

BRAIN DRAIN OF ENGINEERS IN SRI LANKAN IT INDUSTRY: CAUSES AND COUNTERMEASURES

Wijesinghe Wasala Mudiyanseelage Dhanujaya Bandara
Wijesinghe

229146U

Master of Business Administration in Information Technology

Department of Computer Science & Engineering
Faculty of Engineering

University of Moratuwa
Sri Lanka

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own work and this Thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or Institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text. I retain the right to use this content in whole or part in future works (such as articles or books).

Signature:

Date: 11-07-2024

The supervisor should certify the Thesis with the following declaration.

The above candidate has carried out research for the Master of Business Administration in Information Technology Thesis under my supervision. I confirm that the declaration made above by the student is true and correct.

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Nisansa de Silva

Signature of the Supervisor:

Date: 18/07/2024

DEDICATION

To my wife for her unwavering support and patience, to my parents for the inspiration and blessing, and to the rest of my family for all the encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The research on “Brain Drain of Engineers in Sri Lankan IT Industry” would not have been a success without the contribution of many individuals whom I turned to seek support. To all those who assisted me, I would like to express my gratitude for providing me with aid to complete the study.

First, I want to sincerely acknowledge my supervisor, Dr. Nisansa de Silva, for his continuous support, guidance, and motivation which made this study possible. I benefited greatly from his invaluable insights and expertise which shaped the work with added quality. It was indeed a privilege to work under the mentorship of such an inspirational supervisor who continuously guided me throughout the research work.

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ABSTRACT

Brain Drain or the departure of skilled individuals at an alarming rate has become a timely topic in the context of Sri Lanka which is going through a rough period as a country in multiple disciplines. The phenomenon is even more applicable to industries like Information Technology (IT) that are running into a shortage of skill, even with promising future predictions due to higher demand and relentless technological advancements. Effects of brain drain are visible in both the home and the host country including economic losses, skill shortages, and reduced innovation. This study focused on identifying the most significant factors that encourage or discourage migration based on the push-pull framework which illustrates that migration decision occurs from the result of two forces acting in different directions in pushing and pulling. Data analysis conducted on the data collected from suitable respondents within the industry revealed the political push factor of the home country to be the most significant force contributing to migration decisions. In addition, the study uncovered several other factors of both home and the host country that significantly impact migration. Based on the outcome of the analysis and survey responses, actions to reduce brain drain are discussed in the latter half of the study which aims to propose mitigation strategies. With valuable findings and revelations, the study contributes to finding solutions for underlying causes and sets the foundation for further investigation on the subject.

Keywords: brain drain, push-pull framework, home and host country, countermeasures for brain drain

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
IoT	Internet of Things
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
IT	Information Technology
SAARRC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

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