can have on organizational performance has intensified the interest in TM among academia and the corporate world. Ashton and Morton (2005) define talent as high performance and potential of people, who can make a measurable difference to the organization now and in future. The war for talent has been caused due to the excessive demand for unique talent, while the availability of such talent is rare.

The significant impact this unique resource, human talent, could have on the overall organization is clearly established in research. As per the resource-based view (RBV) (Barney, 1991; Conner, 1991), a rare, inimitable, valuable and non-substitutable talent is a resource that can result in competitive advantage to a company. At the same time, talented work force has been recognized as a key driver of operational excellence by all local, international and multinational companies (Ashton & Morton, 2005; Achieve Operational Excellence, 2008). Talent has also been identified as a key differentiating factor among competitors (Lockwood, 2006). Supporting this view, Snell, Bohlander, and Vohra (2012, p. 3) state that “in many fast-growing economies it may be easier to access money and technology than good people.” Hence organizations that can attract, engage and retain the right talent gains the competitive advantage.

Talent management strategies focus on five primary areas (Lockwood, 2006): a) attracting talent, b) selecting, c) engaging, d) developing and e) retaining talented employees. Thus, the trend in the business arena in the recent past has urged companies to focus more and more on acquisition, development, engagement and retaining of the best talent in the company (Snell, Bohlander, & Vohra, 2012). Among these, the strategies for attracting and acquiring superior talent seem to be of the highest importance. This is because the companies could develop, engage or retain talent if and only if it is capable of acquiring such talent in the first place. A seven percent increment in the average expenditure on talent acquisition in the United States in 2014 clearly depicts the fact that, companies are actually concerned over the issue (Erickson, 2015).

As a result of the increased competition to attract the right talent, many of the large companies strive to become ‘an employer of choice’ such that they attract the best talent

without much competition (Branham, 2005). Building an employer brand has been considered as one of the strategies that facilitates and increases the pace of the process of becoming 'an employer of choice'. Engaging in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities is a common and a very strong tool used by many companies in creating an employer brand. CSR activities showcase the companies involved in them as responsible corporate citizens in the community and thus it increases their Corporate Social Performance (CSP): a measurement of one's CSR involvement (Ghosh, 2015).

Creating a reputation of a responsible citizen has become important for a company, as the new generations (Generation Z in particular) who are seeking for employment opportunities find working for environmentally and ethically responsible companies more appealing (Zukin & Szeltner, 2012). The new generations or the millennial seem to become more and more sensitive and conscious towards things beyond salary and employee benefits. Therefore, employers are compelled to engage in activities that improve their relationships with the stakeholders. CSP activities have been identified as one of the key areas that the companies would focus in this regard (Greening & Turban, 1996; 2000). This is especially applicable in companies where the majority is knowledge workers. The attention of the prospective and current employees towards CSP is evident from the considerably large amount of money allocated from the company budgets annually for different such activities. For an instance, Financial Times states that US and UK companies in the Fortune Global 500 spend \$15.2 billion a year on corporate social responsibility activities (Smith, 2014).

However, while there has been many recent research discussing both of these timely topics of talent attraction (Lockwood, 2006; Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Zhang & Bright, 2012; Snell, Bohlander, & Vohra, 2012; Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013; Boutla, 2014) and CSP (Greening & Turban, 1996; 2000; Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008; Kim & Scullion, 2011; Weinreb, 2012; Ghosh, 2015), research that focuses on the impact of the latter (*i.e.* CSP) on the former (*i.e.* talent attraction) seems very limited. Moreover, many research has emphasized the need for more context specific research in both the areas (Kim & Scullion, 2011; Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013; Beamond, Farndale, & Hartel, 2016). There is increasing recognition among organizations around the globe that a 'one-size fits all' approach to CSR or TM in operations around the world is ineffective in responding to the business drivers of socially responsible behavior (Ward, et al., 2007).

It has also been seen that countries in emerging economies, where a large pool of talent is available, are of the key concern of large companies who are waiting to be geographically diversified. The literature also states that many companies are focusing on CSR in developing countries as they represent the most rapidly expanding economies, and hence the most lucrative growth markets for business (Visser, 2012). However, the research attention on the discussed areas has mostly been limited to only a few large countries such as the USA, UK, India, China and Latin America.

Sri Lanka, being an Asian country with educated people seeking employment opportunities, declares a 92% literacy rate; higher than anywhere else in Asia (Lockhart, 2015). Therefore, carrying out a research related to the talent attraction in the Sri Lankan context seemed relevant and timely. As a country comprising of immense talent, many Multi-National Companies (MNCs) have already spread their wings into Sri Lanka. There are many other probable MNCs whom would be willing to establish a subsidiary in the country as well.

More importantly, brain drain in Sri-Lanka has been identified as a critical issue within the past years. Brain drain refers to the talent in the country leaving out seeking better prospects. In other words, it refers to the local talent being attracted by foreign countries which have built strong reputations. A recent study conducted by the Institute of Policy (IPS) shows that while the stock of Sri-Lankan migrant workforce increased by 195,000 in 2006 and 2007, the domestic labor force shrunk by 110,000 during the same period. It further shows that in 2007, the stock of Sri-Lankan workers abroad amounted to about 1.6 million which is 22% of the domestic workforce (Daniel, 2009). While there can be many causes for these high rates of brain drain in Sri-Lanka, failure of local companies to attract talent can be critical. Therefore, understanding strategies to improve organizational capacity to attract talent in an emerging economy like Sri-Lanka is a timely and significant topic.

Against this backdrop, this paper attempts to understand *the role of Corporate Social Performance on talent attraction in the Sri Lankan context*.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: First it identifies different factors influencing talent attraction, dimensions of CSP and the level of impact CSP has had on talent attraction in other contexts. Second a conceptual framework is presented drawing from the literature. This is followed by recommendations for future research. The paper ends suggesting an experimental design which could be used in these future empirical studies.

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION

Drawing from human resource management (HRM), talent management in particular, and Corporate Social Responsibility literature, the following section develops the foundation for conceptualization.

Talent

People have become more important in today's organizations than ever before (Snell, Bohlander, & Vohra, 2012). Different terms related to the human component found in literature such as "Human resources", "Human capital", "Intellectual assets" etc. are all linked back to the concept of 'talent' in an organization. They all infer that people have capabilities that drive organizational performance and that they make the difference in how an organization performs (Snell, Bohlander, & Vohra, 2012). The literature suggests "competing through people" as a key theme for human resources management in organizations.

However, not all human resources are considered 'talent.' Talent necessarily refers to high performing and high potential human resources (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). The literature in general identifies talent as a valuable, rare, and hard-to-imitate resource due to the tacit knowledge in people, their unique skills and other attributes such as loyalty. Barney (1995) supporting this view claims that "human resources include all the experience, knowledge, judgment, risk taking propensity, and wisdom of individuals associated with a firm". He further states that companies, through their people, gain skills and abilities over time and develop a culture, social networks, and an organizational/management structure. These developed attributes are said to be managing those skills and abilities and therefore are hard for competitors to duplicate.

A statement made by Jack Welch, the former chairman and CEO of General Electric (from 1981 to 2001), supports above views in the literature and claims that, "an organization's ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly, is the ultimate competitive business advantage" (Schweyer, 2004; Snell, Bohlander, & Vohra, 2012, p.17). These abilities of an organization would largely depend on the quality and the amount of talent owned by the organization. Therefore, talent in an organization is largely related to its competitive advantage.

However, since human capital/talent is intangible, elusive and is not owned by the organization but the employees, right management of these resources is of vital importance to the success of the organization. Therefore, while talent must be viewed as the most indispensable ingredient for success, success also depends on how the talent has been managed.

Talent Management

The literature states that “successful companies in the 21st century will be those who do the best jobs of capturing, storing and leveraging what their employees know” (Schweyer, 2004; Snell, Bohlander, & Vohra, 2012, p. 17). This further confirms the fact that having access to talent does not provide organizational benefits unless talent is appropriately managed. Talent management therefore has become an important component of human resource management

Increasing significance of talent management has drawn a lot of scholarly attention towards it. However, little consistency in defining talent management has hindered the progress of research in this area. For instance, some scholars (e.g. Heinen & O’Neill, 2004; Fegley, 2006) define talent management as a collection of typical human resource department practices, functions, activities or specialist areas such as recruiting, selection, development, and career and succession. Talent management in this context is not different from HRM.

Talent management has also been defined as a set of processes designed to ensure an adequate flow of employees into jobs throughout the organization (Kesler, 2002; Schweyer, 2004). Another school of thoughts refers to talent management as seeking, hiring, and differentially rewarding talented individuals regardless of their specific role or, in some cases, the organization's specific needs (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). This view of talent management is consistent with the architectural view of human resource management (Lepak & Snell, 2002) which suggests differentiated human resource approach for individuals based on the uniqueness and value delivered. Therefore, this paper defines talent management as seeking, hiring and differently rewarding high performing individuals.

Despite scholarly attention, studies that explicitly investigate how the choice of HR practices is tied to talent management strategy are limited (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). The existing literature primarily focuses on the extent to which practices have varied among industries. Although such studies might serve the purpose of “re-branding” HR practices to keep them

seemingly novel and fresh, make little contribution to advance one's understanding of the strategic and effective "management of talent" (Lewis & Heckman, 2006).

Thunnissen, Boselie, and Fruytier (2013) suggest a three-phased process to managing talent namely, (a) recruitment, staffing and succession planning, (b) training and development and (c) retention management. Accordingly, talent acquisition is the foundation of talent management. Only if an organization can attract the talent, can they train and develop, engage and retain talent. *Talent Acquisition Factbook, 2015* states that in 2014, U.S. companies experienced an increase to nearly \$4,000 cost per hire in 2014. Interestingly, high-impact talent acquisition functions have 40 percent lower new-hire turnover and are able to fill vacancies 20 percent faster than companies with more tactical recruiting functions (Erickson, 2015).

A recent Benchmarking and Analytics Research conducted Deloitte focuses on a High-Impact Talent Acquisition (HITA) study to establish an Acquisition Maturity Model. This suggests that high-impact talent acquisition improves both overall business and talent acquisition performance outcomes. High-performing talent functions are identified to be often more agile and are two times more effective at "building a seat at the table (Erickson, 2014)." This justifies that high attention is paid by many leading firms towards adopting high-impact talent acquisition functions.

These findings emphasize that modern-day the organizations recognize spending money strategically on recruitment, employment branding, sourcing and the entire candidate experience as critically important (Anon., 2015). It is seen that companies around the world have started giving high priority and attention to talent acquisition and attraction strategies. However, since majority of these studies has been conducted in US or UK contexts, if these factors hold true for other countries and contexts needs further investigation.

Corporate Social Performance (CSP)

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to the obligations of business firms towards the society beyond their economic obligations to shareholders (Dudovskiy, 2013). According to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, CSR is the "continuing commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families, as well as of the local community and society at large". While it has been used interchangeably in some cases with CSR, the concept of CSP has been identified as a method introduced to evaluate how well

organizations are meeting their corporate social responsibilities. In other words, while CSR is the responsibility that the organizations have towards their stakeholders; CSP is the way it handles these responsibilities in action (Boutilier, n.d.). CSP looks into how the company would be engaged in different types of CSR activities in real life in a way it could be measured.

Wood (1991) defines CSP as “a business organization's configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programs, and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm's societal relationships”. Accordingly, CSP is not something that is implicitly "desirable" for firms "to have," or is linked to particular unspoken values, but is a construct for evaluating business outputs that must be used in combination with explicit values about “appropriate business-society relationships.”

CSR is substantially related to corporate reputation with external stakeholders such as customers, investors, bankers, suppliers and competitors and building a positive image among stakeholders (Ghosh, 2015). CSR therefore can assist creating competitive advantage by creating greater willingness to do business with the company and buy its products (Kim & Scullion, 2011; Ghosh, 2015).

CSR initiatives reveal the values of a company and thus can be a part of its “employee value proposition” (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008). Furthermore, the literature suggests that cultivating a reputation as a socially responsible company can be an important lever in talent management and retention (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008; Kim & Scullion, 2011).

The literature refers to CSR initiatives as creating a “reputation shield.” This can help companies secure competitiveness where employees are seen as the primary intangible asset of the business. Understanding of CSR and its relationship with Global TM is vital for managing local employees, and particularly so in relation to recruitment, retention and motivation in both international and local business (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008; Kim & Scullion, 2011). For an instance, when global companies that have operations in locations where the local population and media have negative or even hostile feelings toward the company, CSR is identified as a successful defender.

CSP and Talent Management

As highlighted above, organizations increasingly compete on the basis of their employee talents and capabilities, and thus engaged in a war for talent. Although workers seemed to be in plentiful supply following the recession of 2001, that began changing as the economy recovered (Snell, Bohlander, & Vohra, 2012). As the baby boomers begin retiring, the demand for labor is expected to grow by between 9-22 percent annually, far outstripping the supply. Increased competition for talent means that ‘attraction of talent’ has gained new importance for managers and hence is worth studying. Figure 1 depicts that the share of employers reporting difficulty filling jobs has been increasing globally.

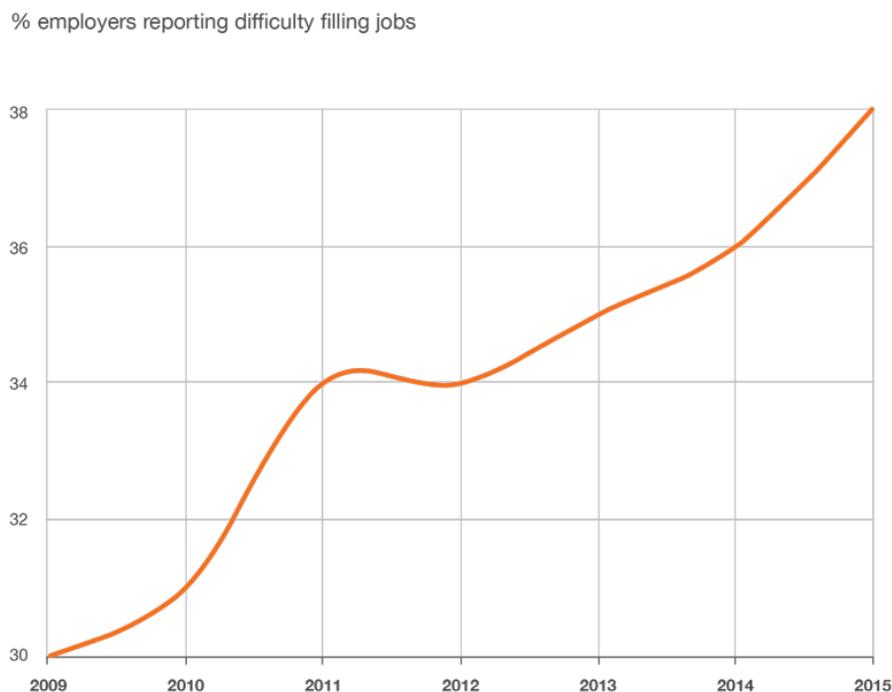


Figure 1 - Difficulty of filling jobs globally (Sinclair, 2016)

Many of the leading and visionary firms have promoted their CSP as a way to attract a large number of quality employees (Greening & Turban, 2000). For example, firms such as IBM, Google, and Microsoft are publicizing information such as their responsiveness to the community, natural and work environments, their diverse workforce, and the quality of their products and services, in their recruitment advertisements to attract a larger number of prospective job applicants.

The research suggests that firms receiving higher CSP ratings are perceived as having better reputations and are more attractive employers (Greening & Turban, 1996). Furthermore, the

literature suggests that employees in firms with a strong CSP have positive self-concept and therefore prospective candidates are attracted to firms with positive CSP compared to, negative counterpart (Greening & Turban, 2000).

More recent research suggests that regardless of the age groups, work around sustainability and making a positive impact at work, or “impact jobs” are becoming career priorities for a majority (61-70 percent) of employees in the USA (Zukin & Szeltner, 2012). The majority across all generations have agreed that they have a personal responsibility to make things better for society, rather than leaving it to others. Furthermore, the “impact” jobs have a direct correlation with overall job satisfaction. Workers who are able to make a social and environmental impact on the job are more satisfied by a margin of 2:1. Interestingly, the millennials (age 21-33) are found to greatly care about impact careers. In fact, around 59 percent of the millennials desire (find it essential or very important) a job that can make a difference compared to about 50 percent of their older cohorts (Weinreb, 2012).

In the study, among both graduate and undergraduate students, 50 percent identified working for a company that prioritizes CSR as essential or very important, while 65 percent of the participants stated that “the potential to contribute to society” and “a job that will make the world a better place” as very important to them (Zukin & Szeltner, 2012).

It is also found that ‘the sense of responsibility’ is one of the top three in a list of traits essential for business while 70 percent of those who are working in non-governmental large companies have highlighted the need for a company to have a sense of responsibility in order for it to succeed (Zukin & Szeltner, 2012). Despite the limited empirical attention to non-western developing countries such as Sri-Lanka, the literature supports a definitive link between an organization’s CSP and its ability to attract, engage and retain talent (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008; Ghosh, 2015).

Based on the foregoing discussion, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 1a: CSP of an organization positively relates to its ability for talent attraction

Factors influencing the link between CSP and talent attraction

While recent literature emphasizes the importance of CSP in attracting or acquiring talent, it also highlights the need for understanding the contextual and environmental differences that

can have on the said relationship. For an instance, literature suggests that the meaning of the term ‘Corporate Social Responsibility’ may vary in Europe or Asia compared to the Anglo-American context in which the said relationships are established (Kim & Scullion, 2011). Similarly, the recent literature suggests that there are differences in perceptions related to TM among different parts of the world. Therefore, the need to identify and investigate more detailed, country-level and context-specific factors related to TM is highlighted in the literature (Beaumont, Farndale, & Hartel, 2016).

Impact of individual characteristics on the relationship between CSP and talent attraction: It was earlier discussed that the generation the respondent belongs to is likely to have an impact on the relationship between CSP and TM where millennials show a strong positive relationship compared to older cohorts (Weinreb, 2012). However, the relationship has not been tested in developing country context such as Sri Lanka.

The literature suggests that the relationship between CSP and talent attraction can be influenced by demographic characteristics of the prospective candidate such as the age, level of education and the work experience (Judge & Bretz, 1992; Greening & Turban, 2000; Meijer & Schuyt, 2005; Hafsi & Turgut, 2013). For instance, with age, education and experience, the extrinsic expectations of a job would decrease and the prospective employees would seek more intrinsic components such as their ability or opportunity to be a part of a worthy course (e.g. CSP), when they are considering new placements. This argument is also backed by the Maslow’s (1954) theory of the hierarchy of needs.

Similarly, it is argued that gender can be an influencing factor as females are recognized to be more concerned on CSP (Greening & Turban, 2000; Meijer & Schuyt, 2005). It is also argued that those who have more value to the environment would have more attraction towards CSP (Greening & Turban, 2000). Therefore, we propose age, work experience, level of education, gender and value to the environment as moderate variables related to individual differences.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the following hypothesis is advanced:

Hypothesis 1b: Individual differences moderate the relationship between CSP and talent attraction

The impact of the level of development of a country on the relationship between CSP and talent attraction: The literature further highlights that the interest and investment in CSR activities is significantly higher in the developed countries compared to the developing counterpart (Visser, 2012; Smith, 2014; Erickson, 2015). This can be due to CSR in the developed world, with a relatively mature institutional system and efficient market mechanism, found to be more visible than CSR in the developing world. CSR–CFP relationship (*i. e. the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Financial Performance*) is also found to be stronger for firms from advanced economies than for firms from developing economies (Wang, et al., 2015). Therefore, we argue that the level of development of a country will positively moderate the relationship between CSP and talent attraction such that the more developed a country is, the stronger the relationship between CSP and attraction.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the following hypothesis is advanced:

Hypothesis 1c: The level of development of a country positively moderates the relationship between CSP and talent attraction

Impact of national culture of a country on the relationship between CSP and talent attraction: Furthermore, aspects of the national culture such as individualism or collectivism of the people in a country is largely influencing their beliefs and values that mold their decisions, perceptions and the behaviour they expect from businesses (Ringov & Zollo, 2007; Beamond, Farndale, & Hartel, 2016). This specially applies to MNCs where high levels of cultural-specificity require correspondingly high investments in understanding and tailoring decisions and actions to match each local context. In other words, organizations are required to understand the diverse cultural contexts in different host countries and adapt and adjust their strategies to best suit the people’s perceptions and expectations in that country.

Individualism refers to the cultural belief and corresponding social pattern where tasks are prioritized over relationships and it is accepted that individuals should take responsibility primarily for their own interests and those of their immediate family only (Ringov & Zollo, 2007). Collectivism refers the exact opposite of this definition and is related to the cultural belief and corresponding social pattern where relationships being prioritized over tasks. CSP is viewed to be more important in collective cultures than in individualistic cultures (Ringov & Zollo, 2007; Gomez-Mejia & Werner, 2008). According to the Hofstede cultural

dimensions model, Sri Lanka is declared to have a collective culture (Hofstede, 2001). Thus, the relationship between CSP and TM may have a difference than that of a country with a more individualistic culture such as the USA.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the following hypothesis is advanced:

Hypothesis 1d: The relationship between CSP and talent attraction is stronger in collective cultures than in individualistic cultures

The impact of the employment condition of a country on the relationship between CSP and talent attraction: Similarly, we argue that the employment/unemployment situation of a country (OECD, 2013) may have an impact on the ability of a company to attract talent. The higher the employment levels, the higher the possibility of employees or potential employees to be concerned about CSP compared to lower employment levels. The literature claims that CSR conceptions, tools, and methodologies originating in developed countries do not have the same impact in developing countries where pressing issues such as high unemployment and income inequality persist (Visser, 2012). Therefore, we propose that the employment condition positively moderates the relationship between CSP and talent attraction.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the following hypothesis is advanced:

Hypothesis 1e: The employment condition of a country positively moderates the relationship between CSP and talent attraction

Measuring Corporate Social Performance

Academic research has measured CSP using survey questionnaires, content analyses of annual reports, expert evaluations, and regulatory compliance data (Zahra, et al., 1993; Chen & Delmas, 2010). More recently, several for-profit organizations have taken up the task of measuring CSP (e.g. KLD, Sustainable Asset Management Group: SAM). For an instance, SAM gathers CSP information such as board structure, ability to manage risk, and environmental reporting system (Chen & Delmas, 2010).

Up until now, the KLD database has been the most commonly used database for assessing CSP (Greening & Turban, 1996; 2000; Backhaus, et al., 2002; Chen & Delmas, 2010). KLD is a profound database developed by Kinder, Lydenberg, Domini and Company which

provides detailed descriptions of certain dimensions of CSP providing a holistic approach. The literature states that KLD rates firms on nine dimensions of Corporate Social Performance, five of which are typically used for research. These five dimensions are: community relations, treatment of women and minorities, employee relations, treatment of the environment, and quality of services and products (Greening & Turban, 1996; 2000). Therefore, CSP of the organization can be characterized and measured through these five dimensions described in KLD database.

The following manipulations (presented in Table 1) are adopted from Greening and Turban (1996; 2000) and are based on the *exact* reason codes listed on the KLD database to ensure the construct validity of the measures and to increase the generalizability of the results:

Table 1: Descriptions of CSP dimensions

<i>1 CSP Dimension</i>	<i>2 Reason codes/descriptions</i>
3 <i>Employee relations:</i>	4 “The description for high employee relations stated that the company has good relations with its union and encourages worker ownership through gain-sharing plans, employee stock ownership, and extensive participation in management decision making. The description for low employee relations stated that the company has poor relations with its union, provides only a minimal level of benefits to its employees, has a substantially underfunded pension plan, and that employees feel little sense of ownership in the company in part because there are no gain-sharing or stock ownership plans and the company does not encourage employee participation in management decision making (Greening & Turban, 2000).”
<i>The environment:</i>	“The description for high CSP stated that the firm is concerned about the environment; maintains its property, plants, and equipment with above-

	average environmental performance; and minimizes the use of toxic chemicals in production to make it a leader in the industry. The description for low CSP stated that the firm shows little concern for the environment, recently paid significant fines because of damage to the environment, is a top emitter of toxic chemicals in its industry, and the emissions play a substantial role in the formation of acid rain (Greening & Turban, 2000).”
<i>Product quality:</i>	“The description for high CSP stated that the company has a reputation for high-quality products and services and for exceptional inventiveness in new product development. The description for low CSP stated that the company was facing several major lawsuits and regulatory actions alleging that one of the company’s products caused life-threatening injuries and that the company is involved in disputes with regulatory agencies as a result of questionable marketing and production practices (Greening & Turban, 2000).”
<i>Treatment of women and minorities:</i>	“The description for high CSP stated that the firm has received national recognition from groups advocating fair hiring policies for its progress in promoting women and minorities and that the company has a long record of supporting women- and minority-owned businesses. The description for low CSP stated that the firm was facing several lawsuits relating to its unfair hiring practices and lack of affirmative action programs and that the firm had few women or minorities, with no senior executive women or minorities (Greening & Turban, 2000).”
<i>Community relations:</i>	“The description for high CSP stated that the company is actively involved in local communities, has consistently given more than 5% of pretax earnings to various charities, and encourages its employees to participate as volunteers for local charities. The description for low CSP stated that the company is involved in disputes with community leaders in several areas in

	which its sites are located and that, in general, many community leaders do not see this company as a good corporate citizen (Greening & Turban, 2000).”
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Furthermore, the evidence suggests that type of work, compensation, and promotion opportunities as well as the size and the profitability of the organization are important to applicants (Judge & Bretz, 1992; Zuckin & Szeltner, 2012; Dineen & Allen, 2016). These variables can be eliminated from the framework by describing them positively in the manipulations such that the relationship between CSP and talent attracts becomes clear.

Measuring talent attraction

There are no standard means of measuring talent attraction stated in the literature. Highhouse, and others (2003) in their study have examined general attractiveness, intentions to pursue, and prestige as the three components of organizational attraction stating that those have received the most attention in research on organization choice. They have used five items in each component making the design complex. However, Greening and Turban (2000) have adopted a similar yet simpler means where talent attraction is organized and measured through (a) the job pursuit intention of the prospective candidates, (b) their probability of attempting an interview with the company, and (c) their probability of accepting a job offer at the company.

Job pursuit intentions: job pursuit intention is measured with the same two 7-point Likert-type items: “I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company” and “I would be interested in pursuing a job application with this company.”

The coefficient alpha for this two-item scale has been 0.91 which indicates that instrument has high internal consistency.

Probability of attempting to interview: Participants indicated the probability they would attempt to interview with this firm, from 0 indicating no probability to 100 indicating a 100% probability.

Probability of accepting a job offer: Participants indicated the probability (from 0 to 100%) they would accept a job offer with this firm.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 2 suggests that the CSP of a company has a direct impact on the talent attraction of the company.

It further suggests that the impact of CSP on the talent attraction will be influenced by the level of economic development and the employment situation of the country, both of which are proposed to positively moderate the relationship between CSP and the talent attraction. Advancing existing understanding of the relationship between CSP and talent acquisition, our framework suggests that the national culture, defining if the people are individualistic or collectivistic, too will have a moderating impact on the relationship between CSP and talent attraction as CSP is proposed to be more valuable to collectivistic people over those who are individualistic.

The literature suggests that the relationship between CSP and talent attraction can be influenced by demographic characteristics of the prospective candidate such as the age and the work experience (Hafsi & Turgut, 2013). Therefore, we propose age, gender, work experience and level of education as control variables. It is also proposed that talent attraction towards CSP in an organization is influenced by a candidate's value to the environment. To assess the extent to which candidates value the environment, we propose add three more values to Rokeach's 18 Terminal Values namely: clean environment, health, and tradition in order to compute a value for the said variable (Simmons, Binney, & Dodd, 1992; Greening & Turban, 2000; Williams, 2016).

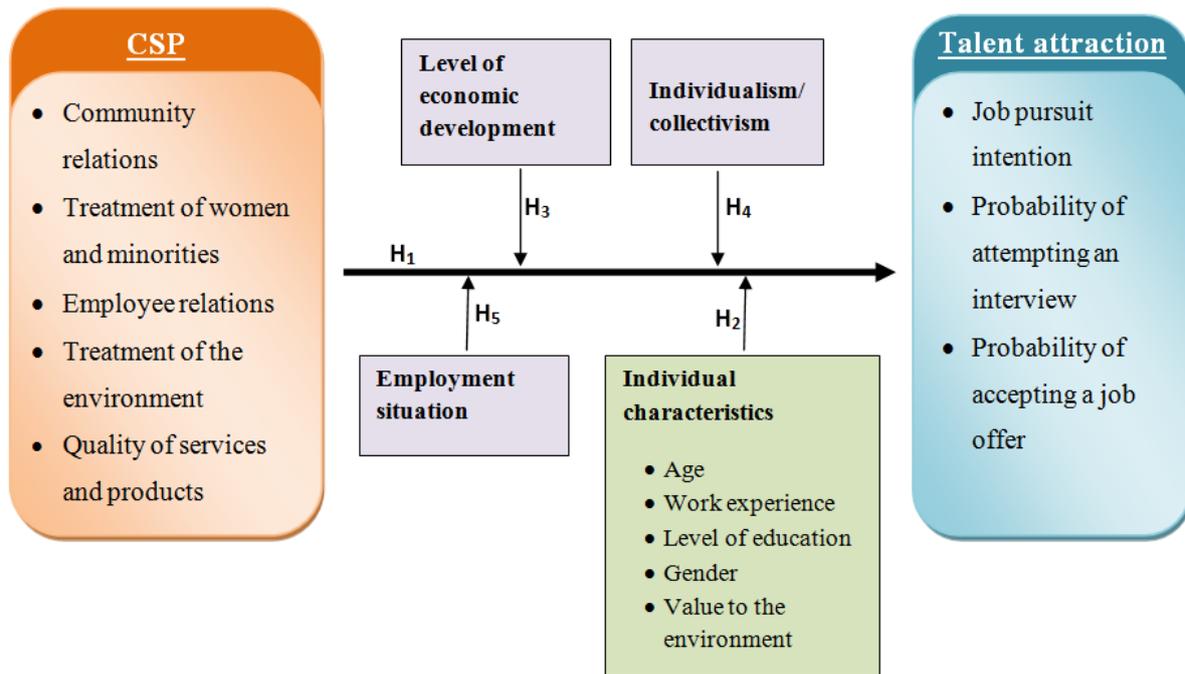


Figure 2: The Proposed Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE

This section draws attention in to the key methodological challenges in the CSP and talent acquisition research and thereby provides direction for minimizing such issues in future research.

Research Design

The literature on talent attraction has primarily focused on quantitative surveys method (e.g. Zukin & Szeltner, 2012; Erickson, 2015). Therefore, it only provides a generic understanding of the relationship between CSP and talent attraction. In addition, the findings would be very subjective as the respondent would mostly answer with one familiar company in mind. The researcher would not know about the characteristics of this company or what dimensions of CSP made the biggest impact or if there are relationships among the given dimensions. These issues persist when data about CSP is obtained from company websites as well (e.g. Ghosh, 2015).

However, Greening and Turban (1996; 2000) adopt an experimental approach which has a $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$ between-subjects factorial design. They suggest two levels for each dimension of CSP depicted in Figure 2 and therefore to develop 32 separate descriptions

(high and low levels of each of the five variables: $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 = 32$) combining all the scenarios. Study participants are given one of the 32 scenarios randomly to get their feedback on each dimension of CSP. Such an experimental design seems more appropriate since it will provide a detailed understanding of the impact of each dimension of CSP on talent attraction. This method would eliminate the aforementioned issues since there will be predetermined characteristics for each company or scenario. It will clear any ambiguity and will allow the researcher to determine possible interactions among the CSP dimensions as well. A similar experimental design is recommended to adopt in future empirical studies of conceptual finding of this paper.

Using a within-subject factorial design would have given a less subjective picture of the responses as individual differences in subjects' overall levels of performance are controlled. However, due to carryover effects, boredom and fatigue reported to result in such experiments, rather than having the same respondent read and respond to all 32 scenarios, it is proposed to opt for between-subjects factorial design.

Data Collection: Future research may test the proposed conceptual framework in different contexts. Furthermore, the current literature has predominantly focused on the data collected from undergraduates or recent graduates. The underlying assumption therefore is that all graduates are/likely to be high performing individuals. It would therefore be methodologically appropriate to include currently high performing individuals. We propose inclusion of candidates from highly competitive graduate programs such as Master of Business administration (MBAs) in future research to address aforementioned limitation.

CONCLUSION

The paper identifies and discusses different factors influencing talent attraction, the dimensions of CSP and the level of impact CSP has had on talent attraction in other contexts. It delivers a conceptual framework which assists in understanding the role of CSP on talent attraction in different contexts. The conceptual framework considers five dimensions of CSP which are proposed to have a direct impact on talent attraction. It also takes into consideration three moderating variables namely: individualism/collectivism, economic development and employment situation of a country which are proposed to moderate the said relationship positively. It also suggests that the individual characteristics of the candidates could have an influence on the said relationship.

The proposed conceptual framework will guide for future empirical studies in developing a deeper understanding of the relationship between CSP and talent attraction in different contexts. The paper also proposes an experimental study design which can be used to address limitations in commonly used survey designs. Overall, this paper expects to bring meaningful insights to both theory and practice by helping to bridge the knowledge gap persisting due to lack of studies on the discussed areas, especially in developing countries such as Sri-Lanka.

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