

“Justice on Brain Drain”

Does talent migration get affected by perceived justice and perceived organizational politics?

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Abstract

Brain drain remains a critical challenge for knowledge-driven industries in developing countries, particularly where the outflow of skilled professionals undermines organizational and national competitiveness. Although brain drain constitutes a substantial component of international migration, scholarly attention to its antecedents, especially organizational justice, remains limited. This concept paper examines brain drain as a key problem and proposes perceived justice as a key antecedent influencing the migration intentions of skilled professionals. Drawing on existing literature, the paper develops a five-dimensional justice framework encompassing distributive, procedural, interactional, informational, and emotional justice, and theorizes their effects on talent migration intentions. Furthermore, the paper argues that perceived organizational politics may moderate the relationship between perceived justice perceptions and migration decision-making. By integrating perceived justice and perceived organizational politics into the talent migration discourse, this study offers a novel conceptual perspective that extends traditional economic explanations of brain drain. The proposed framework provides valuable theoretical insights and practical implications for managers and policymakers seeking to retain skilled employees, particularly in volatile and competitive work environments.

Key Words: Brain Drain, Human Resources, Perceived Justice, Perceived Politics

Introduction

Human resources (HR) are widely recognized as the most precious asset of any organization, as they drive performance, innovation, and long-term sustainability (Shrotryia & Dhanda, 2019). In this context, talent retention is considered the heart of organizational success (Khalid & Nawab, 2018, as cited in Iddagoda & Opatha, 2020). However, talent retention/brain drain is a major issue that haunts knowledge-driven industries in developing countries

(Wanniarachchi, 2020). According to academic literature, "brain drain" refers to the international transfer of human capital resources. It primarily applies to the migration of highly educated individuals from developing to developed countries (Docquier, 2014). The loss of talent due to brain drain is a pertinent issue in developing countries. It has increased over the past decade (Chacko, 2007; Gungor & Tansell, 2007; Clemens, 2009) (Wanniarachchi, 2018). Although brain drain represents a substantial component of total international human migration, the literature on the antecedents of brain drain is still emerging, and consideration of justice as an antecedent of brain drain remains largely unexplored. Sri Lanka experienced a 3.4% increase in professional migrants from 2011 to 2019 (Central Bank, 2020).

Popular migration theories such as neoclassical economic theory (Sjaastad, 1962; Todaro, 1969), dual labour market theory (Piore, 1979), and world-systems theory (Wallerstein, 1974) primarily view macro-level economic structures, especially income and employment opportunities, as key migration determinants. These popular migration theories do not adequately consider the concept of justice. It lies at the root of every aspect of human life and is the first virtue of all social institutions (Rawls, 1971), influencing the migration intentions of skilled professionals. Justice often comes in the form of social justice in the existing literature, and in literature, factors have been empirically verified as distributive justice, emotional justice, procedural justice, transactional justice, and informational justice (Salmani et al., 2011). Organizational justice is defined as employees' perceptions of fairness within an organization (Greenberg & Baron, 2007) as cited in Iddagoda & Opatha (2020), encompassing dimensions such as distributive justice and interactional justice. Distributive justice refers to the extent to which employees perceive the outcomes they receive as fair. This perspective suggests that employees evaluate fairness by comparing their own inputs and outcomes with those of others. Inputs include factors such as effort, skills, knowledge, time, and both physical and mental contributions, while outcomes refer to rewards such as salary, pay increases, and recognition. When employees perceive that rewards are distributed fairly, their motivation increases, which ultimately enhances their level of employee engagement (Iddagoda & Opatha, 2020).

However, the existing literature (Maslyn & Fedor, 1998; Wijesuriya, 2011) suggests that there could be other organizational-level factors, such as organizational politics, that different elements and stimuli could potentially affect the occurrence or the rate of the talent flow and each could be studied independently. As per the organizational politics theory (Ferris et al., 1989), one possible response by the employee who views the work environment as politically violated will be to withdraw from the organization. Accordingly, one can assume that skilled professionals may treat migration as a possible withdrawal behaviour to avoid engaging in a politically driven organizational culture. Sensitivity to justice, especially organizational justice, is one such factor. Surprisingly, no empirical research has yet been done in Sri Lanka or any other country that has comprehensively attempted to explore the relationship between justice and brain drain. This study is to examine this possible relationship. Thus, this paper concentrates on perceived justice as the primary factor influencing the brain drain or intention to migrate skilled professionals from Sri Lanka.

Statement of Problem

The migration of highly skilled individuals is an issue inextricably connected with globalization that facilitates opening geographical and cultural boundaries (Artuc et al., 2015; Beine et al., 2008), as cited in Latukha et al., (2021). The number of international migrants worldwide reached 272 million in 2019, and the proportion of international migrants residing in high-income countries increased from 43% to 60% between 1960 and 2010 (United Nations, 2019). Sri Lanka experienced a 3.4% increase in professional migrants from 2011 to 2019 (Central Bank, 2020). There will be a mix of motives for any migration case, and any combination may influence the decision about whether to leave and where to go. Talented people will make a positive (usually substantial) contribution to economic welfare, regardless of whether they have much infrastructure to work with. Obviously, in countries where physical input for research and science from outside is absent or very scarce, exercising their intellectual capability as the principal resource involved is likely to be an exceptional value (Kannappan, 1968).

Different factors and stimuli could potentially affect the occurrence or the rate of talent flow, and each could be studied independently. One factor is sensitivity to justice, especially justice in organizational context (Salmani et al., 2011). The study of justice or fairness has been a philosophical interest that extends back to Plato and Socrates. Although justice has been humanity's aspiration since ancient times, discussion of its nature as a fundamental question in political philosophy remains (Ezzat, 2003) as cited in Latukha et al., (2021). According to Rawls (1971), justice lies at the root of every aspect of human life and is the first virtue of all social institutions. Although Maslow (1954, p. 22) does not mention justice in his pyramid of human needs, justice is implicit in terms he does include, like fairness, honesty, and balance (Salmani et al., 2011). Indeed, justice can be seen as the focal point of all other moral and political virtues (McLeish, 1993, p. 403), suggesting criteria to judge whether human needs are met in complex social institutions (Folger and Cropanzano, 1998). Salmani et al. (2011) proposed that justice influences migration intention. Sensitivity to justice can be seen at all levels of society. The existing literature (Maslyn & Fedor, 1998; Wijesuriya, 2011), as cited in Wanniarachchi (2018), suggests that in addition to these factors, there could be other organizational-level factors, such as organizational politics, that could influence the intention to migrate. Accordingly, one can assume that skilled professionals may treat migration as a possible withdrawal behaviour to avoid engaging in a politically driven organizational culture. Also, skilled workers are among the most struggling people in society in terms of carrying the burden of technical or managerial responsibilities, making them more sensitive to injustice. Hence, the relationship between brain drain and perceived justice is significant. Therefore, the researcher examines:

Does talent migration intention get affected by perceived justice and perceived organizational politics?

Purpose of the Study

Grounded in Neoclassical Economic Theory (Sjaastad, 1962; Todaro, 1969), Dual Labour Market Theory (Piore, 1979), and World-Systems Theory (Wallerstein, 1974), which primarily emphasize macro-level economic structures influencing migration, this study extends the migration discourse by incorporating organizational-level factors. Specifically, it examines how perceived justice and perceived organizational politics influence the migration intentions of skilled professionals. As the antecedents and consequences of brain drain continue to gain scholarly attention, this study seeks to provide new insights into the sensitivity of skilled workers to fairness and political dynamics within organizations and how these perceptions shape their decisions to migrate. By doing so, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of talent migration that integrates economic, organizational, and psychological perspectives.

Method

The overall purpose of this paper is to examine the role of perceived justice and perceived organizational politics in influencing talent migration intentions and to identify key theoretical gaps for future empirical investigation. A desk research approach was adopted to review and synthesize existing literature related to brain drain, organizational justice, and organizational politics. Academic databases such as Sage, Taylor & Francis Online, SpringerLink, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library, and Emerald were utilized to retrieve relevant peer-reviewed journal articles. In addition, several scholarly books and reports were examined to strengthen the theoretical foundation. The study reviewed a wide range of published work spanning from 1960 to 2024, ensuring both classical theories and contemporary perspectives were incorporated to develop the conceptual framework and research hypotheses.

Review of Literature

Brain Drain / Talent Migration Intention

Over the last five decades, developing countries have lost many skilled professionals, and the number of migrants has increased in developed countries (Ngoma & Ismail, 2013). A skill shortage has emerged as a significant problem in many countries worldwide. In the labour market, skill mismatches and skill shortages have reached a worrying level. Globally, skill shortage is severe in five occupations: ICT, health (doctors, nurses, and midwives), science and technology, engineering and mathematics, and education (Ullah et al., 2019). According to literature, the word "brain" of the term "brain drain" refers to any talent, know-how, competency, or attribute that is a potential asset. Brain drain is identical to human capital flight, where highly educated and skilled experts move heavily in one direction (Ngoma & Ismail, 2013). The loss of considerable human capital resources without compensation results from the endless unidirectional flow of skilled labour from less developed to developed countries (Salt, 1997).

Most existing literature recognizes that the decision to migrate results from the collaboration between several acknowledged factors, both from home and abroad. These factors are often categorized as "push factors" that drive migrants to leave their countries of origin and "pull

factors" that attract skilled migrants to their preferred destinations. The push factors that encourage professionals to migrate and their order of importance vary from one developing country to another. Most of these factors are often closely related to the characteristics of underdevelopment. Among the identified "push" factors are the poor condition of services, low wages or salary, misplacement of talent, human rights abuse, underemployment, political instability, lack of research facilities, inefficient institutions, disregard for local talent, discrimination in appointment and promotion, corruption, limited access to quality education, and desire for a better urban life (World Migration, 2003). The "pull" factors encourage migrants to be virtually absent in developing countries but readily available and obtainable in destination countries. Some of the most important pull factors are better economic prospects, higher salary and income, better career expectations, better research facilities, a modern educational system and better opportunities for higher qualifications, respect for foreign training, intellectual freedom, better working condition, better employment opportunities, relative political stability, presence of a rich scientific and cultural tradition, availability of experienced and supporting staff, technological gaps, and allocation of substantial fund for research (Kainth, 2009).

Perceived Justice

The study of justice has been a philosophical interest that extends back to Plato and Socrates. But although justice has been humanity's aspiration since ancient times, discussion of its nature, as a fundamental question in political philosophy, still endures (Ezzat, 2003) as cited in Latukha et al., (2021). According to Rawls (1971), justice lies at the root of every aspect of human life and is the main virtue of all social institutions. And although Maslow (1954, p. 22) does not mention justice in his pyramid of human needs, justice is implicit in terms he does include, like fairness, honesty, and balance. Indeed, justice can be seen as the focal point of all other moral and political virtues (McLeish, 1993, p. 403), suggesting criteria to judge whether human needs are met in complex social institutions (Folger and Cropanzano, 1998).

In social justice literature, four prominent models can be identified: the first is a one-factor model, in which each constructing item indicates one significant justice factor (Greenberg, 1990; Lind and Tyler, 1988). The second is a two-factor model, with distributive justice as one factor and procedural justice as another: procedural justice contains informational and interpersonal justice. This two-factor model is the most used conceptualization in the justice literature (Rego and Cunha, 2006).

The third is a three-factor model, exploiting distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. The three-factor model is currently the second-most used conceptualization (Greenberg & Lind, 2000; Byrne & Cropanzano, 2000; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Gilliland & Chan, 2001), as cited in Salmani et al., (2011). Finally, Colquitt (2001) found that a four-factor confirmatory model best fits empirical reality (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001). According to Rego and Cunha (2011), another factor called "emotional justice" could be added to the existing four-factor model and constructs a new five-factor (Distributive Justice, Procedural Justice, Emotional Justice, Transactional Justice, Informational Justice) model. Since all five factors are correlated and dependent, the model with more elements is more accurate.

Consequently, the five-factor model is the most accurate in explaining justice and the brain drain relationship (Ngoma & Ismail, 2013).

Dimensions of Perceived Justice

Perceived Distributive Justice

Distributive justice is a concern for the perceived fairness in the outcomes or rewards received by employees in exchange for their efforts, such as salary, promotions, and recognition. This dimension is based on the equity theory, which states that equity occurs when the ratio of inputs (work, time, skills) to outcomes (salary or wage, incentives, and benefits) is perceived to be equal across employees.

Employee-level outcomes of such equity perceptions include organizational commitment and satisfaction when rewards are viewed as merit-based, effort-based, or need-based (Adams, 1965). Conversely, perceived inequities-whether under-or overpayment-may lead to negative emotions or responses, such as lack of motivation, turnover intentions, and poor organizational commitment (Greenberg, 1990).

Perceived Procedural Justice

Procedural Justice refers to the perceived fairness of the processes and procedures by which decisions are made within the organization. In contrast to distributive justice, which pertains to the fairness of the outcome, procedures become the arena in which fair treatment determines whether decision-making processes are transparent, unbiased, and consistent. Procedural justice was introduced by Thibaut and Walker in 1975, who held that individuals cared about the fairness of the decision-making procedures as these processes had direct implications on their hopes for subsequent outcomes.

Procedural justice is very important in shaping trust in management and commitment towards organizational goals and the acceptance of decisions that might not have been favourable to employees (Tyler & Lind, 1992). Conversely, students or employees considered the necessary procedures to arrive at decisions to be fair and are more likely to be satisfied with the outcomes, no matter how unfavourable (Leventhal, 1980).

Perceived Transactional Justice

Transactional Justice refers to the relatively fair way the employee is treated during decision-making. It concerns the quality of communication by employees with superior officials. There are generally two smaller dimensions within interactional justice: Interpersonal Justice, which insists that respect and decorum be reflected by decision-makers, and, on the other hand, Informational Justice, which insists that explanations regarding the decisions be made transparent and correct (Bies & Moag, 1986). Cropanzano et al. (2002) reveal that transactional justice refers to the quality of the interpersonal interaction between individuals. Cropanzano et al. (2002) also point out that interactional justice occurs when the leader, as the decision-maker, respects the interpersonal dignity of the employee. Positive perceptions of fairness and justice about the organization enhance employee engagement (Maslach & Leiter, 2008; Saks, 2006) as cited in Iddagoda & Opatha (2020).

Perceived Emotional Justice

Perceived emotional justice refers to employees' perceptions that their emotions, dignity, and psychological well-being are acknowledged and respected within organizational processes and interpersonal interactions. Although traditional justice research has focused on distributive, procedural, and interactional justice (Greenberg, 1987; Colquitt, 2001), recent studies emphasize the emotional dimension of fairness, arguing that employees assess justice not only based on outcomes and procedures but also on how organizational actions affect their emotional states (Rupp et al., 2014). Emotional justice highlights empathy, compassion, and sensitivity demonstrated by supervisors and organizations, particularly during stressful situations such as organizational change, performance evaluations, or conflict resolution (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001).

The absence of perceived emotional justice has been associated with emotional exhaustion, psychological distress, and withdrawal behaviours among employees (Barsky & Kaplan, 2007). For skilled professionals, especially those in knowledge-intensive industries, emotional neglect or disrespect may signal a lack of organizational support and long-term career concern. Such perceptions can weaken affective commitment and increase intentions to exit the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Perceived Informational Justice

Perceived informational justice refers to the extent to which employees believe that organizational authorities provide adequate, honest, timely, and reasonable explanations regarding decisions and procedures (Greenberg, 1993). As a sub-dimension of interactional justice, informational justice focuses on the quality and transparency of communication, particularly during decision-making processes that affect employees' careers, such as promotions, performance appraisals, restructuring, or compensation decisions (Colquitt et al., 2001). High levels of informational justice help employees understand the rationale behind decisions, thereby reducing ambiguity and enhancing perceptions of overall fairness, even when outcomes are unfavourable.

Conversely, inadequate or misleading information can foster mistrust, uncertainty, and perceptions of manipulation (Shaw, Wild, & Colquitt, 2003). For skilled professionals, access to accurate and transparent information is essential for career planning and evaluating future opportunities. Research suggests that perceived informational injustice is linked to lower organizational trust, reduced job satisfaction, and increased turnover intentions (Kernan & Hanges, 2002). In the context of talent migration, poor informational justice may encourage professionals to seek employment in environments perceived to offer greater transparency and governance, thus positioning informational justice as a significant organizational antecedent of brain drain intentions.

Perceptions of Organizational Politics (POP)

Organizational politics refers to informal, unofficial, and sometimes behind-the-scenes efforts to sell ideas, influence an organization, upsurge power, or achieve other targeted objectives (Brandon & Seldman, 2004). Organizational behaviour is often political (Wanniarachchi, 2017).

The theory of perceptions of organizational politics proposed by Ferris et al. (1989) has been widely used to understand this phenomenon in previous studies. Organizational, environmental, and personal factors influence other perceptions of politics.

According to the Perception of Politics theory, several potential outcomes may occur when employees perceive their organization as political. These include organizational withdrawal, job involvement, anxiety, and dissatisfaction. Ferris et al. (1989) suggested at least three potential responses to political perceptions, namely, to withdraw from the organization, to remain a member of the organization but not become involved in politics, and to remain a member of the organization and become involved in politics (Wanniarachchi, 2018). One potential response of an employee who views the work environment as political is to withdraw from the organization. Frost (2003), as cited in Ferris & Kacmar (1992), has also suggested arguing that employees may leave to avoid engaging in an organization's political games. Withdrawal can take two forms, absenteeism or turnover (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). As such, employees with the luxury of external mobility will decide to leave the organization.

Further, this plays a critical moderating role in shaping the relationship between perceived justice and talent migration intention. While high levels of perceived justice generally reduce employees' intentions to leave, this relationship may be weakened in environments characterized by high political behaviour. According to Ferris et al. (1989), employees who perceive their workplace as politically driven tend to distrust formal systems and interpret organizational actions as self-serving rather than fair. As a result, even when distributive, procedural, or interactional justice is present, employees may question the authenticity of these practices, thereby diminishing their positive effects.

Empirical evidence suggests that POP is associated with negative outcomes such as stress, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intentions (Kacmar & Ferris, 1991; Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006). In such contexts, skilled professionals who typically possess higher external mobility may perceive migration as a more viable withdrawal response to escape politically charged environments. Therefore, POP strengthens the likelihood that perceived injustice translates into migration intentions and concurrently weakens the retention effect of perceived justice. This moderating effect highlights that organizational fairness alone is insufficient; the broader political climate must also be managed to effectively retain talent and mitigate brain drain.

Theoretical Background

Equity Theory

Equity Theory, or Theory of Organizational Justice, proposed by Adams (1963), states that people assess the fairness of a given situation by comparing themselves with those who calculate a similar ratio, for themselves and others. In a workplace scenario, inputs, for example, might be the skills, effort, and time spent by a worker, while outputs stand for the rewards one receives in terms of money, appreciation, opportunities, etc. In this respect, according to the theory, inequity, when an individual feels that he is earning less or more than others, results in a negative feeling, which can trigger several behaviours as the individual attempts to restore equity, like changing the job or, in this case, moving to a different country (Okafor & Chimereze, 2020; Mozolova, 2024).

The Theory of Social Exchange

Social Exchange Theory (SET) was first proposed by Peter Blau in 1964 and is predicated on the idea that relationships between an individual and an organization are characterized by an exchange of goods or services. According to SET, employees who are treated well and fairly by the organization on an overall basis tend to feel the obligation to repay the treatment in terms of loyalty, commitment, or performance. In contrast, if employees are treated unfairly for instance, owing to perceived unfairness in the distribution of resources or in people’s treatment, then they tend to distance themselves from the organization (Proquest, 2021; Springer, 2020).

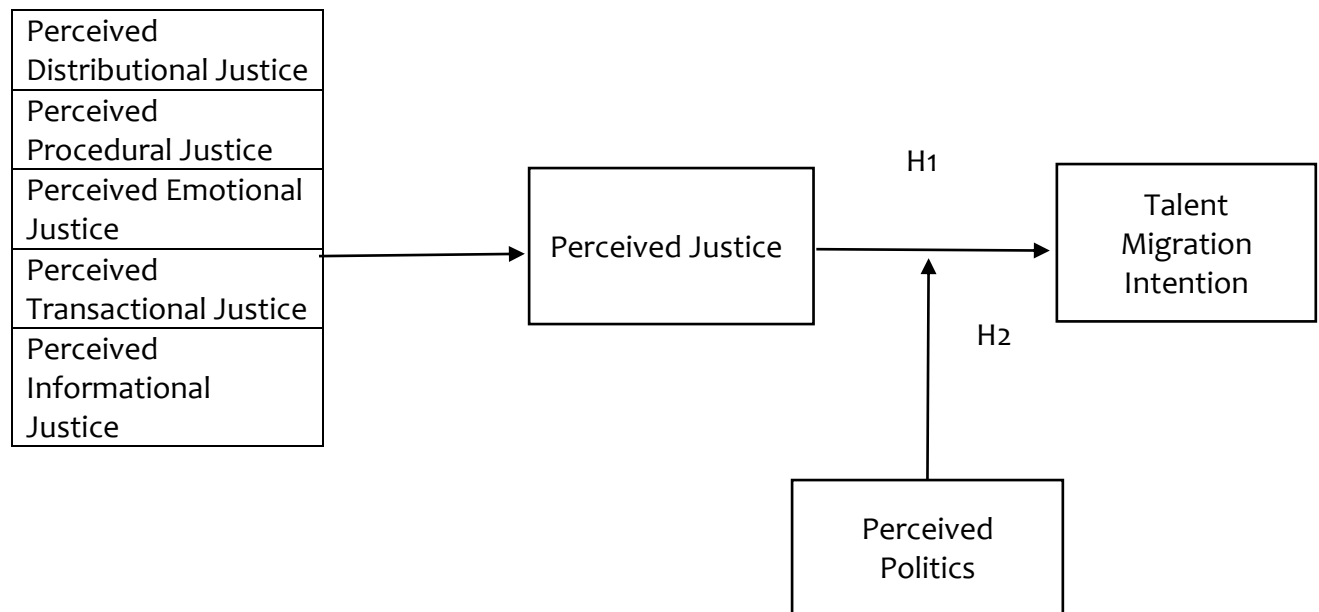
Push-Pull Theory

The push-pull theory has been extensively used to study migration and is essential in explaining the migration of nurses. In this regard, it is observed that there are some conditions as push factors unfavorably conditions that make people leave their home country and such conditions as opportunities in the country they want to move to as pull factors (Sgro et al., 2021). Push factors for healthcare employees' immigration include low salary, an unappealing working environment, and few career growth prospects back home. On the other hand, better pay, good job security, and better promotion prospects overseas are the pull factors (Okafor & Chimereze, 2020).

Development of Hypotheses

A conceptual framework given in Figure 1 was developed, and based on it, two hypotheses were formulated.

Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Framework



Colquitt (2001) found that a four-factor confirmatory model, which includes perceived distributive justice, perceived procedural justice, perceived transactional justice, and perceived informational justice, provides the best fit with empirical reality (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001). According to recent research, Rego and Cunha (2006) suggest another factor called "emotional justice," which could be added to the existing four-factor model and construct a new five-factor model. Since all five factors are correlated, isomorphic, and dependent, the model with more factors is more accurate. Therefore, the five-factor model is the most accurate one in explaining the perceived justice and brain drain relationship (Salmani et al., 2011).

Before 1975, the study of justice was primarily concerned with distributive justice. Much of this research was derived from initial work conducted by Adams (1965), who used a social exchange theory framework to evaluate fairness. According to Adams, people are concerned not about the absolute level of their outcomes but whether those outcomes are fair. Adams suggests that one way to determine whether an outcome is fair is to calculate the ratio of one's contributions or "inputs" (e.g., education, intelligence, and experience) to his/her outcome and then compare that ratio with that of others.

For many years, social science has ignored an important part of man, which is his "emotion." In recent decades, the concept of emotion has found its way into social science discussions. Emotional justice refers to equally expressing and caring about people's emotions and is less regarded in justice literature (Salmani et al., 2011). With the publication of their book summarizing disputant reactions to legal procedures, Thibaut & Walker (1975) introduced the study of process to the justice literature as procedural justice. Cohen-cherish and Spector (Colquitt et al., 2001) virtually equated process control with procedural justice. Bies and Moag (1986) introduced the most recent advance in the literature of justice by emphasizing the importance of the quality of interpersonal treatment people receive when procedures are deployed. They referred to these aspects of justice as interactional justice. More recently, interactional justice has come to be seen as consisting of two specific types of interpersonal treatment (Greenberg, 1990, 1993). The first is interpersonal justice, which reflects the degree to which people are treated with politeness, dignity, and respect by authorities or third parties who oversee executing procedures or determining outcomes. The second is informational justice. Informational justice focuses on the explanations provided to people that convey why procedures are used in a certain way or why outcomes are distributed in a certain fashion. Interpersonal justice primarily alters reactions to decision outcomes because sympathy can make people feel better about an unfavorable outcome (decision) (Salmani et al., 2011). Informational justice acts primarily to alter reactions to procedures, in which explanations provide the information required to evaluate structural aspects of the process. In this paper, the researcher proposes perceived justice as a reason for influencing the migration intention. Sensitivity to justice can be seen at all levels of society. Nevertheless, elites are the most struggling people in society in terms of carrying the burden of technical and/or managerial responsibilities, making them more sensitive to injustice.

Hence, the relationship between brain drain and perceived justice is likely to be significant. Elites who feel more injustice are more likely to migrate to a better country. For instance, an irrational difference in income-to-life cost ratio between home and host country is a main factor influencing brain drain (Watanabe, 1969). Or when an individual feels injustice or corruption in his/her organization's administration, he/she is more likely to get dissatisfied and migrate. When elites do not perceive justice in their interactions with governors, colleagues, or friends, they are likely to migrate if possible. In addition, given the increasing importance of information and communication, it is likely that elites will seek to migrate to countries with more freedom of information and communication. Based on this discussion, two hypotheses are proposed. In H1, the influence of the general construct of justice (the sum of the five factors) on talent migration intention is examined, and then the moderating effect of perceived organizational politics on the perceived justice and talent migration intention is tested in H2.

H1: Perceived justice is negatively related to talent migration intention.

H2: Perceived organizational politics moderates significantly the negative relationship between perceived justice and talent migration intention.

Limitations

Talent migration intention is an area of research that has received much attention, and a few limitations are identified within the study. The main one is related to the generalizability of the study's findings to other industries. The current study does focus on the IT industry. Thus, the findings would be unique within the related context. Furthermore, the study considers skilled professionals, on which the generalizability would be low for unskilled employees. In addition, due to time and resource constraints, the study is centered on 400 respondents, which would generate better results if a larger sample existed.

Another limitation would be that the personal biases and views of the respondents will not be adequately captured, as the data will be captured only through the structured set of questions. In addition, this will be a cross-sectional study. Thus, the changes within the period could not be captured. Talent migration intention is involved in a changing environment. The study will not capture the dynamic changes within the working environment in managing the connections. The study scope is limited to the individual-level factors influencing talent migration intention.

Concluding Remarks

This proposed conceptual model positions perceived justice across distributive, procedural, interactional, informational, and emotional dimensions as a pivotal antecedent to Talent migration intention among skilled information technology (IT) professionals, with perceived organizational politics moderating by weakening justice's retention effect of justice amid political climates. By highlighting fairness and transparency as strategic levers against brain drain, it addresses a critical gap in developing-economy human resource management (HRM) literature, where no prior work links these constructs locally. In the case of boundary

conditions and scope, it is delimited to individual-level factors in Sri Lanka's IT sector. Generalizability to other industries or unskilled workers remains untested, with surveys potentially missing qualitative nuances. In the case of theoretical and practical implications, the framework urges organizations and policymakers to prioritize perceived justice while curbing perceived organizational politics through transparent HRM systems, fostering public-private partnerships to retain talent. It shifts the brain drain discourse from macroeconomic fixes to micro-level justice perceptions. The proposed study will have directions for future research. Empirical testing via structural equation modelling, mixed methods for lived experiences, and extensions (e.g., mediators like support, cross-country comparisons) would refine and validate the model in dynamic contexts.

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