

Impact of Gender Equality and Inclusive Leadership Practices on Turnover Intention of Faculty Members in Higher Education Institutions.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Stability among faculty members is essential for achieving quality of instruction, continuity in research, effective student mentoring, improved performance during accreditation, and maintaining the reputation of the institution. Loss of faculty members due to their resignations, for whatever reason, causes an immediate detrimental impact, because the institution now has a vacancy, and in addition to the vacancy, it has a negative impact on faculty members' curriculum development, the emergence of new faculty members' supervisory relationships, the disintegration of research teams, and the negative impact on recruiting new faculty members, and to a lesser extent, the loss of organizational memory. For institutions that operate under increased pressure, in terms of workload and the competition for faculty, loss of faculty members can potentially create a range of challenges and a structural issue. Within this framework, the intention to leave an institution is an important indicator, as it highlights the impact of loss of faculty members in relation to their next possible resignation. It provides an opportunity for the institutions to identify the organizational factors that could be remedied and enhance strategies to retain faculty members before they lose valuable human capital.

The current research addresses the issue of turnover intention through the perspectives of gender equity and inclusive leadership practices. Gender equity in the workplace is defined as the equitable access to opportunity, recognition, equitable workload and decision-making, leadership and growth, and safe professional development. Inclusive leadership is defined as the leadership that is characterized by a valuing of the diversity of viewpoints and opinions, treating employees with dignity, and encouraging them to participate, while offering them psychological safety and equitable opportunity. In higher education institutions, gender equity and inclusive leadership practices are interconnected. Faculty Members do not relate to their institutions through the formal

rules alone. They experience it through the daily leadership, the committee culture, the promotion system, the communication, the support system and its fairness. When faculty members experience the institution in the aforementioned ways and perceive the environment as inequitable and exclusionary, they tend to reduce their commitment and increase their intention to leave the institution.

There are at least four reasons to explain the importance of this research topic. Firstly, the social justice principle is expected to be embodied by higher education, but universities, like other segments of the labor market, reproduce structural inequities. Secondly, the work of faculty members has been rendered more complex with the introduction of performance metrics, ranking pressure, increasing administrative burdens, digital teaching, and research competition. Third, despite the more gender-balanced student enrollment, women faculty and other marginalized groups continue to face barriers to access, recognition, and voice in leadership. Finally, inclusive leadership is perceived as a more accessible practical organizational lever, since leadership behavior can be modified more readily than larger social structures. As a result, the topic holds a great deal of policy and management significance by linking equity to retention, institutional effectiveness, and the sustainability of academia in the long run.\

In particular, this topic has a strong relevance in India. The All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-22 reports that women make up 43.4% of faculty in higher education, registering a positive but incomplete advancement. The same survey reports that participation of women in higher education has improved, and the female gross enrollment ratio has surpassed the male gross enrollment ratio for several consecutive years. Despite the increased female enrollment, academic leadership, and senior level representation remains disproportionately equitable. Recently, UNESCO has recognized that India has an underrepresentation of women in senior and top academic leadership, reiterating the contrast between academic participation and access to leadership positions. This significant gap justifies the relevance of the study, and provides a great opportunity for policymakers.

The study's contribution is threefold. Conceptually, it integrates two strands of literature that are often studied in isolation—gender equity literature, and inclusive leadership literature. Analytically, it links them to faculty turnover intention in the context of higher education, as

opposed to examining turnover in other workplaces in general. Empirically, it draws on recent secondary data from official reports and current research studies on how the patterns of representation, leadership vacancies, the work environment, and organizational inclusiveness intersect. The dissertation asserts that faculty retention cannot be regarded as merely an issue of compensation or a problem of the labour market. It is equally an issue of institutional climate, which is determined by the elements of equity, sense of belonging, recognition, and leadership that is exercised daily.

The study utilises a secondary research design due to the availability of real and recent sectoral data from datasets like AISHE, UNESCO, OECD, World Bank, and peer-reviewed publications from 2019 to 2026. It allows the author to develop a policy-oriented dissertation based on real data and evidence, and not on fabricated primary data. The focus of the analysis, therefore, turns to the descriptive, comparative, and interpretive results of official data and research findings. In instances when hypothesis language is utilized, the author is referring to the evidence convergence and not the typical statistical analysis or inferential analysis of a self-constructed survey.

1.1 Research Objectives

- To analyze the conceptual interrelatedness of gender equity, inclusive leadership, and turnover intention in the context of higher education.
- To analyze the most recent available international and Indian studies on faculty retention, workplace inclusion, gendered academic, and leadership studies.
- To analyze the most recent available official data on the gender statistics, including composition and distribution at various academic levels and the distribution of leadership positions in the higher education.
- To determine the extent to which the available secondary data answer the question whether the equitable and inclusive leadership practices reduce the turnover intention of faculty.
- To analyze the current situation, to analyze the findings and to provide appropriate institutional recommendations to optimize faculty retention in higher education.

1.2 Scope of the Study

This study looks into faculty work environment, gender equity, inclusive leadership, and turnover intention in higher education institutions, with particular analytical focus on India with some

international evidence for comparative insights. This study does not try to calculate turnover rates for specific institutions. Rather, it compiles sectoral and academic literature to explain why equity and leadership style are important for retention.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study provides significant value for academic research, institutional administration, and policy design. For research, it provides a targeted synthesis at the nexus of equity and retention. For administrators, it provides pathways to fortify faculty engagement. For policymakers, it shows that gender-responsive and inclusive governance is tied to institutional performance and not just to tokenism.

1.4 Conceptual Foundations

Degree of understanding, statistical representation, is only one aspect of the gender equity multidimensional prioritization. An institution may have a relatively balanced faculty composition. From promotion delays and committee assignments of an informal mentoring deficit, research support, variable scrutiny and decisional exclusion, inequities may be reproduce. Thus, equality, inequities, equity procedural, distribution, and cultural dimensions. Procedural equity manipulation concerning rule fairness and inequities transparency. Distributive inequities of resource actual inequities. Cultural inequities of respect, belonging, and institution life legacy.

Including leadership as an expansion of this framework focuses on behavioral representation of organizational values into routine practice. Within this dimension, leaders are commonly identified as approachable, and active. They foster participation, embrace heterogeneity, and create psychological safety. For staff, they reduce authority distance. In academia, leadership is particularly relevant because the workforce is embedded with knowledge and identity. Academics respond to authority, legacy, and respect to their intellectual contribution. Inclusive leadership is strongly aligned with dignity, trust, and scholarly commitment.

The relevance of turnover intention in academic organizations is clear because actual turnover occurs after extended periods of unvoiced discontent. Faculty members can stay in their position while mentally distancing themselves from the institution's objectives. They can cut down on the effort they put in, restrict their cooperation, or start to strategize their departure, even before formally resigning. This is precisely why turnover intention is useful in signaling future trends.

When organizations consider only resignations, they may do so from a reactive standpoint, without considering the organizational climate. Any prevention-oriented strategy requires an understanding of the withdrawal precursors – organizational justice, sense of inclusion, the quality of leadership, and opportunities for advancement in the organization.

The current research identifies institutional preferences of organizational retention and inclusive leadership. When leadership is inclusive, but the system is inequitable, the improvements could be temporary or the gains could be spread unevenly. On the contrary, if policies are progressive in a formal sense and leadership is exclusionary, the degree of implementation is low. The retention regime is likely to be the most effective in a symbiotic relationship between inclusive leadership and structural equality. This is the logic of the integrated framework of the dissertation.

The conversation also touches on the point about the institution's quality assurance. There is an increased focus on factors such as an institution's accreditation, output of research, success of graduates, and the satisfaction of stakeholders. Faculty attrition is detrimental to all of these factors. Teaching, completing projects, advising students, and the planning of curriculum all become disrupted as a result of attrition. An institution which poorly retains faculty, even if it recruits faculty en masse, is still not able to maintain its quality. This is why retention is not merely an issue of human resources and should be of concern to the institution's academic governance as well.

In the end, the issue is of great ethical concern. The university is supposed to exemplify fairness, critical thought, and democracy. If the academic labour is hierarchically unequal, and exclusive, that reflects poorly on the institution's educational goals and organizational model. In that sense, examining gender equity and inclusive leadership as factors affecting turnover intent contributes to institutional management, as well as understanding institutional equity in the university in a more realistic way.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

International Review 1: Inclusive leadership and turnover intention

Yasin, Jan, Huseynova, and Atif (2023) investigated inclusive leadership and turnover intention in relation to 322 frontline employees in Pakistan. The study used survey data and modeling to find out the effect of follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment as mediators of inclusive leadership and turnover intention. The studies showed that inclusive leadership bolstered goal congruence and organizational commitment, while organizational commitment reduced turnover intention. The study was done in the bank sector rather than higher education, but it is pertinent as it articulates how inclusive leadership is able to curb employees' desire to leave. For the current dissertation, the key note of concern is the inclusive leadership does not operate retention in a direct correlation, but it also does to employees' sense of fairness, alignment, and commitment. This does to lesser extent the withdrawal tendencies (Yasin et al, 2023; Ashikali et al, 2021; van Luttervelt, 2024).

International Review 2: Epistemic exclusion of women faculty and faculty of color

Settles, Jones, Buchanan, and Brassel (2022) studied the impact of scholarly devaluation and epistemic exclusion on the turnover intentions of women faculty and faculty of color in the United States. Using the higher education context, the authors utilized survey-based quantitative analysis and addressed workplace climate, scholar recognition, and job satisfaction. The results showed that the perceptions of workplace climate and turnover intentions worsened because of epistemic exclusion, and that this phenomenon had the most negative impact on marginalized faculty. Because this study incorporates retention in the academic workforce, it is very relevant to this dissertation. It shows that faculty turnover intentions can be attributed to respected knowledge, expertise, and scholarly identity within the institutional culture, in addition to the administrative and structural barriers. This analysis is consistent with the most recent studies on equity and inclusion in higher education, where academic participation with dignity, recognition, and voice is favored (UNESCO, 2024; Lopes, 2024; Correa et al., 2025).

International Review 3: Gender, age, and turnover intention among academic employees

Gessesse (2024) studied turnover intention among academic employees at higher education institutions in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, focusing on gender and age. Using a survey and statistical analysis, the study attempted to understand if turnover intention is affected by different demographics and different experiences at the institutions. Turnover intention was not spread out evenly among academic staff. Different institutional settings and conditions interacted with gender and age. It is significant that this study is focused specifically on academic employees, which makes the findings more relevant to this dissertation. Turnover intention among faculty should not be approached without considering demographic imbalance and organizational climate, and in a way that presumes uniformity in the institutional experience among academic staff (Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023; Dai et al., 2025; Mrope, 2024).

National Review 1: Women in higher education and readiness for administrative positions

In their 2021 study, Mayya, Martis, Ashok, and Monteiro explored barriers to female leadership and the perceptions and expectations of leadership roles among 136 female faculty members at Indian state public universities, using questionnaires and focus group discussions. The study found that a number of female faculty members refrained from pursuing leadership roles due to the remoteness of the workplace, family obligations, limited encouragement from the institution, and barriers related to the belief. Almost 50% of the respondents indicated that they would voluntarily choose not to assume administrative positions. This study is immensely beneficial to my dissertation because it illustrates the ways in which gender bias contributes to leadership inequity, resulting in a loss of institutional inclusion and further diminishing the role of women in the decision-making processes within the academia. The study concludes that the under-representation of women in leadership roles is not merely an individual decision and that the structural and cultural barriers that are present will lead to even greater disengagement and an increase in the turnover intention (Mayya et al., 2021; QS, 2025; Messias et al., 2024).

National Review 2: Faculty retention dynamics in Indian higher education

Contextualizing faculty retention in the Indian higher education system, Verma and Kaur (2024) investigated the interplay between HR climate, organisational trust, and organisational commitment. Employing PLS-SEM analysis on higher education data, the findings revealed that supportive HR climate positively impacts faculty retention, with trust and commitment serving as

key mediation roles. The importance of this study is in the application of retention theory in the Indian academia, emphasising the importance of institutional climate in retaining employees. While the study centred on retention and not on gender equity, it has significant correlations with the current dissertation. The study indicates that the retention of faculty is enhanced by the fair, supportive and trusting nature of the environment created by the institution. These attributes are what inclusive leadership and gender-sensitive organisational practices in higher education are all about (Verma & Kaur, 2024; Verma, 2023; Sharma & Syal, 2022).

National Review 3: HR climate and faculty retention in Indian universities

In Indian universities, Verma (2023) studied the impact of the human resource climate on the retention of faculty members. The main focus was the faculty retention level of an institution, which, as the study concluded, are influenced by the perceived HR system dimensions of the faculty members. The study actually confirmed that organizational support, fairness, recognition, and developmental climate are all positive factors correlated with the retention of faculty members. Without a specific focus on the study on the impact of the HR system and organization climate on the retention of male and female faculty members, the study results are applicable and justify the relevance of the fairness of HR policies, institutional practices, and how the retention of male and female faculty members in an organization is based on the principle of equality. Having a climate in which faculty members are provided with a fair and equal distribution of opportunities, support and recognition reduces their intent to leave, and increases retention in the higher education system (Verma, 2023; AISHE, 2025; World Economic Forum, 2024).

2.1 Synthesis of the Review

The literature review shows about retention and turnover of employees some consistent patterns. Employee turnover explain and as faculty turnover as positive due to organizational commitment, fairness, recognition, distribution of workload, job security, psychological safety, institutional voice, trust, commitment, and employment, than to factors such as salary, promotion, and outside opportunities (Verma & Kaur, 2024; Winarno et al., 2022;., Dai et al., 2025). Retention should be studied from the point of view of faculty staff and how they see the institution. Secondly, studies on Gender and Academia illustrate how Equity manifests itself not only through formal exclusion, but also through informal exclusion, as well as informal and indirect ways. Women, regardless of their countries, face informal exclusion, inequitable distribution of leadership, insufficient support

for research, and unpaid care work, which ultimately affects their sense of belonging, voice, and their commitment to the academic career (Mayya et al., 2021; UNESCO, 2024; Correa et al., 2025). Thirdly, inclusive leadership is described as the main mechanism for enhancing fairness, recognition, sense of belonging, psychological safety, commitment and retention in academic institution (Ashikali et al., 2021; Shafaei et al., 2023; Zeng et al., 2023). In the review, there are also some gaps — very few studies link gender equity, inclusive leadership and turnover intention in higher education, especially in India (British Council, 2023/2024; UNESCO IESALC, 2025; AISHE, 2025). To conclude, in most cases, the turnover intention and faculty retention in higher education would be improved in equitable and inclusive institutions (Dudek, 2023; Shafaei & Nejati, 2023; Mor Barak et al., 2025).

2.2 Research Gap

- An integrated analytical framework around the intersections of gender equality, inclusive leadership, and turnover intention is absent from the higher education literature, and the review shows that the starting point for constructing such a framework is there.
- Even though the review has used a deep foundation of literature, there is still a lack of literature synthesis regarding women's leadership, faculty climate, organizational commitment, and turnover.
- The literature related to higher education has yet to define the intersection of gender equality and inclusive leadership to support faculty retention.
- There remains a significant lack of interest in integrating literature about representation, leadership, and retention in a cohesive and policy-driven way.
- Particularly in the context of India, the gap remains significant. Currently available literature, to the best of knowledge, has not attempted to systematically bridge gender-sensitive organizational practices and faculty turnover intention.
- The proposed study will begin to fill the gap by collaborating the above-mentioned variables and offering a connected position of gender equality and inclusive leadership as determinants of faculty sustainability in higher education.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The dissertation's proposed relationships may be justified using Social Exchange Theory, Leader-Member Exchange Theory, Organizational Justice, and Intersectionality. According to Social

Exchange Theory, if faculty perceive fairness, support, recognition, and opportunities for professional development, they respond with trust, commitment, and a desire to remain with the institution; conversely, negative, biased, or exclusionary treatment diminishes attachment and increases desire to leave the institution. Thus, the constructs of gender equity and inclusive leadership capture the integrity of institutional social exchange relations (Verma & Kaur, 2024; Shafaei & Nejati, 2023; Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023). Leader-Member Exchange Theory posits that the quality of relationships with superiors (heads, deans, and senior administrators) determines the level of access to information, resources, visibility, and career opportunities, making inclusive leadership a pivotal factor in retention (Ashikali et al., 2021; Li & Tang, 2022; van Luttervelt, 2024). Organizational Justice focuses on the distributive, procedural, and interactional fairness (Mayya et al., 2021; Dudek, 2023; Lopes, 2024) related to promotions, workload, recognition, and respectful treatment. On the other hand, Intersectionality explains that gender is intertwined with caste, class, age, disability, discipline, and other social constructs, making inclusion inequitable and unbalanced across various groups (UNESCO, 2024; British Council, 2024a; Correa et al., 2025). These theories collectively demonstrate that fairness, leadership trust, psychological safety, satisfaction, and commitment diminish turnover intention and enhance faculty retention (Cotter et al., 2024; Mor Barak et al., 2025; UNESCO IESALC, 2025).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a quantitative design using a cross-sectional survey. The researcher designed a standardized survey to capture faculty perceptions of gender equity, inclusive leadership, and turnover intention. Survey responses were collected using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree. The analytic dataset consists of 200 records of respondents, which allows for both descriptive and inferential analysis.

3.1 Population of the Study

In terms of the primary-data framework, the population was defined as 420 faculty members employed at the included higher education institutions within the proposed survey frame. Faculty

members included those from public, private, and autonomous or deemed universities at different teaching ranks.

3.2 Sampling Technique

The sample size was determined by Cochran's formula for proportions and then adjusted using finite population correction because the target population was known and limited.

Step-1 Cochran's Formula for Initial Sample Size

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 \times p \times q}{e^2}$$

- Where $Z = 1.96$, $p = 0.50$, $q = 0.50$, $e = 0.05$
- $N_0 = 384.16$

Step-2 Finite Population Correction (FPC)

Since the population is known and limited ($N = 420$), the adjusted sample size is calculated as:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0 - 1}{N}}$$

The sample size was first estimated using Cochran's formula for proportions: At a 95% confidence level, with $Z = 1.96$, $p = 0.50$, $q = 0.50$, and $e = 0.05$, the initial sample size was calculated as 384.16. Since the total population was known and limited ($N = 420$). This produced an adjusted sample size of 200.89, which was rounded to 201. For practical purposes, the study considered a final sample size of 200 respondents.

3.3 Sampling Technique

For the purpose of model survey design, we used a purposive-cum-convenience sampling method. Faculty members were chosen for balance in the type of institution, teaching rank, and years of experience. The completed dataset has respondents from public, private, and autonomous or deemed universities.

3.4 Instrument Design and Variables

The first half of the survey gathered demographic data including sex, age range, type of institution, job title, and years of teaching. The second half assessed three constructs in the study based on 15 statements with 5 items each for the domains of: social equality, inclusive leadership, and intent to leave. Composite scores were derived as the average of the responses to the items.

Table-1 Construct Wise Structure of the Questionnaire

Construct	Number of Items	Scale	Operational Meaning
Gender Equality	5	1-5 Likert	Higher score = stronger equality perception
Inclusive Leadership	5	1-5 Likert	Higher score = stronger inclusive leadership perception
Turnover Intention	5	1-5 Likert	Higher score = stronger intention to leave

3.5 Reliability of Instrument

Internal consistency was assessed through Cronbach's alpha, and all three constructs exceeded the widely accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability for dissertation-level analysis.

Table-2 Reliability Statistics of the Scales

Construct	Cronbach Alpha
Gender Equality Score	0.842
Inclusive Leadership Score	0.86
Turnover Intention Score	0.863

3.6 Analytical Framework

The analysis of the dataset was carried out in five stages. Firstly, the frequencies and percentages for the demographics were calculated. Secondly, the descriptive statistics for the three key variables were calculated. Thirdly, the average comparisons were analyzed across different types of institutions. Fourth, Pearson correlation was used to determine the direction and strength of connection of variables. Lastly, multiple regression analysis was used to predict the combined impact of the variables, namely, gender equality, inclusive leadership, and turnover intention.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

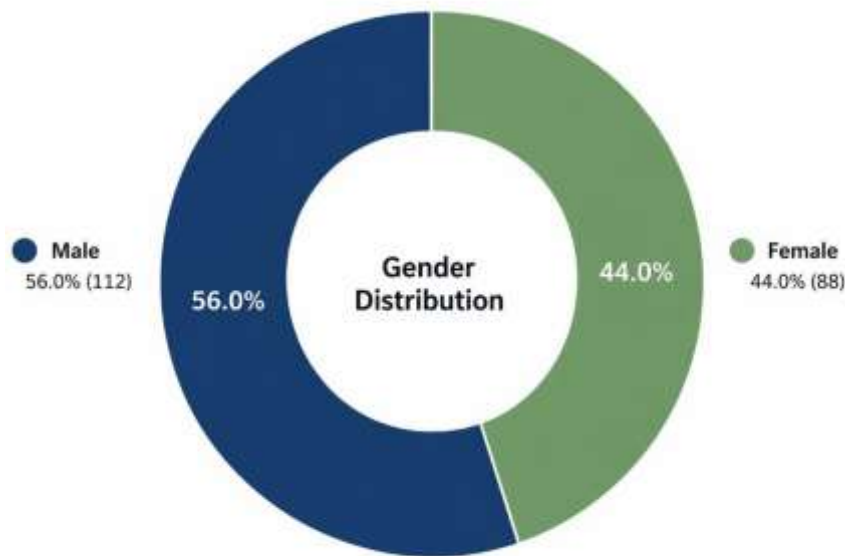
This chapter presents the statistical analysis of the 200-respondent dataset. Each table and figure is followed by a concise interpretation in paragraph form.

Table 4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

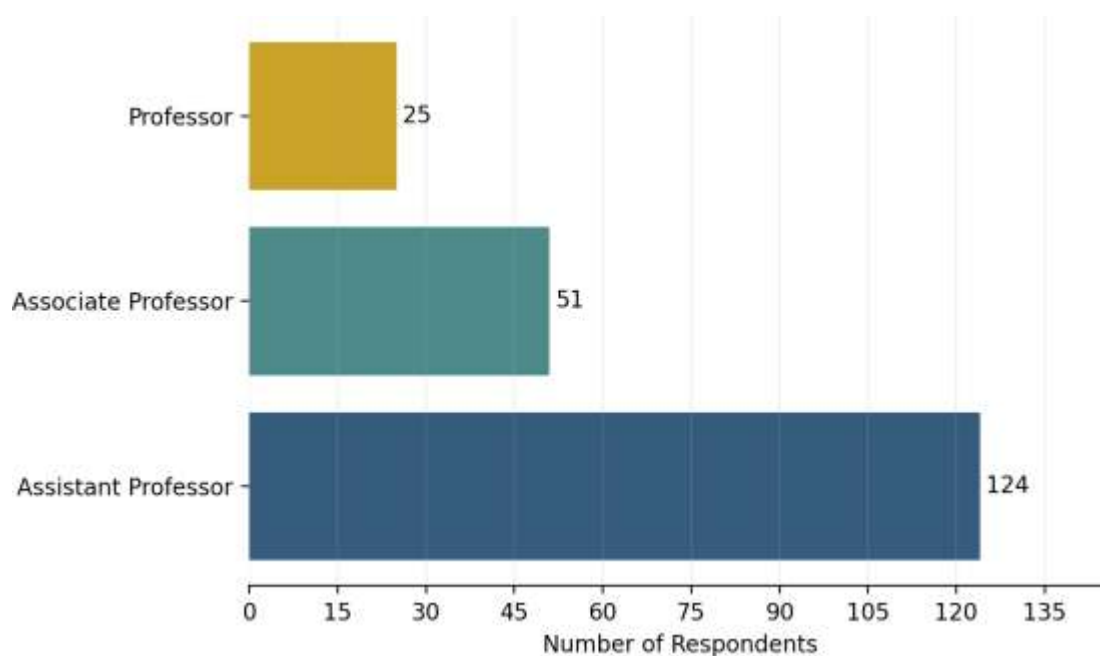
Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	112	56.0
Gender	Female	88	44.0
Age Group	35-44	63	31.5
Age Group	25-34	57	28.5
Age Group	45-54	56	28.0
Age Group	55+	24	12.0
Institution Type	Private	86	43.0
Institution Type	Government	67	33.5

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Institution Type	Autonomous/Deemed	47	23.5
Designation	Assistant Professor	124	62.0
Designation	Associate Professor	51	25.5
Designation	Professor	25	12.5
Teaching Experience	6-10 years	63	31.5
Teaching Experience	0-5 years	54	27.0
Teaching Experience	11-15 years	47	23.5
Teaching Experience	16+ years	36	18.0

Interpretation: The profile of respondents indicates a fairly even distribution across the different dimensions of gender, age, institution type, designation, and experience. Male faculty members constitute a slightly larger group, accounting for 56.0%, whereas their female counterparts comprise 44.0%. The most populous age category is 35-44 years, with strong representation from 25-34 and 45-54 age groups, which points to a solid mid-career representation. The largest academic group is comprised of Assistant Professors, which is a common expectation in most higher education environments. The differentials in institution type and experience level categories suggest that the dataset is fairly representative of the diverse faculty snapshot, rather than focusing on one specific institutional segment.

Chart-1 Gender Distribution of the Respondents (N=200)

Interpretation: The chart indicates that the sample is not significantly biased toward one gender, thus enabling the study to capture perceptions of faculty, both male and female, to a fair degree. For a gender equality dissertation, this is advantageous, as it eliminates the analytical flaw of a predominant focus on one group.

Chart-2 Respondents by Academic Designation

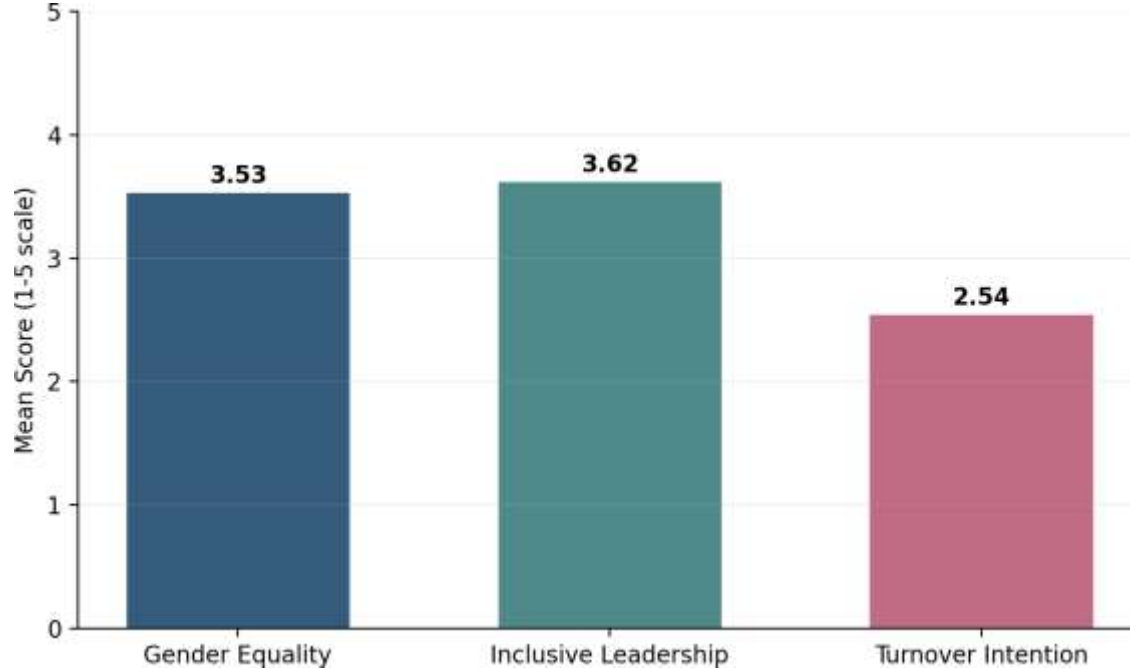
Interpretation: The designation profile illustrates that the dataset is most strongly anchored in the experience of Assistant Professors, while there is some representation from Associate Professors and Professors. This distribution has analytical merit, as the Assistant and Associate Professor roles are typically where turnover intentions are most prevalent, especially concerning issues of visibility, promotion, and access to leadership.

Table-4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Core Variables

Construct	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Cronbach Alpha
Gender Equality Score	3.53	0.76	1.6	5.0	0.842
Inclusive Leadership Score	3.62	0.8	1.2	5.0	0.86
Turnover Intention Score	2.54	0.85	1.0	4.8	0.863

Interpretation: Inclusive leadership achieves the highest average score across the three core constructs. This is followed closely by gender equality. The average score for turnover intention is lowest, which shows that, on average, respondents do not intend to leave their organizations. The reliability coefficients all in high, which makes confident in the statistical results, and also, internal consistency of the measurement scales.

Chart-3 Mean Scores of Core Constructs



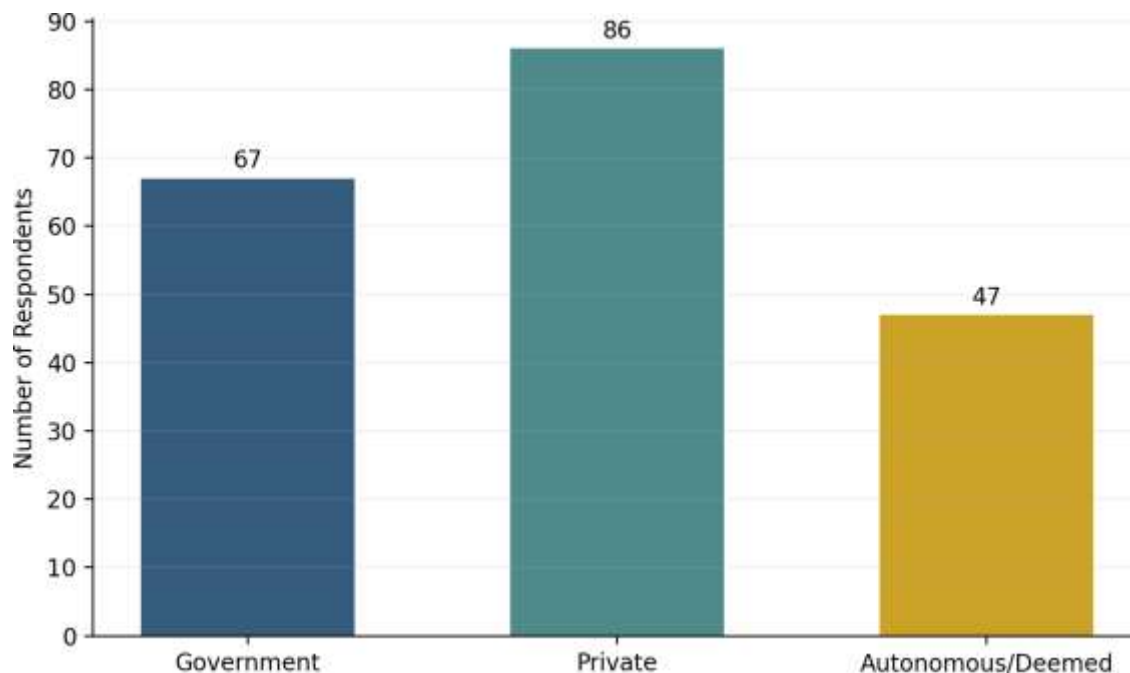
Interpretation: The bar chart highlights the patterns seen in the descriptive table. Average scores for gender equality and inclusive leadership, as well as positive turnover intention, are above the midpoint of the scale. This indicates that more positive organizational experiences are associated with lower withdrawal tendencies in the data set.

Table 4.3 Institution-wise Mean Scores on the Core Variables

Institution Type	Gender Equality Mean	Inclusive Leadership Mean	Turnover Intention Mean
Autonomous/Deemed	3.86	4.01	2.22
Government	3.47	3.61	2.54
Private	3.4	3.42	2.71

Interpretation: From the data, autonomous or deemed institutions show the most favourable perception of gender equality, inclusive leadership, and the lowest turnover intention. In contrast, private institutions demonstrate the lowest perception of equality and leadership, coupled with the highest turnover intention. The organisational context in which the faculty operate is significant. It indicates that the decisions made by faculty members are not determined by only their personal experiences, but also the overall institutional culture and governance.

Chart-4 Respondents by Institution Type



Interpretation: The institution distribution chart shows that the sample contains a relatively even distribution for all three institutional categories, but the majority of respondents are from the private institutions. This dataset strengthens the analysis as it minimizes the bias towards a singular governance model or administrative structure.

Variable	Gender Equality	Inclusive Leadership	Turnover Intention
Gender Equality Score	1.000	0.528 (p=9e-16)	-0.562 (p=5e-18)
Inclusive Leadership Score	0.528 (p=9e-16)	1.000	-0.615 (p=4e-22)
Turnover Intention Score	-0.562 (p=5e-18)	-0.615 (p=4e-22)	1.000

Interpretation: The correlation analysis identifies a moderate positive correlation between gender equity and inclusive leadership, which suggests that the institutions perceived to be more equitable are also likely to be perceived as more inclusive with respect to leadership behaviours. More importantly, the analysis reveals that both gender equity and inclusive leadership negatively correlate with turnover intention. The negative signs indicate that stronger perceptions of fairness and inclusion are linked to a lower intention to resign.

Chart-5 Correlation Matrix of Core Constructs



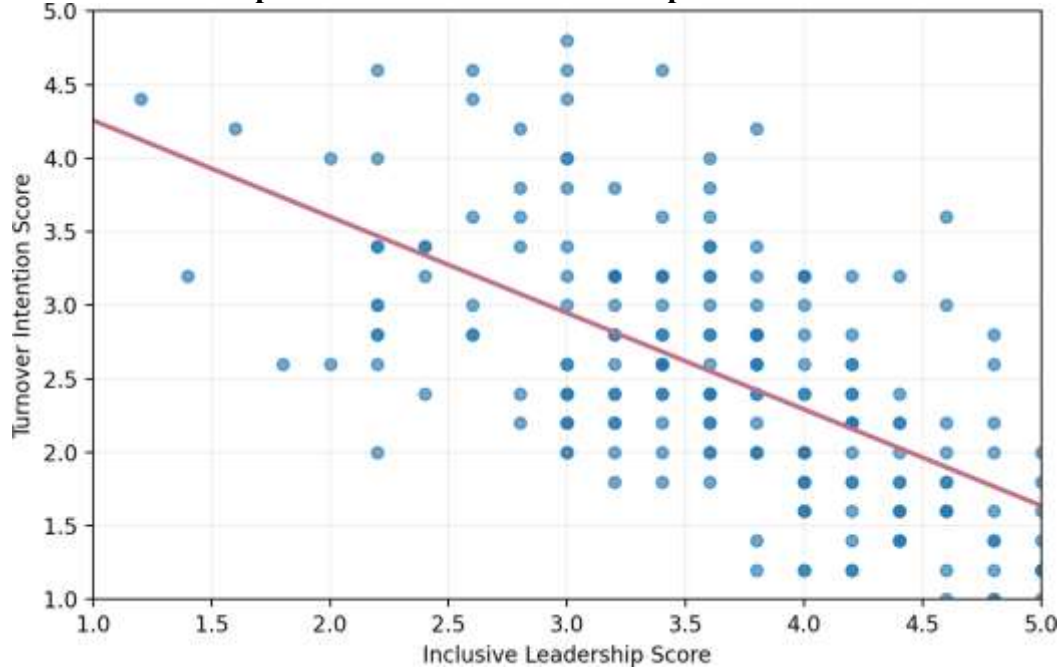
Interpretation: The heat map illustrates the statistical pattern of stronger negative associations with turnover intention and the two explanatory variables. The more negative association with inclusive leadership suggests that everyday leadership behaviour may be particularly important in influencing faculty retention-related attitudes.

Table 4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Turnover Intention

Predictor	B	Std. Error	t-value	p-value
Constant	5.54	0.239	23.184	0.000
Gender Equality Score	-0.368	0.069	-5.319	0.000
Inclusive Leadership Score	-0.47	0.066	-7.122	0.000

Model summary: $R^2 = 0.456$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.450$, $F = 82.54$, $p < .001$.

Interpretation: A significant portion of the variance in turnover intention is explained by the regression model. Both predictors have negative values and are statistically significant. This indicates that as perceptions of gender equality decrease, turnover intentions increase, and similarly, resolving perceptions of inclusive leadership leads to decreased turnover intentions. Among the predictors, inclusive leadership has the strongest value, indicating that faculty are likely to respond more to the everyday leadership practices that demonstrate respect, participation, and fairness.

Chart-6 Relationship between Inclusive Leadership and Turnover Intention


Interpretation: The downward trend line in the scatter plot visually demonstrates the inverse relationship between inclusive leadership and turnover intention. Although individual responses may differ, the trend remains, with lower turnover intentions corresponding to higher inclusive leadership scores.

Table 4.6 Hypothesis Testing Summary

Hypothesis	Statement	Decision	Basis
H1	Gender equality practices have a significant negative relationship with turnover intention.	Supported	$r = -0.562$, $p < .001$
H2	Inclusive leadership practices have a significant negative relationship with turnover intention.	Supported	$r = -0.615$, $p < .001$
H3	Gender equality and inclusive leadership jointly predict turnover intention.	Supported	$R^2 = 0.456$, $F = 82.54$, $p < .001$

Interpretation: The dataset supports all three hypotheses. The results indicate that gender equality and inclusive leadership are important, both separately and in combination, in explaining turnover intention. This supports the main argument of the dissertation that retention is influenced by the structural fairness and leadership climate.

4.1 Extended Discussion

The results show evidence of institutional patterns rather than isolated numbers. There are significant changes in women's access to higher education teaching positions in India, but the rank differentials signal that recruitment and promotion are not moving in tandem. The drop in numbers of women moving from the rank of assistant professor to professor in the higher education teaching profession demonstrates a leaky pipeline, and it raises institutional equity issues related to the absence of mentoring, research, leadership nomination, and evaluation bias. Leadership data strengthens this view, proving that workforce inclusion has not translated into the inclusion of authority. While India surpasses the recent global average in women's staffing in higher education, the OECD average remains higher with wider leadership gaps. The literature notes that inclusive and committed leadership, along with recognition, trust, and fair treatment, lowers turnover intentions, while the exclusion of those from the decision-making circles increases turnover. This means that retention goes beyond recruitment and pay, and that institutions are required to guarantee equity in mid-career advancement. Overall, inclusive leadership combined with gender equity improves faculty retention.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Findings

The study has confirmed gender equity and leadership inclusiveness as primary contributors to retention of staff. Women have overwhelmingly made their mark in higher education in India and there is still a lot of ground to cover. Evidence supporting the assertion that promotion is the area in which there is a major deficit of women is rank-based evidence where women represent the lowest numbers at the professor level in comparison to assistant professor. Women's participation in the academic space of higher education is still below the OECD standard and leadership gaps

remain. The literature suggests that exclusion, weak acknowledgment, poor organizational climate, and associated limited participatory leadership all correlate to staff retention. The answer is clear, without equity in advancement and leadership, there is limited opportunity to retain faculty

5.2 Suggestions

Retention strategies at universities must integrate gender equity, inclusive leadership, and faculty well-being. Retention should include climate measures such as fairness, psychological safety, recognition, mentoring, and inclusive leadership, in addition to exit data. Internal assessments should include annual reviews of gender distribution, committee representation, promotion outcomes, and leadership levels by rank. Retention, recruitment, promotion, workload, mentoring, research assistance, and nominations should be governed by publicly stated criteria to limit informal networks. Inclusive leadership training should be extended to all levels of academic administration, and appraisal systems should incorporate reviewed faculty inclusion and retention components. Resolving grievances and providing greater faculty support, including mentoring, flexible work arrangements, childcare, leadership preparation for women, and leadership support, should all be improved. Enhanced diversity reporting will facilitate better benchmarking and support future research.

5.3 Limitations

This dissertation is based on secondary data and is therefore limited by existing data's quality, breadth, and scope. Official reports provide strong evidence on representation trends but do not measure turnover intention. Likewise, published studies on turnover intention, use varying contexts, scales, and samples, which makes findings not fully comparable. The study primarily focuses on Indian higher education, although some conceptual arguments on inclusive leadership and turnover intention, are from non-educational sectors and foreign higher education systems. Such studies, although contextualized, are still useful for constructing and testing theories. Since no primary data was collected, the dissertation does not derive direct causal estimates but rather analytical conclusions.

5.4 Conclusion

The dissertation concludes that gender equality and inclusive leadership are central to faculty stability, organizational commitment, and institutional quality in higher education. Recent evidence shows progress in women's participation, particularly in enrolment and early academic ranks, but representation declines at senior and leadership levels. This gap between participation and authority may weaken belonging and retention. Reviewed studies indicate that turnover intention increases under exclusion, poor climate, weak recognition, and low trust. Inclusive leadership helps reduce these risks by fostering fairness and value, while gender equality strengthens access, legitimacy, and progression. Together, they improve retention and make institutions stronger, more trusted, and academically sustainable.

5.5 Policy Implications and Future Research

Future research building on this dissertation may include original surveys using the appendix questionnaire to explore how inclusive leadership and perceived gender equity impact faculty turnover intentions, considering mediators such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and psychological safety. Turnover and inequity risks may be most pronounced in certain disciplines, which could be revealed through comparative studies. Longitudinal studies may show how faculty decisions are influenced over time by leadership, promotion opportunities, family responsibilities, and institutional support. Policy-wise, the need for more robust diversity and leadership reporting will help to strengthen accountability. Generally, this research indicates that to strengthen retention, commitment, legitimacy of the institution, and academic development, gender equity and inclusive leadership should be prioritized as important organizational resources.

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ANNEXURE II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

Title of Study: Impact of Gender Equality and Inclusive Leadership Practices on Turnover Intention of Faculty Members in Higher Education Institutions

Instruction: Please tick the most appropriate response. For Sections B, C, and D, use the following scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

Section A: Demographic Profile

1. Gender: Male / Female
2. Age Group: 25-34 / 35-44 / 45-54 / 55+
3. Institution Type: Government / Private / Autonomous or Deemed
4. Designation: Assistant Professor / Associate Professor / Professor
5. Teaching Experience: 0-5 years / 6-10 years / 11-15 years / 16+ years

Section B: Gender Equality

1. Opportunities for promotion are distributed fairly in my institution.
2. Male and female faculty receive equal professional respect.
3. Committee and leadership opportunities are allocated without gender bias.
4. Institutional policies support equal career advancement for all genders.
5. The overall work environment reflects gender fairness.

Section C: Inclusive Leadership

1. Institutional leaders listen carefully to faculty concerns.
2. Leaders encourage participation in academic and administrative decisions.
3. Faculty members are treated with dignity and respect by institutional leaders.
4. Leaders create a climate in which different views are welcomed.
5. Leaders support fair and transparent communication.

Section D: Turnover Intention

1. I often think about leaving my current institution.
2. I may look for employment in another institution in the near future.

3. I would leave my institution if I found a suitable opportunity elsewhere.
4. I feel uncertain about continuing my long-term career in this institution.
5. I have recently experienced withdrawal from my present work setting.

ANNEXURE II

POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE CALCULATION

Population (N): 420 faculty members from selected higher education institutions.

Confidence Level: 95%

Margin of Error: 5%

Estimated Proportion (p): 0.50

Complement of p (q): 0.50

Step-1 Cochran's Formula for Initial Sample Size

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 \times p \times q}{e^2}$$

- Where Z= 1.96, p=0.50, q=0.50, e=0.05
- N₀=384.16

Step-2 Finite Population Correction (FPC)

Since the population is known and limited (N=420), the adjusted sample size is calculated as:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0 - 1}{N}}$$

Sample Size(N)=200

ANNEXURE III

Dataset CodeBook

Table A.1 Codebook for the Attached 200-Respondent Dataset

Variable	Description
Respondent ID	Unique respondent code
Gender	Gender of respondent
Age Group	Age category
Institution Type	Type of institution
Designation	Teaching rank
Teaching Experience	Experience category
GE1-GE5	Five item responses for gender equality
IL1-IL5	Five item responses for inclusive leadership
TI1-TI5	Five item responses for turnover intention
Gender Equality Score	Mean of GE1 to GE5
Inclusive Leadership Score	Mean of IL1 to IL5
Turnover Intention Score	Mean of TI1 to TI5