

THE EFFECT OF INSTITUTIONAL INJUSTICE ON INTENTION TO MIGRATION AMONG EMPLOYEES IN SRI LANKA WITH THE MODERATION EFFECT OF JOB ENTRENCHMENT

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Abstract

Sri Lanka, in the past years, has been providing fertile soil to aspirational emigrants, as millions of Sri Lankans have left the country in the last several decades either permanently or temporarily in search of superior job opportunities. The current study examines how organizational injustice impacts migration intentions and how employment entrenchment moderates this impact. With this in mind, the current research adds to the literature in terms of employment entrenchment as a moderating factor and, therefore, links organizational injustice to migratory aspirations in the special setting of a developing, non-Western country like Sri Lanka. The study carried out in this research surveyed skilled employees currently in employment and systematic random sampling technique was used to collect the data. Out of 298 distributed questionnaires, 225 responses were collected. Thus, findings showcased that organizational injustice positively influences migration intentions, while employment entrenchment moderates the relationship between organizational injustice and migration intentions. Thus, the study gives a clear insight for top level management to facilitate and identify the desired behavior of employees in order to mitigate the labor turnover.

Keywords: Institutional Injustice, Organizational Justice, Procedural Justice, Interactional Justice, Distributive Justice, Employee Migration Intention, Employee Turnover Intentions, Job Entrenchment

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1. Introduction

An educated population is a significant contributing highly to economic growth and prosperity, a preeminent foundational block in the competitive advantage of nations in international markets. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development suggests that investing in the development of knowledge and its distribution will be essential to the creation of high-paying employment and the increase of productivity (Soyer et al. 2020; Goczek, 2021). Knowledge-based economies rely on skilled human resources who build capacity, enhance innovation, social capital, improve social cohesion, facilitate good governance and provide the leadership for making strategically important decisions for the whole country (Asian Development Bank 2007). To develop economically, Sri Lanka has taken every effort to provide the right education and training to the skilled young people with its free education by strengthening the framework into a knowledge-based economy because, in its belief, due to sustained pressure to become more productive and competitive, a skill level of its workforce should be improved (Alawattagam, 2020; Dundar et al., 2017)

This framework pinpoints the areas of training that are very important in developing the employability of graduates (Aljumah, 2023). Over the last two decades, the government had embarked on several educational reforms that would raise the standard of graduate output (National Education Commission, Sri Lanka, 2022). Some major reforms include: "Modernized Competency-Based Curriculum, introduced by the National Institute of Education in 2007, that pursues activity-based learning promoting constructive knowledge and developing higher-order academic skills" (Thero, 2024). Other initiatives include the "21st Century Learning Framework," to better prepare students for today's workforce challenges,

According to estimates by the World Bank, in 2023, South Asia accounted for the largest number of emigrants in the world; approximately 41.2 million people from the region were residing abroad (Khan et al., 2018). For Sri Lanka, emigrants make up 8.8 percent of its population, a relatively higher share compared with India's 1.3 percent. According to the World Bank (2022), South Asia headed the global list of emigrants in 2023, with an estimated 41.2 million people from the region residing abroad. Emigrants constituted 8.8% of the population in the Sri Lankan context, far more than 1.3% recorded for India. More importantly, 35% of Sri Lankan emigrants in OECD countries reported tertiary education in 2011. World Bank Group (2016). By recent estimates, migrations from Sri Lanka went almost tenfold in the last two decades, with an estimated 1.7 million Sri Lankans working abroad and about 200,000 individuals going out every year. For 2022, the net migration rate for Sri Lanka is 4.149 per 1,000 population, accounting for an estimated 200,000 citizens who have left the country amidst the current economic crisis of the Department of Immigration (Gunawardena & Nawaratne, 2017).

From this perspective, international migration from the poor to the rich countries, more commonly referred to as "brain drain, has become one of the controversial global issues currently. Brain drain is described as mobility of people to achieve improved living standards, improved remunerations, superior technology, new resources, and political stability across the globe (Kadel & Bhandari, 2019). It

represents the international transfer of human capital and typically involves the migration of highly educated individuals from developing nations to developed ones, particularly professionals such as engineers, doctors, and scientists (Docquier, 2014). It is important to note that the study by Joneja (2023) has been used to operationalize “brain drain” as migration intentions.

Problem Statement

The motivations behind skilled workers' migration have garnered attention, yet international literature remains scarce regarding the specific factors that heighten migration intentions (Anastasiou et al., 2020; Kvartiuk, 2020). Many factors that promote both temporary and permanent migration exist, and are often scrutinized under the push-pull model (Ren, 2024). According to this model, this pushes factors in the source country include weak economies, high unemployment, corruption, famine, and poverty while pulls in the receiving country promote workforce shortages and brain drain. Further, Docquier (2014) refer to economic instability, political repression, and lack of freedoms as drivers for emigration. Chimenya and Qi (2015) add to this list by referring to organizational factors such as unclear career prospects, low remuneration, high workloads, poor working conditions, and lack of training as drivers for migration from developing countries. While the push and pull model provides a basic framework, it does not explain individual-level motivations showing "why some skilled individuals migrate" and others do not. Sarwar (2019) examine this by identifying personal determinants such as long-term career prospects and advancement opportunities, which prove to be more influential than macro-level influences.

According to Nascia (2021), migration includes reasons such as insufficient research funding, poor facilities, and lack of career progression. Similarly, low pay and bad working conditions are considered factors that have pushed Romanian physicians to migrate abroad, supported by the opinions of Boncea (2014), while Research among Iranian health workers identify workplace challenges and discrimination as significant factors, Asadi et al., 2017. Strategies would include enhancing training opportunities and acknowledging the contributions of employees for retaining skilled personnel. These will be the significant push factors to influence brain drain due to the opportunities for career advancement and perceived organizational politics, as identified by Wanniarachchi et al. (2022) among IT professionals in Sri Lanka. The contribution of this study, therefore, illustrates a new perspective on organizations in understanding the dynamics of migration within a Sri Lankan context. The extant literature summarized causes of brain drain into main categories as push or pull factors but often failed to consider the impact of institutional injustice, which refers to perceived employees' fairness in their workplace (Kwon Choi et al., 2014). Organizations that foster a just environment tend to cultivate positive employee attitudes, hence enhancing retention (Kundu, 2017; Suifan et al., 2017). Thus, it has been shown that individuals who perceive organizational injustice are more likely to intend to emigrate (Salmani et al., 2011), which emphasizes the importance of the examination of organizational justice in developing countries where perceptions of injustice increase the intentions to migrate.

On the other hand, there is an increasing interest in knowing why some employees choose to stay amidst workplace injustice. This interest has led to the birth of the concept job entrenchment that incorporates all factors that influence an employee to stay in their job. According to Shah et al. (2020), JE refers to the fit between the job and personal life, connections with colleagues, and sacrifices associated with leaving. The literature shows that employees who perceive high levels of organizational support are highly entangled and less likely to react negatively to perceived unfairness (Jamshaid & Malik, 2018). Even though higher education has gained much accessibility in Sri Lanka, the country is still suffering from retaining its skilled lot. It reflects in the large jump in high-skilled migration that has gone up from 4.26% in 2017 to 9.54% as per Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau 2023. This obviously suggests several critical questions behind their intention to migrate, necessitating comprehensive research into their intention to migrate and factors moderating that intention. Organizational determinants, which shape such intentions, specifically the contribution of organizational justice, have received scant attention in current studies on skilled migration. In the context of Sri Lanka, research examining skilled migration's organizational determinants. More precisely, institutional injustice continues to be extremely limited. The literature to date underscores that few studies have considered the role of workplace factors, e.g., perceived injustice or lack of organizational support, in influencing professionals' migration decisions (Wanniarachchi et al., 2022; Wijesinghe & Jayawardene, 2021). This lack of empirical investigation underscores a fundamental knowledge gap regarding the impact of internal institutional dynamics on migration intentions. Thus, Logendran, Yogeswaran, and Vijayarajah (2024) found organizational injustice perceptions to have a strong positive effect on migration intentions of Sri Lanka's skilled workforce. Their study also identified job embeddedness or job entrenchment as a moderating factor; employees with higher levels of embeddedness had a lower relationship between institutional injustice and migration intention. This finding is in line with general organizational behavior and employee retention theories, demonstrating that institutional conditions within organizations can have a powerful influence on migratory outcomes (Greenberg, 1987; Hom et al., 2012). Continued studies are therefore warranted to unpack the relationship between institutional injustice and migration, particularly in the Sri Lankan context where studies of this nature are underdeveloped.

This study, therefore, tries to expand the understanding of such dynamics within the context of a developing nation like Sri Lanka and contribute valuable insights into an under-researched area.

Research Questions

RQ 1: what is the impact of institutional injustice on intention to migrate among skilled employees in Sri Lanka?

RQ 2: what extent job entrenchment influences the relationship between organizational injustice and migration intentions?

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Institutional justice encompasses employees' assessments of fairness in the distribution of outcomes, the processes used to allocate these outcomes, and the interpersonal relationships within the workplace (Chen,2013). It reflects how fairly employees believe they are rewarded and treated for their contributions (Kwon Choi et al., 2014) and comprises four dimensions: distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice. Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of outcomes such as salaries, promotions, and benefits, which are seen as fair when they align with employees' expectations based on their input (Wang et al., 2010). Procedural justice focuses on the perceived fairness of the decision-making processes that determine how these outcomes are allocated (Wang et al., 2010). Meanwhile, interactional justice, introduced by Park et al. (2016), emphasizes the importance of treating employees with honesty, respect, and dignity during decision-making and resource allocation. Together, these dimensions shape employees' overall perception of justice in their workplace, significantly influencing their intentions regarding migration. Informational justice relates to the quantity, authenticity, and clarity of information concerning how outcomes are distributed and the procedures used to determine those outcomes (Bibri,2021; Webster,2022). In today's world, concerns about justice and fairness in the workplace resonate with nearly everyone, regardless of the organization's size or setting. Numerous studies have shown that the practice of organizational justice significantly predicts employees' withdrawal behaviors in various organizational contexts (Eisenberger et al,2019; Mengstie, 2020; Zhou et al., 2020). These studies highlight the critical connection between organizational justice and employee attitudes, underscoring its role in fostering favorable attitudes and behaviors at work. While organizational justice creates a positive workplace climate that encourages desirable employee attitudes (Anitha,2014), perceived injustice can lead to negative emotions that adversely affect those attitudes (Kofi et al., 2016).

particularly in Sri Lanka. Theoretically, most of the research on migration has been macro-theory-driven, e.g., push-pull theory (Lee, 1966), considering economic, political, or environmental determinants and neglecting organizational-level psychological determinants, e.g., feelings of injustice (Docquier & Rapoport, 2012). Similarly, organizational justice theory (Greenberg, 1987) has a robust theory to forecast the response of employees towards being treated unjustly but never applied in migration studies, especially in less developed nations. As such, there is a theoretical gap for bridging organizational justice theory with employee migration behavior. Empirically, Sri Lankan emigration has been studied mainly in terms of external economic factors, brain drain, or in search of education (Perera & Perera, 2021; Wanniarachchi et al., 2022) with insufficient focus given to internal institutional or work-place level grievances like discrimination, lack of voice, or procedural unfairness, which could lead employees to pursue emigration. More importantly, however, the entrenchment or embeddedness moderating function that can buffer or augment such relationships has yet to be properly tested in Sri Lankan studies. Logendran, Yogeswaran, and Vijayarajah (2024) have only just begun to close the gap but strong empirical evidence across industries and types of employees is required. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to bridge

theoretical and empirical gaps by investigating the role of institutional injustice on migration intention and the extent to which work entrenchment moderates this relationship among Sri Lankan workers.

The social exchange theory provides a strong theoretical basis for this study's assumptions (Risius, & Spohrer, 2017), linking organizational justice to migration intentions. According to this theory, employee behaviors result from weighing the benefits and costs of exchange processes. Individuals are motivated to act when they believe the anticipated rewards will equal or exceed their contributions. Conversely, they may avoid engagement if their inputs exceed the outcomes and may explore alternative opportunities. Key aspects of social exchange theory include reciprocity, social networks, fairness, solidarity, and social cohesion (Cook, 2015). Employees who perceive fair treatment are more likely to reciprocate positively and feel a sense of obligation to contribute to their organization, leading to lower migration intentions and a preference for remaining with their current employer (Readdick, 2023; Ohana & Meyer, 2016). Research by Maslach and Leiter (2016) indicates that employees' perceptions of justice can significantly influence their commitment to their organization and their willingness to act in its best interests. Justifications and clear communication can alleviate feelings of unfairness and mitigate negative reactions among employees (Colquitt et al., 2013). This is supported by a study highlighting the significance of distributive and procedural fairness in understanding the susceptibility to brain drain among Ethiopian employees in higher education (Semela, 2010). From the perspective of social exchange theory, organizations that effectively address all aspects of organizational justice, leading employees to perceive their treatment as fair or equitable, may encourage them to reciprocate by choosing to remain with the organization (Alnajim, 2021). As a result, employees who perceive higher levels of justice are more inclined to stay and less likely to consider migration. In contrast, those who feel unjustly treated are more prone to leave.

Thus, based on social exchange theory, we propose that

H1: There is a significant impact of organizational injustice on migration intentions.

Job Entrenchment as a Moderator

Vosko. (2018) recently examined job entrenchment to shed light on why individuals choose to remain in their jobs. They refer to job entrenchment as a net or web that binds people to their jobs, and the more links a person has, the more "stuck" they feel the concept involves all those psychological and contextual forces that prompt an employee to stay and thus reflect an attachment inclination to the circumstance (Allen et al., 2016). Thus, a job entrenchment means how much an individual is involved in the social network or system in their organization or society as a whole, represented through the three dimensions links, fit, and sacrifice (William Lee et al., 2014). The stronger the personal or professional links of employees, the less likely they are to quit voluntarily (Porter, 2016). Job entrenchment has been shown to strongly predict important organizational criteria such as attendance, retention, and performance, accounting for substantial variance beyond more traditional factors such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment Burrows et al (2021) have

indicated that job entrenchment is influenced by both on-the-job factors, such as relationships with coworkers and fit of skills to the job, and off-the-job influences, such as personal and community commitments. The three core dimensions links, fit, and sacrifice together work to bind the employees with their organizations. In the words of Feng et al., (2023), "Fit" refers to the degree to which employees feel that their values, skills, and career goals are congruent with the culture and requirements of their workplace. "Links" are the formal and informal connections that employees have with their organization. The more links an employee has, the stronger the attachment. "Sacrifice" represents the material and psychological costs of leaving, and thus, the difficulty of the exit decision. It follows that the more cohesive and better-fitting an employee is, the less they will engage in withdrawal activities, such as thinking about quitting (Khalid,2021). This paper relies on the job entrenchment theory, which postulates that job entrenchment moderates the influence of organizational injustice on migration intention. With limited literature on this particular subject, there is a dire need for empirical evidence to prove how job entrenchment can cushion negative impacts on migration intentions because of perceived organizational injustice. High levels of perceived justice foster positive attitudes and emotional bonds with the organization, which decrease the intent to migrate. On the other hand, Ariff (2018) individuals who perceive organizational policies as unfair are more likely to look for opportunities elsewhere. Peacock (2023) points out that individuals attached to their organization are more influenced by procedural justice violations. According to indicates that job entrenchment acts as a shock absorber to negative organizational experiences of an employee and their intention to leave (Yang.,2021). Similarly, Armaly (2020) theorize that highly entrenched individuals are more likely to react negatively to procedural injustice relative to low embedded ones. On the other hand, Huang et al. (2021) support the notion that even when people feel highly dissatisfied, high levels of job entrenchment make one stick. Thus, drawing from these insights, we further hypothesize that job entrenchment moderates the influence of organizational injustice on migration intentions.

H2: Job entrenchment moderates the impact of organizational injustice on migration intentions.

3.Methodology

3.1. Conceptual Model of the Study

This study investigates the relationship between institutional injustice and employees' intentions to migrate, and the moderating role of job entrenchment in this relationship. Embedded in the positivist research philosophy, which espouses objectivity, measurability, and hypothesis testing (Saunders et al., 2019), the study adopts a deductive approach in the sense that it attempts to test theoretically derived expectations from prior research (Greenberg, 1987; Hom et al., 2012). Through a quantitative methodological choice, the research takes a survey strategy in garnering the data via a guided self-administered questionnaire, which was prepared and modified following an extensive literature review to ensure validity and relevance. Systematic random sampling was used as the sampling technique, which enabled

the choice of an unbiased and representative sample. The study used a cross-sectional time horizon, which provided measurements at one point in time, and this was deemed appropriate to test the hypothesized linkages between institutional injustice, job entrenchment, and migration intentions. While the longitudinal design would potentially provide insight into change across time, the cross-sectional design was both practical and in line with the immediate objectives of the study. The data collection through self-reported questionnaires also allowed participants to confidentially report their experiences and perceptions, which rendered the responses more dependable. Overall, the research design provides a solid and methodologically sound foundation for exploring the complex relationship between institutional injustice and migration intention in the Sri Lankan organizational context.

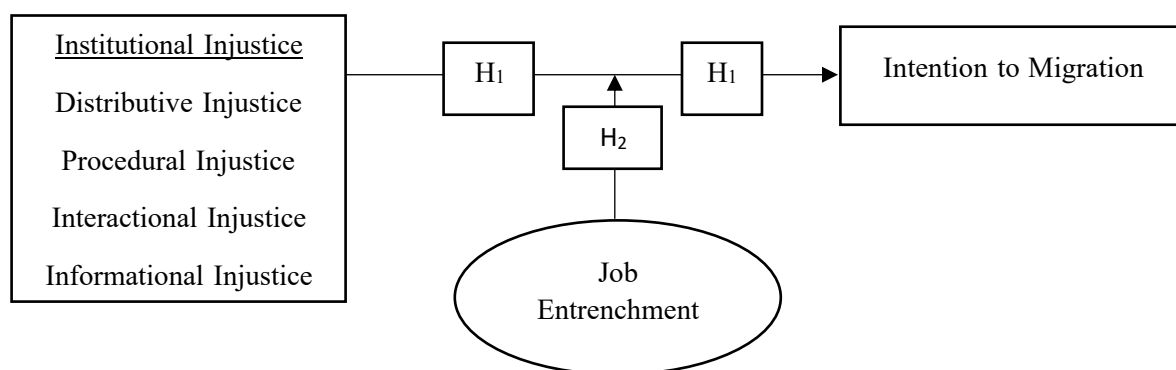


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the study

Source: Developed by the Author

The main questionnaire was comprised of 28 items, out of which 10 items for the migration intentions and 20 items for Organizational injustice. The independent research variables were distributional, procedural, interactional and informational justice while "Intention to migrate" is dependent variable. Brain drain was measured using the migration intention scale of Wanniarachchi et al. (2022), adopting 10 items from the original scale. The scale of Niehoff & Moorman (1993) was adapted for procedural and interactional justice, where all 6 items for procedural justice and 6 out of the 9 items concerning interactional justice were retained based on factor loadings. Distributive justice was assessed by a 3-item scale from Kim & Mauborgne (1996). Informational justice was assessed by using a 5-item scale adapted from Colquitt's (2001) work. Further, Job entrenchment was measured by a 5-item scale from Crossley et al. (2007). This study surveyed those people who are labeled skilled workforce and are currently working. Out of 298 questionnaires distributed, 225 responses were usable for the analysis, giving an effective response rate of 83%. In responding to the statements in the questionnaire, a 5-point Likert scale was used (1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree) to ensure consistency across scales

3.1.1 Operationalization

Operationalization refers to the systematic process of transforming abstract theoretical constructs into measurable variables that can be empirically tested. The following table illustrates the operationalization process by demonstrating how key constructs are translated into observable indicators

Table 1: Operationalization Table

Variable	Indicators (Items)	Measurement Scale	Source / Scale Adapted From
Intention to Migrate	1. I plan to seek employment outside the country. 2. I often think about migrating for better career opportunities. 3. I intend to look for jobs abroad within the next year. 4. I am actively preparing to migrate. 5. I discuss migration plans with colleagues/family. 6. I would leave my job if a foreign opportunity arises. 7. I believe migration is beneficial for my career. 8. I feel dissatisfied with local work options. 9. I would prefer to work abroad rather than locally. 10. I intend to submit migration-related applications soon.	5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree)	Wanniarachchi et al. (2022)
Distributive Justice	1. My rewards are appropriate for the work I do. 2. I receive fair pay compared to my coworkers. 3. The outcomes I receive are justified based on my contributions.	5-point Likert scale	Kim & Mauborgne (1996)
Procedural Justice	1. Procedures are consistently applied. 2. Decisions are made based on accurate information. 3. There is a process to correct inaccurate decisions. 4. Procedures are applied fairly to all employees.	5-point Likert scale	Niehoff & Moorman (1993)

	5. Employees have a chance to express their opinions before decisions are made. 6. The decision-making process is unbiased and ethical.		
Interactional Justice	1. My supervisor treats me with respect. 2. I am given adequate explanations for decisions. 3. I am treated with dignity by my managers. 4. My managers are polite and courteous. 5. Communication from management is honest. 6. I feel managers care about my feelings and concerns.	5-point Likert scale	Niehoff & Moorman (1993)
Informational Justice	1. I receive timely information about decisions. 2. Explanations regarding outcomes are honest. 3. Information is communicated clearly and thoroughly. 4. Management provides sufficient explanations. 5. The reasons for decisions are explained fully.	5-point Likert scale	Colquitt (2001)
Job Entrenchment	1. I feel stuck in my current job. 2. Leaving my job would cause too many problems. 3. I have invested too much in this job to quit now. 4. I am committed to staying because leaving would be costly. 5. It would be difficult to find a comparable job elsewhere.	5-point Likert scale	Crossley et al. (2007)

4. Results & discussion

Table 2: Sample profile of the Respondents.

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	132	58.7%
	Female	93	41.3%
Age Group	20–29 years	68	30.2%
	30–39 years	102	45.3%
	40–49 years	40	17.8%
	50 years and above	15	6.7%
Marital Status	Single	95	42.2%
	Married	130	57.8%
Educational Qualification	Diploma	35	15.6%
	Bachelor's Degree	124	55.1%
	Master's Degree	58	25.8%
	Professional Qualification (e.g., CIMA)	8	3.6%
Employment Sector	Private Sector	147	65.3%
	Public Sector	63	28.0%
	NGO	15	6.7%
Years of Work Experience	Less than 5 years	44	19.6%
	5–10 years	93	41.3%
	11–15 years	58	25.8%
	Over 15 years	30	13.3%
Intention to Migrate	Yes	142	63.1%
	No	83	36.9%

Source: Compiled by the Author

4.1 Test of Validity

Validity demonstrates the accuracy of the concepts and elements employed to gauge a variable. The fundamental component determining the quality of a test can be referred to as validity. Consequently, it is imperative and essential to evaluate validity prior to conducting subsequent analytical assessments

Table 3: Test of Validity

Variable	Chi-square Value	Significance (0.05 >)	KMO Value (0.5 <)	Composite Reliability (0.7 <)	AVE (0.5 <)	Discriminant Validity
Distributive Injustice	208.913	0.000	0.760	0.702	0.548	0.7502
Procedural Injustice	323.649	0.000	0.698	0.721	0.592	0.779
Interactional Injustice	287.353	0.000	0.716	0.890	0.729	0.863
Informational Injustice	268.413	0.000	0.770	0.712	0.558	0.751
Intention to Migrate	692.259	0.000	0.873	0.809	0.675	0.831
Job Entrenchment	341.659	0.000	0.728	0.704	0.602	0.785

Source: compiled by the Author

The sample met all the necessary requirements for the variables, with coefficients exceeding zero ($P < 0.05$). Validity was assessed through convergent validity, which was confirmed as the composite reliability (CR) values surpassed the average variance extracted (AVE), and the shared variance values remained lower than the AVE. Furthermore, discriminant validity was ensured by applying the Fornell-Larcker criterion, following the recommendation of Hair et al. (2014), which specifies that the square root of the AVE should exceed the correlation values between variables. The results of this discriminant validity analysis, as shown in the table above, confirm that the criteria were successfully met, reinforcing the robustness of the measurements.

4.2 Reliability test

Table 4: Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Comment
Distributive Injustice	0.812	Accepted.
Procedural Injustice	0.834	Accepted.
Interactional Injustice	0.871	Accepted.
Informational Injustice	0.845	Accepted.
Intention to Migrate	0.890	Accepted.
Job Entrenchment	0.822	Accepted.

Source: compiled by the Author

The reliability was ensured since the Cronbach Alpha (α) value of each and every variable was higher than 0.7. Thus, it fulfilled the need of having the internal consistency of the measurement

Correlation Analysis

Table 5: Correlation Analysis

Variable	Pearson correlation(N)	Distributive Injustice	Procedural Injustice	Interactional Injustice	Informational Injustice	Intention to Migrate	Job Entrenchment
Distributive Injustice	Pearson correlation	1.000	0.652*	0.539**	0.525**	0.478**	0.846**
Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	N	262	262	262	262	262	262
Procedural Injustice	Pearson Correlation	0.652**	1.000	0.550**	0.489**	0.505**	0.575**
Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	-	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	N	262	262	262	262	262	262
Interactional Injustice	Pearson Correlation	0.539**	0.550*	1.000	0.463**	0.512**	0.424**
Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	-	0.000	0.000	0.001
N	N	262	262	262	262	262	262
Informational Injustice	Pearson Correlation	0.525**	0.489*	0.463**	1.000	0.549**	0.433**
Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	0.000	0.000
N	N	262	262	262	262	262	262
Intention to Migrate	Pearson Correlation	0.478**	0.505*	0.512**	0.549**	1.000	0.407**
Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	0.000
N	N	262	262	262	262	262	262
Job Entrenchment	Pearson Correlation	0.846**	0.575*	0.424**	0.433**	0.407**	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-
N	N	262	262	262	262	262	262

Source: compiled by the Author

As shown in Table 5, all independent variables show a positive relationship with consumer purchasing behavior in the online retail fast fashion sector. Among these variables, familiarity exhibits the highest positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.790.

Table 6 : Multiple Regression Analysis for Organizational Injustice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.778	0.772	0.774	0.36750

Source: compiled by the Author

The R Square value of 0.772 indicates that around 77% of the variation in organizational injustice is accounted for by the independent variables, such as Distributive Injustice, Procedural Injustice, Interactional Injustice, and Informational Injustice.

Table 7: Anova Table

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	80.386	5	12.077	42.530	0.000
Residual	136.780	615	0.306		
Total	197.186	620			

Source: compiled by the Author

The above ANOVA Table (6) illustrates whether the tested model is significant and it illustrates the above model is significant since the alpha (α) value is less than 0.05

Table 8: Coefficients of the Multiple Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.046	.152		-6.481	.000
	Distributive Injustice	.274	.059	.270	2.957	.515
	Procedural Injustice	.352	.058	.350	2.613	.029
	Interactional Injustice	.469	.060	.437	4.486	.000
	Informational Injustice	.516	.050	.541	8.402	.067
	Job Entrenchment	.316	.050	.341	8.402	.000

Source: compiled by the Author

The above Table (8), Multiple regression results showing the relationship between organizational injustice dimensions of Distributive Injustice, Procedural Injustice, Interactional Injustice, Informational Injustice, and Job Entrenchment with organizational outcomes. The constant term of -1.046, with a t-value of -6.481 and a p-value of 0.000, gives a negative base value when all predictors are held constant. Having an unstandardized coefficient of 0.274, a t-value of 2.957, and a p-value of 0.515, distributive injustice relates positively but insignificantly with organizational outcomes. On the other hand, procedural injustice significantly influences organizational outcomes positively, having a coefficient of 0.352, a t-value of 2.613, and a p-value of 0.029.

The results also reveal that, with a β of 0.469, $t=4.486$, and a p-value of 0.000, interactional injustice has a strong positive statistically significant effect. Informational injustice is represented by a β of 0.516 with a t-value of 8.402 and a p-value of 0.067, hence marginally positive. On the other hand, with a β of 0.316, $t=8.402$, and a p-value of 0.000, job entrenchment turns out to show a highly statistically significant positive impact on organizational outcome. The analysis thus suggests that Procedural Injustice, Interactional Injustice, Informational Injustice, significantly impact organizational outcomes, while Distributive Injustice does not have a significant effect. To examine the moderating effect of Job Entrenchment on the relationship between Institutional Injustice and Migration Intention, a moderated regression analysis was conducted.

Table 9: Model summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.7948	.6540	.1538	264.6562	3.0000	417.0000	.0000

Source: compiled by the Author

To examine the moderating effect of Job Entrenchment on the relationship between Institutional Injustice and Migration Intention, a moderated regression analysis was conducted. An interaction term between Institutional Injustice and Job Entrenchment was computed and included in the regression model. The overall model was statistically significant ($F(3, 417) = 264.66, p < .001$), with an R^2 of 0.654, indicating that 65.4% of the variance in Migration Intention was explained by the predictors. The significance of the interaction term confirmed that Job Entrenchment significantly moderates the effect of Institutional Injustice on Migration Intention.

Table 10: coefficient Table e-WOM Model

	Coefficients	se	t	p	LL CI	UL CI
constant	.7652	.16	4.55	.00	.43	1.0
Inst.	.1205	.75	15	.00	.30	.91
Injustice	.5922	.06	2.15	.04	.01	.3
Job Entrenchment	-.424	.06	31	.19	.14	.24
Int_1		.07	7.62	.00	.43	.96
		.76	78	.00	.96	.74
		.02	-	.00	-	.47
		.58	.286	.49	.0580	.04
			1			.33

Source: Compiled by the Author

The regression test confirmed that both employment entrenchment and institutional injustice both significantly influence employees' migration intent. Furthermore, the significant negative interaction term ($\beta = -0.4240, p = .0049$) shows that job entrenchment acts as a moderator of the employment injustice - migration intent relationship. Specifically, higher job entrenchment weakens the effect of perceived institutional injustice on migratory intention, suggesting that entrenched workers will react less to perceived injustice by intending to migrate. This suggests that job entrenchment is a buffer, weakening the impact of injustice on migratory intention. Although the interaction term confidence interval (0.0580, 0.0433) is narrow, it fails to cross zero, confirming statistical significance. In general, institutional injustice and job entrenchment are good predictors of migration intention, while job

entrenchment moderates the effect of injustice to indicate that entrenched workers are less prone to respond to organizational injustice with migratory intentions.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study provide compelling evidence that job entrenchment plays a critical moderating role in the relationship between institutional injustice and employees' intention to migrate. The significant interaction term ($p = 0.004$) confirms that the effect of institutional injustice on migration intention is not uniform across all employees it is contingent upon the degree of their entrenchment in the organization. This supports the rejection of the null hypothesis and aligns with previous theoretical propositions that suggest employees with high job entrenchment may feel psychologically or economically bound to their current employment, thus dampening their migratory responses to perceived injustice. Delving into the specific dimensions of institutional injustice, the findings further reinforce the differential impacts of justice types on organizational outcomes. Interestingly, distributive injustice, typically related to fairness in resource allocation, was found to be statistically insignificant ($\beta = 0.274$, $t = 2.957$, $p = 0.515$). This result supports the argument made by Colquitt et al. (2001) that distributive justice, while important, often has a weaker influence on employee attitudes compared to procedural and interactional justice. It suggests that employees may be more tolerant of unequal outcomes if they perceive that the process leading to those outcomes is fair.

Procedural injustice, by contrast, showed a significant effect ($\beta = 0.352$, $t = 2.613$, $p = 0.029$), underlining the importance of transparent and unbiased decision-making processes in the workplace. This finding echoes the fairness theory proposed by Lind and Tyler (1988), which posits that individuals form perceptions of fairness more strongly based on the procedures used than on the outcomes themselves. Employees in this study appear to respond more negatively when they perceive that organizational procedures lack consistency, voice, or neutrality. Even more prominent was the influence of interactional injustice ($\beta = 0.469$, $t = 4.486$, $p = 0.000$), which had the strongest impact among all justice dimensions. This supports Bies and Moag's (1986) assertion that respectful and dignified interpersonal treatment is a key determinant of employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. In cultures where hierarchical relationships and interpersonal respect are highly valued as is the case in Sri Lanka interactional fairness may serve as a primary anchor in forming judgments about workplace justice. The finding regarding informational injustice ($\beta = 0.516$, $t = 8.402$, $p = 0.067$) is marginally significant, but still notable. It highlights that inadequate or misleading communication from organizational leaders may also influence migration intention, albeit to a lesser extent. This suggests that while communication matters, it may act more as a reinforcing factor than a standalone driver of dissatisfaction. Importantly, while job entrenchment moderates the effects of perceived injustice, this should not be interpreted as a long-term solution. Entrenched employees may remain in their

roles not because they are engaged or motivated, but because they feel unable to leave. This scenario can foster organizational complacency and a disengaged workforce. Thus, while job entrenchment can reduce turnover in the short term, relying on it without addressing root causes such as procedural and interactional injustice can lead to retention without commitment. These findings advocate for a more ethical and people-centered approach to retention strategies one that focuses on building fairness, inclusion, and trust, rather than on anchoring employees through obligation or constraint. Overall, the study enriches the theoretical understanding of how different justice perceptions shape migratory intentions and provides practical guidance for organizations operating in developing countries like Sri Lanka. Future research could benefit from exploring the longitudinal impact of entrenchment, or how combinations of justice perceptions interact with retention practices across different industries and cultural contexts.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical significance of the research is significant and harmonizes with several established theories. First, it expands Organizational Justice Theory by demonstrating that perceptions of institutional injustice can be at work to motivate not just job dissatisfaction or turnover, but workers' migration intentions something less thoroughly examined in traditional justice scholarship (Greenberg, 1987; Rupp et al., 2014). This shifts the theoretical understanding of injustice from being an issue strictly for an organization to one with broader socio-economic implications, such as migration. Importantly, the study is situated within a non-Western, developing country context Sri Lanka adding value by demonstrating that justice-based constructs function across cultures but can be shaped differently depending on contextual factors (Samaraweera & Gamage, 2021). One of the key theoretical contributions is making job entrenchment, or job embeddedness, a moderator. Evidence helps substantiate the contention that those workers who are more entrenched in their jobs due to factors like economic obligation, social connections, or limited options are less probable to enact their migration plans even when being wronged (Mitchell et al., 2001). This suggests that injustice is not causally associated with migration but conditionally, as a function of job entrenchment level. Second, this study crosses over two varying theoretical domains: Organizational Behavior and Push–Pull Migration Theory. By conceptualizing institutional injustice as an internal "push" and job entrenchment as an internal "pull," the study combines concepts of Greenberg's (1987) justice theory and Lee's (1966) migration theory. This multi-theory framework provides more insight into why employees in unprocedural equitable workplaces might choose to stay or migrate. Lastly, the study contributes to retention theory by noting that merely relaxing institutional injustice might be too little to achieve; enhancing job embeddedness is also important to inhibit talent migration (Mitchell et al., 2001; Samaraweera & Gamage, 2021). All these works supplement theoretical commentary and serve as a point of departure for forthcoming research into employee behavior in similar socio-economic conditions.

Managerial Implications

Recent studies also show that job entrenchment significantly moderates the relationship between institutional injustice and migration intentions, in a way helping to reduce negative effects brought about by perceived unfairness at work and aligns with Cheng (2019). Whereas injustice can trigger turnover intention, job entrenchment involves job satisfaction and quality of relationships(kang,2019). It is an important critical antecedent that reduces such intentions. However, job entrenchment leads to short-term reduction of migration intentions, and firms are strongly dependent on it (Cuadros,2019). Consequently, it can lead to disengagement employees continue to stay for necessity, not commitment (Welsh,2020). The study also confirms that procedural and interactional injustices have a stronger influence on organizational outcomes than distributive injustice, as previous work on the centrality of fairness to employee attitudes has suggested (Pan,2018). In other words, the organization should focus on procedural and interactional justice in order to enhance long-term employee engagement. Future research could study long-term job entrenchment and further investigate the link between different forms of injustice and migration intentions to develop better retention strategies. From this, the managerial implications show that both procedural and interactional injustices have to be addressed to retain employees and reduce intentions of turnover. Managers should ensure that processes for decision-making are fair and clear of procedural injustice; managers focus on showing respect and thus implanting principles of fair communication that boost interactional justice. Albala Genol et al., (2023) commented that fair interpersonal treatment has greater influence on employee satisfaction. Job entrenchment may lower migration intention for a short period, but over-reliance on this may result in disengagement. It is therefore important that managers be aware of the potential negative outcomes of job entrenchment in the longer term and focus on establishing a positive organizational culture based on genuine commitment through fair treatment, career development, and employee empowerment. The conclusions of the study support the imperative requirement of solving procedural and interactional injustice in order to maintain the migratory intentions of the employees at an optimum low level. Open and transparent decision-making procedures as procedural justice and considerate and respectful communication as interactional justice are both essential in forming an optimal organizational climate (Greenberg, 1990). Having the organizational processes more equitable in and of itself will not be enough to retain employees if how people are treated is seen as being inequitable. Therefore, managers must adopt an integrated retention approach that not only boosts fairness on every dimension of organizational justice but also comprises other variables such as job satisfaction, career development opportunities, and work-life balance (Cropanzano, Bowen, & Gilliland, 2007; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2013). These act as buffers against the detrimental outcomes of perceived injustice and job dissatisfaction, otherwise leading to migration intentions (Colquitt et al., 2013). Lastly, the study provides prescriptive managerial recommendations by hypothesizing a more complete model of employee engagement one that extends past perceptions of justice to include intrinsic and extrinsic incentives. The multi-dimensional model is central to constructing

employee commitment and constraining turnover in environments vulnerable to institutional injustice.

The managerial implications of the research indicate that procedural and interactional injustices have to be addressed in order for the retention of employees with minimum intentions of turnover. That is, instead of proceeding with fair and transparent processes of decision-making to avoid procedural injustice, managers should show respect by implementing principles of fair communication to boost interactional justice. The findings indeed suggest that an exclusive reliance on organizational justice may not be sufficient. Managers should, therefore, implement broad retention strategies that address not only the dimensions of justice but also job satisfaction, career growth, and work-life balance to increase employee engagement and reduce their migration intentions. These insights provide valuable guidance for improving employee retention and mitigating adverse effects of institutional Injustice. Future research must undertake a systematic examination of the long-term impact of job entrenchment on employee motivation and engagement and explicitly consider how overdependence on entrenchment mechanisms can paradoxically generate employee disengagement and organizational commitment loss. This has implications for organizations struggling to balance stability with employee energy and innovation. Moreover, comparative cross-cultural studies are needed to unravel the subtle way in which institutional injustice operates with job entrenchment under various cultural and institutional settings. Comparative studies can offer critical insights into culturally contingent retention processes and differential justice perception effects on employees' behavior.

Future Research Suggestions and Directions

Further study on the synergistic effects of employee empowerment, career development, and the psychological contract is necessary to synthesize a more complete and intense retention strategy framework. Psychological contracts, or the unspoken expectations that employees and employers have from each other, have proven to be ever more vital to employee engagement and organizational performance. Empirical studies show that employee engagement serves as a key mediator linking psychological contract fulfillment to organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Moreover, open communication regarding career development opportunities has been shown to significantly foster employee motivation and retention (Singh et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the strategic role played by human resource management in formulating and maintaining psychological contracts needs greater scholarly attention. Human resource practices that support employee expectations and needs have been empirically linked to stronger psychological contracts and better levels of retention (Sandhya & Sulphrey, 2021). These findings underscore the necessity for future research to adopt an integrative conceptual framework through the adoption of psychological contract theory, perceived organizational support, and HRM practices in examining job entrenchment and employee engagement. In this manner, future research can provide more prescriptive findings for organizations wanting to build a resilient, committed workforce through focused retention programs that address both structural and psychological elements of employment relationships.

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