



Work Alienation and its Determinants among Knowledge Workers in the Information Technology Firms in Sri Lanka

Devadas U.^{1*}, Karunaratna D.²


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^{1*} Udaya Mohan Devadas, University Lecturer Grade I, Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies, University of Kelaniya Sri Lanka, Colombo, Western Province, Sri Lanka.

² Dahanayaka Ishara Madushanka Karunaratna, HR Executive, Human Resource Department, University of Kelaniya Sri Lanka, Colombo, Western Province, Sri Lanka.

There is a little work done to investigate in alienation of knowledge workers in Sri Lanka. This study seeks for filling this identified lacuna by examining the prevalence and causes for work alienation among knowledge workers in the IT industry, in Sri Lanka. Drawing from the extant literature, researchers identified four primary causes of work alienation; task factors, social support at work, organizational justice factors, and organizational structural factors. The study conducted as a cross-sectional, quantitative survey using a sample of 134 knowledge workers selected from three (03) main IT firms in Sri Lanka. (pls add a sentence showing how representative this selected sample in the industry). Primary data were collected via a standard questionnaire, verified. Data were analyzed using SPSS (Version 26) using Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient, and simple regression. Findings showed that structural factors, social support at work, and task factors are the strongest predictors of work alienation among knowledge workers. Hence, it is recommended for practicing managers to intervene in managing these identified factors that are likely to cause work alienation and take preventive actions to ensure a committed workforce.

Keywords: Work alienation, Determinants of Work Alienation, Knowledge Workers, IT industry, Employee Commitment

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Udaya Mohan Devadas, University Lecturer Grade I, Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies, University of Kelaniya Sri Lanka, Colombo, Western Province, Sri Lanka. Email: udayamohan@kln.ac.lk	Udaya Mohan Devadas, Dahanayaka Ishara Madushanka Karunaratna, Work Alienation and its Determinants among Knowledge Workers in the Information Technology Firms in Sri Lanka. IJEBHB. 2021;2(4):10-25. Available From https://ijebhb.com/index.php/ijebhb/article/view/67	

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Introduction

Information Technology (IT) industry in Sri Lanka is struggling to fulfill the global demands, though Sri Lanka is emerging as a choice for a world's IT destination. During the last decade, with the improvements in country's economic, civil, and business environmental conditions, IT sector in Sri Lanka has been rapidly developing. With over 300 main enterprises, the industry now serves several industrial verticals across the country, including communication, fashion, banking and finance, and media. The export revenue of this sector grew from USD 166 Million in 2006 to reach USD 968 Million in 2017 (Board, 2019). In 2018, the industry employed approximately 20,000 experts, with an annual growth rate of 8.9% (Administration, 2019). This growth in the field has led to increase the demand for the IT Knowledge Workers (KW) in Sri Lanka. The programmers, system analysts, technical writers, and researchers, are mainly considered as Knowledge Workers (Drucker, 1999). Since the KW are the bloodstream in the IT industry, IT firms continuously make a substantial investment in adopting various strategies to keep KW committed.

Among them, eliminating the psychological risks such as negative attitudes, negative behaviour and practices (Nart, Nart, & Celik, 2018) impact on employee commitment. However, 24% of IT professionals in Sri Lanka are not committed to their jobs (Jinadasa and Wickramasinghe, 2005) that stands as a massive cost to organizations. Scholars have worked on addressing this issue by studying the implications of pay, benefits, relationships and other such factors with the IT professionals' commitment. Importantly, work alienation has been found as a major determinant to decide the level of employee commitment (Davenport et al., 2002). Work alienation further increase costs to organizations in terms of 'knowledge void' and inefficiencies (give a citation for knowledge avoid and describe it). Thus, identifying the factors affecting the work alienation has a paramount important. However, within the study context of Sri Lanka, the literature on the associated factors as determinants of work alienation among knowledge workers in the IT sector is skeletal. Based on this identified research gap, the authors dedicated this study to investigate the 'determinants of work alienation among knowledge workers in the IT firms in Sri Lanka'.

In resolving this problem, five research questions were set. They are: What is the extent of work alienation among knowledge workers in the IT firms in Sri Lanka? Does 'task factors' have an impact on work alienation among knowledge workers in the IT firms in Sri Lanka? Does 'work relationships' have an impact on work alienation among knowledge workers in the IT firms in Sri Lanka? Does 'organizational justice' have an impact on work alienation among knowledge workers in the IT firms in Sri Lanka? Does 'organizational structure' has an impact on work alienation among knowledge workers in the IT firms in Sri Lanka?

The objectives of the study were then derived as to determine: the extent of work alienation; the effect of task factors on work alienation; the effect of social support at work on work alienation; the impact of organizational justice on work alienation; and the impact of organizational structural factors on work alienation among the knowledge workers in the IT firms in Sri Lanka.

Literature Review

This provide a sufficient description of the concepts and variables to construct the conceptual model of the study.

Defining work Alienation

Alienation was first defined by Wilhelm Hegel as a separation of the individual from his or herself (Tummers, et al, 2014). It is a feeling of being separated off from oneself or others (Korman, Berman, & Lang, 1981). Horowitz (1966) examined alienation from three possible perspectives: alienation from objects in the world, alienation from people, and alienation from other people's opinions about the world. The phrase 'alienation' is originally derived from two Latin words: 'Alienato' and 'Alienarer' (Kartal, 2018). The term 'Alienato' refers to the transfer of ownership, dissolution, or separation from something, and the term 'Alienarer' refers to the act of removing something or replacing it with something else. The meaning of these concepts refers to the loss of harmony among individuals' cohesiveness with the social and cultural environment. (Kongar, 1979). Alienation has been debated in academic literature for a long time, dating back to the seventeenth century (Fishman & Langman, 2015).

It has also been discussed in a variety of fields such as theology, philosophy, sociology, psychology, and psychiatry (Nair & Vohra, 2010). However, some scholars have argued that, though it has been discussed with reference to a broad range of subjects, the concept is nearly forgotten concept in management studies (Shantz, et al, 2015).

Hegel also described the twofold nature of alienation, where people become estranged from themselves or society (Kurdi, 2018). Similarly, Chiaburu, Diaz, and Vos (2013) noted that personnel alienation is where people experiencing a disparity between one's daily activities and one's self-image (e.g. the individual's daily activities are not aligned with real interests and values). Also, social alienation occurs when people become isolated from others due to a lack of social engagement (the essence of social alienation is to be alone).

Karl Marx exclusively discussed the economic and social dimensions of work alienation (Kanungo, 1982; Nair & Vohra, 2012; Shantza, Alfesb, & Trus, 2014). The notion of work alienation has been popularized during his social and political writings. According to Marx, work is what makes humans, and it allows them to be creative and meet their basic needs. Furthermore, Marx has identified three ways in which the working class becomes alienated: alienation from the result of their labour (which is owned by the capitalist), alienation in the production process, and alienation from oneself and the society (Shantza, Alfesb, & Trus, 2014). Other significant philosophers such as Max Webber and Emile Durkheim shared this Marx's views on alienation (Shantza, Alfesb, & Trus, 2014). According to Max Webber alienation stems from a sense of lack of freedom and control at work (Nair & Vohra, 2010). If a person has less decision-making power at work, this can lead to dissatisfaction and alienation among employees. Similarly, Braverman (1974) described alienation as a structural state in which the stronger party in a capitalistic society alienates all workers. The high-profit objectives of capitalistic enterprises drive them to make the most of their human resources. As a result, labourers were forced to work long hours with large machinery for lower wages (Murchland, 1974). In the end, it restricts their independence, and work becomes a means of survival rather than self-fulfillment, while also obstructing workers' social ties (Fishman & Langman, 2015; Tsang, 2016).

However, Melvin Seaman, an American sociologist, has introduced a fresh paradigm to the alienation phenomenon (Fishman & Langman, 2015; Kartal, 2018). From a socio-political standpoint, Seeman's approach is the cornerstone of many research areas. Accordingly, alienation is a multidimensional construct with five dimensions; powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement (Seeman, 1959; Sarfraz, 1997; Senekal, 2010; Shantz et al, 2015; Tsang, 2016; Kurdi, 2018; Seeman, 1959; Sarfraz, 1997; Senekal, 2010; Shantz et al, 2015). However, many scholars have criticized Seeman's (1959) idea of alienation (Mottaz, 1981; Nair & Vohra, 2010; Shantz, et al, 2015). They claimed that when Seeman operationalized the construct, he did not adequately capture alienation and failed to delineate the relationship between dimensions (Fedi, et al, 2016). Mottaz (1981), stated that some dimensions of alienation, such as powerlessness and meaninglessness, are antecedents to alienation rather than definitional elements. Thus, the majority of scholars concluded that alienation is one-dimensional and lends itself to self-estrangement (Mottaz, 1981; Shantz, et al, 2015; Fedi, et al, 2016). Modern researchers have headed this notion (e.g. Banai, Reisel, & Probst, 2004; Nair & Vohra, 2010).

An alienated employee's physiological state is frequently abnormal. This physiological state causes a person to feel disconnected from his or her function in the firm (Shantza, Alfesb, & Trus, 2014). Similarly, Zer et al., (2017) stated that this gap leads to a sense of meaninglessness in which an individual perceives himself or herself as incompetent to perform his or her current job role. Also, those people tend to isolate themselves from others and have a negative attitude toward their jobs. This pessimistic attitude harms operational efficiency as well as individual performance. As a result, the employees' effectiveness, job commitment, and job satisfaction will be wane (Sarros et al, 2002). Further, some scholars have found, alienation can have significant impacts on the performance level of employees (Shantz et al., 2015; Kartal, 2018). Tummers and Den Dulk (2013) found that work alienation has a strong detrimental impact on job commitment and work-family enrichment in their study. Furthermore, they argue that employment with a higher level of meaninglessness has a greater impact on these outcomes.

Some scholars have found that work alienation can have an impact on personnel life as well. Seeman (1959) discovered that work alienation can lead to antagonism, anomia, and political retreat as well.

Determinants of Work

Alienation The reasons for alienation are different. Task factors such as; work autonomy, task variety, task identity, and feedback from the job become critical in determining work alienation (Ramaswami, Agarwal, & Bhargava, 1993; Banai, Reisel, & Probst, 2004; Nair & Vohra, 2010). Additionally, some researchers investigated the impact of structural components of both formalization and centralization on work alienation (Aiken & Hage, 1966; Allen & La Follette, 1977; Greene, 1978). Few studies examined the impact of social support on work alienation (Pearlin, 1962; Shantz, et al, 2015). Some authors have discussed the effects of procedural and distributive justice on job alienation (Nair & Vohra, 2010; Nart, Nart, & Celik, 2018).

Perception of task factors influences employee performance, attitudes and behaviours in both work and life domains (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Employees typically anticipate work to be a psychologically satisfying activity. Ramaswami, Agarwal, and Bhargava (1993) have mentioned that task factors and work alienation have a direct relationship. Because a well-designed job permits its job holder to perceive his or her work as typically imported, valuable, and worthwhile. In other terms, intrinsic job characteristics (decision-making capacity, variety, and recognition) influence behavior through the perceptual process (Banai, Reisel, & Probst, 2004: 2007). When work becomes tedious, dull, or limited in scope, people experience work estrangement (Cotgrove, 1972). Similarly, Banai, Reisel, and Probst (2004) discovered that well-designed job elements can reduce work alienation among 327 Cuban workers. Further, some researchers have claimed that workers who are engaged in monotonous, repetitive, and closely supervised jobs are more prone to be alienated than individuals who are engaged in interesting tasks (Aiken & Hage, 1966; Blauner, 1964).

Social support is a key resource for predicting work alienation. Cobb (1976) described social support as information that leads an individual to think that he or she is cared for, loved, esteemed, and cherished and that he or she is part of a network of communication and mutual obligation.

Social support can be defined conceptually as the acts or intentions of others to be helpful (Deelstra, et al., 2003). Mikkola, Suutala, and Parviainen (2018) defined social support as social interaction in which resources are received from others. It assists individuals in dealing with uncertainty and increases the sense of personal control over one's life experience (Zhang, Lin, & Wan, 2015).

However, Karl Marx claimed that when an individual lacks a social connection with others, they become alienated from their labour (Shantza, Alfesb, & Trus, 2014). Organizations in capitalism relied largely on labour to optimize output while undermining social relations. As a result, a lack of meaningful interactions causes people to isolate themselves from others (Shantz, et al, 2015). Korman, Berman, and Lang (1981) discovered that alienation can impact interpersonal connections with others in their study. Pearlin (1962) discovered that hospital staff who did not have friends in the same ward were more alienated than employees who did have friends in the same ward. Furthermore, Nair and Vohra (2010) discovered a negative significant link between satisfaction with work relationships and work alienation among Indian IT workers.

It has been discovered that a person's view of organizational fairness has a major impact on work alienation (Nair & Vohra, 2010; Nart, Nart, & Celik, 2018). Every employee wants to work for a firm that is fair, ethical, and treats its employees with dignity. The broad concept of justice refers to a morally right approach or choice based on fairness, ethics, religion, or the law (Pekurinen, et al., 2017). It can be defined in the organizational realm as an overall view of fairness in the organization (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002; Ceylan & Sulu, 2011; Lang, Bliese, & Lang, 2011; Robbins & Judge, 2013; Pan, et al, 2018). It is broadly classified into two types: procedural justice and distributive justice (Nair & Vohra, 2010). Despite the existence of various types of organizational justice, such as interactional justice and informational justice (Colquitt, 2001; Ceylan & Sulu, 2011), the two-factor notion of organizational justice as procedural and distributive justice has gained consistent support in the literature (Greenberg, 1990; Nair & Vohra, 2010). There is evidence that both procedural and distributive justice might contribute to job alienation.

Ceylan and Sulu (2011) demonstrated that both

Procedural and distributive injustice have a substantial impact on job alienation among 700 doctors and nurses, working in public and private hospitals in Istanbul.

An organizational structure is a method by which job duties are explicitly separated, organized, and coordinated within an organization (Robbins & Judge, 2013). Until the late 1980s, researchers mostly focused on the structural impact of work alienation (Aiken & Hage, 1966; Allen & La Follette, 1977; Greene, 1978). Sarros et. al. (2002) provided sociological and socio-psychological explanations for alienation. They contended that structural factors break down work into discrete and controlled pieces (division of labour), and that, the jobs that are designed with structural considerations are more efficient. However, at some points, it can n impede productivity. When structural elements of work are valued more than behavioural elements, it limits job holders' autonomy, decision-making, ultimately causes alienation. Aiken and Hage (1966) recognized two structural elements that influence work alienation in their writings: centralization and formalization. They discovered that these characteristics have a significant impact on work alienation among employees employed in 16 welfare agencies in their study. The combined model of work alienation for knowledge workers with its predictor-variables is shown in Figure 1.

Please insert Figure 1 Here

Hypotheses of The Study

The following hypotheses are formulated in order to realize the above-mentioned research objectives and to draw conclusions of the study.

H 1	There is a significant impact of task factors on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 1a	There is a significant impact of job autonomy on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 1b	There is a significant impact of task variety on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 1c	There is a significant impact of task identity on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 1d	There is a significant impact of feedback from job on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 2	There is a significant impact of social support at work on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 3	There is a significant impact of organizational justice on work alienation among knowledge workers.

H 3 a	There is a significant impact of procedural justice on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 3 b	There is a significant impact of distributive justice on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 4	There is a significant impact of organizational structural factors on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 4 a	There is a significant impact of centralization on work alienation among knowledge workers.
H 4 b	There is a significant impact of formalization on work alienation among knowledge workers.

Methodology

The current study was designed as a post positivistic quantitative study using cross sectional survey method. The unit of analysis was individual IT professionals. The targeted population of this study consisted of large scale IT companies within Colombo district in Sri Lanka that have employed 342 IT professionals that represent a significant percentage of the IT industry in Sri Lanka . The questionnaires were distributed among 180 knowledge workers as the sample in the population, selected using simple random sampling method. The sample size was decided using Morgan Table at a 95-confidence level.

The research questionnaire was designed using previous research findings of Hunt, Chonko, and Wood (1985), Morgeson and Humphrey (2006), Colquitt (2001), Aiken and Hage (1966), Nair and Vohra (2001), and others (2010). The questionnaire consisted of three (03) sections. The first segment of the questionnaire contained five questions that assist the researcher in gathering demographic information about the sample (Husain et al., 2021; Javed, 2017; Javed et al., 2020; Javed & Husain, 2021; Javed & Khan, 2017). This aided the researcher in elaborating on the sample characteristics. The researcher employed forty-eight (48) items on the Five-Point Likert scale in the second segment of the questionnaire to measure the independent variables (task factors, social support at work, organizational justice elements, organizational structural factors). The third segment of the questionnaire contained eight (08) items with Five-Point Likert scale options that measure the dependent variable (work alienation). The responses measured by using the interval scale (five-point Likert scale), respondents rated their level of agreement for the items on a five-point Likert scale anchored at 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Perception of 'Work Alienation' measured by the scale developed by Nair and Vohra (2009) which was the most commonly utilized scale by modern scholars. The construct validity of the measures reported the internal consistency reliability as 0.887.

Further, perception of 'Task Factors' were assessed using the scale developed by Hunt, Chonko, and Wood (1985) under four dimensions; job autonomy, task variety, task identity and feedback from the job. In examining the dimensionality of the task factors, construct validation for the scale reported as 0.812, 0.539, 0.707, and 0.700 respectively.

Furthermore, perception of 'Social Support at Work' measured by the scale developed by Morgeson and Humphrey (2006) which was the most commonly utilized scale by modern scholars. The construct validity of the measures reported the internal consistency reliability as 0.715.

Moreover, perceptions of organizational justice factors measured by the two factors of procedural and distributive justice based on the justice measure, presented by Colquitt (2001). In examining the dimensionality of the justice measure, validation for the measure and the scales of procedural and distributive justice were reported the coefficients of 0.797 and 0.820, respectively.

Similarly, perception of organizational structure was measured using widely used instrument, developed by Aiken and Hage (1966). In examining the dimensionality of the structural factors, validation for the measure and the scales of centralization and formalization were reported the coefficients of 0.506 and 0.855, respectively. The operationalization of the study is shown in Table 01 below.

Please insert Table 1 Here

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS-26 by employing the methods of descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and simple regressing model (Husain & Javed, 2019; Javed, 2017; Javed et al., 2019; Javed & Khan, 2017). All the returned questionnaires were given a serial number. Data were entered, checked for data entry errors, explored and cleaned. Descriptive statistics were used to present the socio-demographic information of the sample. Similarly, the researcher used correlation analysis to assess the relationship between the variables of the study.

The regression analysis was used to find the equation of the relationship between variables. The equation of $Y = \beta_1 + \beta_2 X + Std. Error$ was used for the simple regression analysis.

Analysis and Results

Out of 180 KWs, 134 KWs responded sending the questionnaires back that indicates 74.4% response rate. Total of 76 out of 134 KWs were male IT professionals. Hence, in the sample, male and female proportion is approximately equal. Further, 82.1 % of KWs were unmarried in the sample. Majority of the respondents (32.8%) were in the age group of below 25 years, while 48 respondents had less than 1-year tenure with the company. By educational level, graduates comprised the major category (82.8%), with 9.7% of sample having their highest educational level as Master's degree

Specific Objective 01: Identifying the Level of Work Alienation among KW in the IT Firms.

The researchers used the calculated mean value and the standard deviation values to assess the level of work alienation among KWs. In total, 134 respondents in the sample indicated a mean value of 4.1427 with a standard deviation of 0.04612. The mean score is between 3 and 4, implying that the majority of respondents experience a higher level of work alienation.

Specific Objective 02: Identifying the Impact of Task Factors on Work Alienation among KWs in IT Firms.

The Pearson correlation coefficient was computed between task factors (including its four dimensions) and work alienation to assess the strength of the association. As depicted in table 2 Task Factors, Task Variety, Task Identity, Feedback from Job reported the Pearson Correlations as -0.209*, -0.213*, -0.183*, -0.178* respectively with work alienation. Since the significance value is less than the 95% confidential level, the found correlation coefficients are statistically significant. Therefore, there is statistical evidence to claim that, there are low negative correlations between Task Variety, Task Identity, Feedback from Job and work alienation. However, there is no statistical evidence to claim a significant correlation between job autonomy and work alienation. Since the significant value is greater than the level of significance (0.05) at 95% confidential level, the correlation

Coefficient is not statistically significant. Thus, H1a is not accepted in the current domain. Further, simple regression analysis was employed to assess the impact and considered the coefficient of determination. As depicted in table 2 Task Factors, Task Variety, Task Identity, Feedback from Job reported the R Square values of 0.044, 0.045, 0.033, and 0.032 respectively. Thus, the fitted regression model explains 4.4%, 4.5%, 3.3%, and 3.2% variation in work alienation by Task Factors, Task Variety, Task Identity, and Feedback from Job respectively. Since sig values are less than the 0.05, the regression model statistically and significantly predicted the outcome variable. Hence H1, H1b, H1c, H1d are accepted.

Please Insert Table 2 Here

Specific Objective 03: Identifying the Impact of Social Support at Work on Work Alienation among KWs in IT Firms.

According to table 3, Pearson Correlation was reported as - 0.210 which indicates that there is a low correlation between social support at work and work alienation. As the significant value is 0.015 (2-tailed) which is greater than the level of significance (0.05) at 95% confidential level, the correlation coefficient (-0.210) is statistically significant. Therefore, there is statistical evidence to claim that there is a significant relationship between social support at work and work alienation of knowledge workers in the IT industry. Further, a simple regression analysis was employed to assess the impact and consider the coefficient of determination. According to table 3, the R Square value is 0.044. It means 4.4 % of the variation in work alienation is explained by the fitted regression model. Accordingly, it can be concluded that social support at work has a 4.4 % impact on work alienation. The fitted regression model is significant since the significance value is 0.015 which is less than 0.05 and that indicated, the regression model statistically and significantly predicted the outcome variable. Hence H2 is accepted and the researchers claimed that the impact of social support at work on work alienation of KWs is statistically significant at the confidence level of 95%.

Please insert Table 3 Here

Specific Objective 03: Identifying the Impact of Organizational Justice on Work Alienation of KWs in IT Firms.

Table 4 shows that organizational justice, procedural justice, and distributive justice did not explain a substantial link to the job alienation. The calculated correlation coefficients are not statistically significant since the significant values are bigger than the level of significance (0.05) at a 95% confidence level. As a result, H9, H9a, and H9b are not accepted in the current domain.

Please insert Table 4 Here

Specific Objective 04: Identifying the Impact of Organizational Structure on Work Alienation of KWs in IT Firms.

The Pearson correlation coefficient was computed between organizational structural factors (including its four dimensions) and work alienation to assess the strength of the association. As depicted in table 6 organizational structure, centralization and formalization reported the Pearson Correlations as -0.523**, 0.177*, and 0.459** respectively with work alienation. Since the significance value is less than the 95% confidential level, the found correlation coefficients are statistically significant. Therefore, there is statistical evidence to claim that, there are low negative correlations between selected variables with work alienation. Further, simple regression analysis was employed to assess the impact and consider the coefficient of determination. As depicted in table 5 organizational structure, centralization and formalization reported the R Square value as 0.274, 0.031, and 0.211 respectively. Thus, the fitted regression model explains 27.4%, 3.1% and 21.1% variations in work alienation by organizational structure, centralization and formalization respectively. Since sig values are less than the 0.05, the regression model statistically and significantly predicted the outcome variable. Hence H4, H4a, H4b are accepted.

Please Insert Table 5 Here

Discussion of Findings

According to the findings of the study, task variables, social support at work, and organizational structural factors all have a substantial impact on predicting work alienation among knowledge workers. The researchers examined both the combined and individual impact of task variables on work alienation. The current study found that task factors had a 4.4% negative

Impact on work alienation among knowledge workers in the IT sector in Sri Lanka. Similarly, Banai, Reisel, and Probst (2004) discovered in their study that task factors have a substantial negative impact on work alienation among Cuban workers. Workers who work in dull, repetitive, and closely controlled jobs are more likely to be alienated than workers who conduct exciting tasks.

When analyzing dimensions of task factors, researchers discovered that task variety, task identity, and feedback from the job have a substantial impact on work alienation, however, job autonomy did not demonstrate a significant link with work alienation. According to the study findings, both task variety and task identity have a 3.3% impact on work alienation, whereas feedback from the workplace has a 3.2% impact on the dependent variable. Although task factors have a minor impact on work alienation, businesses must address task elements to secure the commitment of knowledge workers. This is because an alienated knowledge worker causes massive loss to the organization. Another factor that impacts alienation is social support at work. The current study found that social support at work had a 4.4% significant impact on work alienation among the sample. Similarly, Korman, Berman, and Lang (1981) found that alienation can affect a lack of interpersonal ties with others in their study. It is to be expected that the nature of work relationships is crucial for individuals in largely collectivist cultures, such as the culture in Sri Lanka. As a result, the impact of social support at work can be comprehended.

Further, the current study explains the impact of organizational structural elements on job alienation. The findings revealed that organizational structural elements had a 27.4% impact on work alienation. The study findings revealed that aspects of organizational structural elements such as formalization have a significant impact on work alienation (21.1%) in addition to the effect of centralization (3.1%). Similarly, Aiken and Hage (1966) discovered that structural factors have a considerable impact on work alienation among employees in 16 welfare agencies. Based on the study results, researchers did not find a significant correlation between job autonomy, organizational justice and work alienation. However, Banai and Reisel (2007) found that job autonomy was inversely related to alienation

From society in a group of Russian workers. Similarly, Özkoç (2016) examined job autonomy and alienation among 509 workers in Istanbul and found a negative association. Further, in their study, Nart, Nart, and Celik (2018) found that organizational justice negatively correlated with work alienation.

Conclusion, Implications and Recommendations

The study concludes that organizational structural factors have a positive impact on work alienation among knowledge workers, whereas task factors and social support at work have a negative impact. Meanwhile, organizational justice and job autonomy have been found to have no effect on work alienation among knowledge workers. According to the findings, workers who work in monotonous, repetitive, heavily controlled jobs due to a lack of task elements are more likely to feel alienated than those who work on exciting tasks. As a result, it necessitates the availability of task variation, task identity, and feedback from the jobs that knowledge workers perform to avoid work alienation. Organizations must thus consider restructuring the job of the KWs to incorporate these positive attributes into their jobs while maintaining a balance between efficiency and behavioral elements in the job.

Because of the strong impact of social support at work on work alienation, managers are under pressure to focus more on cultural eliminations that create positive stimuli for knowledge workers. It also emphasized that if an individual has difficulty establishing and maintaining social engagement at work, they may encounter psychological dilemmas that lead to alienation. Thus, researchers recommend managers to foster a good and healthy work environment, including a work culture that encourages knowledge workers to deploy their expertise in decision making. Since the formalization highly impacts work alienation, the traditional organizations may fail in retaining knowledge workers. Thus, it is recommended to carefully design organizational structural factors, especially, to enable a more flexible and informal organizational set-up for KWs to be active and engaged.

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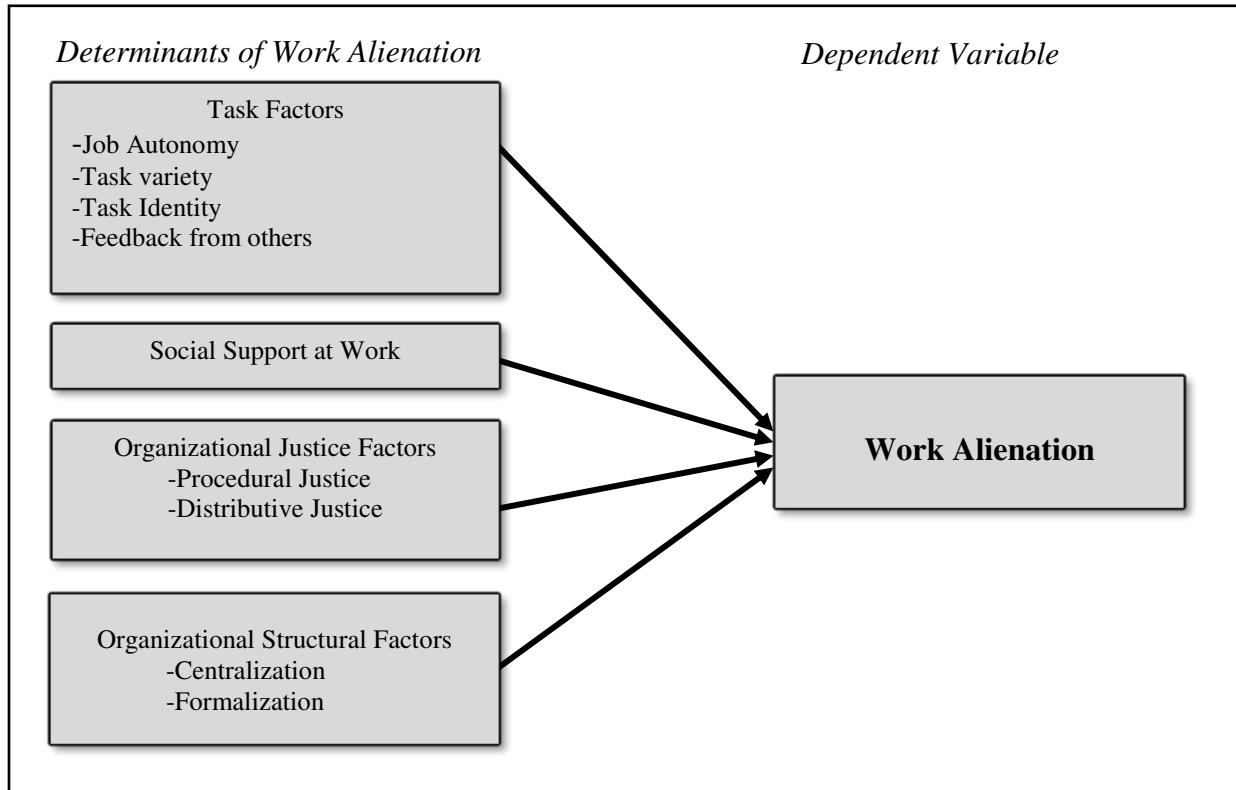
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Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study



Source: Authors' development based on the literature

Table 1: Operationalization of the Constructs

Concept	Variable	Dimension	Source	
Determinants	Task Factors	Job Autonomy	Hunt, Chonko, and Wood (1985)	
		Task variety		
		Task Identity		
		Feedback from job		
	Social Support at work	Social Support at work	Morgeson and Humphrey (2006)	
	Organizational Justice	Organizational Justice	Procedural Justice	Colquitt (2001)
			Distributive Justice	
Organizational Structure	Organizational Structure	Centralization	Miller and Weiss (1991)	
		Formalization		

Work Alienation	Work Alienation	Work Alienation (Uni-dimension)	Nair and Vohra (2010)
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Source: Authors' Development based on Literature

Table 2: Correlation and Regression Summary of Task Factors

Hypotheses	Variable/ Dimension	Correlation		Regression		
		Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	R Square	Sig.	Regression Equation
H1	Task Factors	-0.209*	0.015	0.044	0.015 ^{b1}	$Y = 5.320 - 0.379(X) + 0.154$
H1a	Job Autonomy	0.130	0.134	-	-	
H1b	Task Variety	-0.213*	0.014	0.045	0.014 ^{b2}	
H1c	Task Identity	-0.183*	0.035	0.033	0.035 ^{b3}	
H1d	Feedback from Job	-0.178*	0.039	0.032	0.039 ^{b4}	

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

b. Predictors: (Constant), b1: Task Factors, b2: Task Variety, b3: Task Identity, b1: Feedback from Job

Source: Analyzed data)

Table 3: Correlation and Regression Summary of Social Support at Work

Hypotheses	Variable/ Dimension	Correlation		Regression		
		Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	R Square	Sig.	Regression Equation
H2	Social Support at Work	-0.210*	0.015	0.044	0.015 ^{b1}	$Y = 4.563 - 0.253(X) + 0.103$

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

b. Predictors: (Constant), b1: Social Support at Work

Source: Analyzed data

Table 4: Correlation and Regression Summary of Organizational Justice

Hypotheses	Variable/ Dimension	Correlation	Regression
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		Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	R Square	Sig.	Regression Equation
H3	Organizational Justice	-0.076	0.384	-	-	-
H3a	Procedural Justice	-0.112	0.198	-	-	-
H3b	Distributive Justice	-0.037	0.671	-	-	-

Source: Analyzed data

Table 5: Correlation and Regression Summary of Organizational Structural Factors

Hypotheses	Variable/ Dimension	Correlation		Regression		
		Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	R Square	Sig.	Regression Equation
H3	Organizational Structure	0.523**	0.000	0.274	0.000 ^{b1}	Y = 1.752 + 0.765 (X) + 0.108
H3a	Centralization	0.177*	0.041	0.031	0.041 ^{b2}	
H3b	Formalization	0.459**	0.000	0.211	0.000 ^{b3}	

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

b. Predictors: (Constant), b1: Organizational Structure, b2: Centralization, b3: Formalization

Source: Analyzed data