

Talent Management Practices as Determinants of Retention, Attrition, and Work–Life Balance Among Women Faculty Members

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ABSTRACT

The higher education sector increasingly recognizes that women faculty members are critical contributors to academic excellence, innovation, and institutional reputation. However, despite their valuable role, women faculty often face challenges related to retention, attrition, and work–life balance due to institutional gaps in talent management practices. In the case of women faculty members, the focus of recruitment activities should concentrate on how an institution can support the career development and work along with life coincidence. After selection, they should not merely engage in administrative matters during on boarding, but have formal orientation plans that are able to acculturate them with the various policies and resources offered by the institution, as well as institutional networks of people. This conceptual article examines how effective talent management — encompassing recruitment, career development, mentoring, performance recognition, flexible work policies, and leadership opportunities — serves as a determinant of retention, reduces attrition risk, and fosters work–life harmony among women faculty members. The discussion integrates organizational theory and gender equity perspectives to highlight strategic approaches that academic institutions can adopt to create an enabling and sustainable environment for women educators. The article concludes with policy recommendations aimed at enhancing institutional inclusivity and long-term faculty engagement.

Keywords: Talent Management, Retention, Attrition, Work–Life Balance, Women Faculty, Higher Education, Human Resource Strategies.

INTRODUCTION:

In the modern academia, the ability to recruit and retain excellent faculty is one of the pillars of institutional excellence. Female faculty in particular can contribute diverse opinions, leadership potential, and pedagogical creative innovation that can only increase educational experience. Nevertheless, there still exists gender based issues such as inequality in the receiving of promotions, equal pay, small accessibility to leadership and work life conflict due to societal pressure and lack of flexibility with institutions. These contribute to increase attrition rate and loss of morale of the women faculty. Talent management (TM) has gone beyond the HR systems of corporations and it has become a strategic requirement in academic setting to tackle the human capital requirements of the institution of higher learning. TM involves a package of combined activities that aim at attracting, developing, retaining, and optimal usage of

skills of workers. Can positively affect faculty retention, reduce risk of attrition, and enhance work-life integration of women faculty TM, when used with a gender-sensitive approach, can facilitate. The following article discusses the theoretical connections among talent practices management and three factors related to women faculty in the form of (1) retention, (2) attrition, and (3) work-life balance. It contends that faculty commitment and performance is more likely to develop over the long run when institutions actively instantiate inclusive TM practices.

Talent Management Practices in Academia

1. On boarding and Recruitment: Among the strategies to recruit in academic settings is the active preparation of hiring procedures that will bring gender equity and inclusivity of a wide range of diverse and qualified applicants. This entails precision in job ads, open

processes of selection and objective assessment procedures. An effective on boarding process will establish engagement early, will ensure there is a clear understanding of the expectations and make the employee feel a part of the larger goals, thus raising the probability of long term retention and job satisfaction.

2. Professional Development: Professional development would guarantee that women faculty members would enjoy lifelong chances to develop teaching, research and leadership skills. Workshops, seminars, grants and sponsorship of conferences are among some of the ways in which institutions can make available in order to promote skill development and innovation. The possibility of collaborative research and funds to carry out research that would enable individual faculty to improve their influence in the academia and networks. There are also gender-based issues that need to be dealt with during development programs including work-life balance and career advancement issues. The faculty becomes engaged and loyal when they have a consistent direction of professional advancement. Opportunities to learn continuously enhances academic standards as well as making the institutions more competitive and retaining the faculty.

3. Mentoring and Coaching: Mentoring and coaching ensure structured systems of support to help women faculty advance their careers, build on research activities and lead in academic areas. Institutionalized mentoring has been established whereby junior faculty is paired up with their seniors, who can advise and advocate and provide networking opportunities. Targeted topics Informal coaching may be used when there are certain issues to understand e.g. grant writing, publication strategies, or dealing with institutional politics. Mentorship is particularly useful among the women faculty in terms of breaking down the gender related wall and avenues of leadership. Good mentoring can create an organizational culture of appreciation, confidence and job satisfaction. Environments which invest in mentoring, do not support individual careers only but also make academic environment more collaborative and inclusive.

4. Performance recognition and reward systems: Women faculty motivation and retention cannot be achieved without recognition and rewards. Good mechanisms connect quantitative success in research, teaching specializations, and service with quantifiable rewards of promotions, bonuses and research grants, and sabbaticals. Rewards must also include some contributions that are normally underestimated, including mentorship; community related contributions as well as diversity efforts. Fair evaluation criteria that are clear and transparent are used to provide a fair reward process. Recognition of faculty efforts in the public media can give morale and pride in an institution. Women faculty in an educational setting feel much more inclined to be dedicated, high-achievers, and long-term positive contributors to the academic community when what they do is valued and rewarded.

5. Apartment Housing Standards: The flexibility of work dates enable the women faculty to juggle between academic and personal prescriptions. Flexible teaching schedules, hybrid working and flexibility in research time are some of the alternatives to alleviate stress and increase productivity. Another agency that increases work life harmony is family oriented policies such as parental leave and child-care support. The willingness to practice individualized flexibility must be incorporated into the culture of the institution such that individualized flexibility is accessible without a stigma or as a penalty to career. Institutions can help meet the personal needs and build a hospitable environment that not only appreciates the work of a professional, but also the welfare of an individual.

6. Leadership Development Pathways: Leadership development programs prepare women faculty for administrative and governance roles within higher education. Training initiatives may include workshops on strategic planning, budgeting, conflict resolution, and policy-making. Institutions can also offer shadowing opportunities with senior leaders, participation in committees, and leadership fellowships. Providing these pathways addresses the gender gap in academic leadership and ensures diverse perspectives in decision-making. Leadership readiness programs build confidence, expand influence, and inspire women faculty to pursue higher responsibilities. By cultivating female leaders, institutions strengthen succession planning, enhance organizational resilience, and signal a strong commitment to gender equity and inclusive governance in academia.

Retention and Attrition in Higher Education; Key retention drivers include:

1. Mentoring Networks: Mentoring networks Lines of support placed between women faculty and other supportive peers, more senior folks, and cross-disciplinary partners who have been in trusted to assist in developing professionally. In contrast with single-mentor models, networks provide multiple personalities, training, and the possibility to perform as academic partners. The relationships offer information about the professional development, research paths, and work and life dilemmas as well as emotional support. The mentoring networks may also assist women faculty in dealing with a university politics and overcoming gender-related issues. Inclusion in these kinds of networks leads to confidence, visibility and membership to leadership positions. Universities enhance alluded retention by making mentoring networks an institutionalized form, fostering collaborative culture and creating equity in providing career enhancing opportunities to all the faculty members.

2. Research Support: Women faculty is vulnerable to the effects of research support as a powerful source of academic success and retention. Funding, research assistants, grant-writing workshops and less binding administrative demands can be offered as contributions by institutions to help increase scholarly productivity. There are also laboratories, libraries, and the ability to

collaborate with other fields, all of which increase the capability of research. Specific support given to women faculty members who have increased chances of experiencing high levels of service and family commitments enables them to stay competitive in terms of research output and ability to obtain funds. Academic impact is widened by the acknowledgement of various research work such as the community-based and applied projects. Research support facilities indicate an institutional desire to promote scholarship and instill loyalty and minimize the chances of loosening.

3. Inclusive Culture: A diverse culture embraces differences, brings about equity, and makes every faculty member feel respected and encouraged. This is not just policy; it is also practices in daily life including the sharing of workload, treating one another with respect and giving due appreciation to different contributions. To women faculty, inclusive culture helps solve the barriers that stem from unconscious bias, being sidelined in decision making and the unequal distribution of resources. The inclusion can be fostered in institutions by use of diversity training, open governance and representation of women in the leadership positions. Valuing diversity enhances involvement of the faculty, relieves the sense of isolation, and promotes commitment to long-run. Finally, it raises the reputation of the institution, and enables a rich, collegial academic

TALENT MANAGEMENT AND ATTRITION REDUCTION

Attrition can undermine institutional performance and reputation. For women faculty, attrition often stems from structural inequities, lack of recognition, and limited career progression opportunities. TM practices can mitigate these challenges through:

1. Transparency in Career Path: Transparency in career paths is an issue where the faculty particularly women must have a clear understanding of the requirements, time tables and standards of promotions, achieving tenure statuses and those related to leadership. Such pathways should be advertised by the institutions in policy documents, during orientation, and mentorship programs. Clear career structures help eliminate guesswork, misconception and create the feeling of equality. As a woman faculty, this makes it easier to plan professional development and align research and teaching aspirations to institutional expectations. It is through the removal of ambiguity that the universities develop the level of trust and mitigate attrition resulting in career stagnation, and an atmosphere in which faculty not afraid to work toward long-term goals without the fear of covert prejudice or undefined standards.

2. Workload Equity: Workload equity deals with balancing between the teaching, research, service and administrative responsibilities of faculty members. Women faculty bears an uneven burden of service and student mentoring work, which may constrain their ability to get on research and further their careers. To overcome this misbalancing, the institution could establish forms of monitoring the workloads, the

assignment systems and the identification of valued invisible labor. The equity of workload also entails life stage and individual situations in allotment of work. Universities can also avoid burnout when ensuring that duties are divided fairly and equally to raise productivity and work-life balance. This type of equity is critical to retaining capable female faculties

3. Feedback Systems and Exit Interview: Exploitation of exit interviews and feedback mechanisms enables institutions to receive information about the departing faculty in regard to the workplace experiences and difficulties as well as reasons why people leave. Patterns are identified in structured, confidential interviews that can include gender-specific barriers to faculty women faculty. Improvement in policy, culture, and management practices can also be effectively achieved by feedback of current faculty members via regular surveys of the climate. Organisations that respond to this information are responsive and dedicated to a positive change. In the long run, the inclusion of exit and feedback information in strategic planning has the potential to also minimize the turnover, enhance faculty satisfaction, and increase the inclusiveness and supportive nature of the academic environment

4. Recognition of Non-Traditional Contributions: The importance of non-traditional contributions is recognized as a fruitful academic work, which can not be measured in publications and thru grant funding. These can include student mentorship, community engagement, curriculum innovation or diversity advocacy, where women faculty especially excels. Institutions are able to incorporate such contributions through evaluation of performance, promotion and reward. This holistic orientation puts a premium on the broad scope of scholarly influence and legitimizes the various functions accomplished by faculty in meeting the objectives of institutions. Understanding non-traditional contributions not only is important in boosting morale it also promotes the idea that academic success may involve a wider definition, and this aspect is important in whether an individual is retained in an academic community in addition to widening the present scholarly community.

Talent Management and Work–Life Balance

Work–life balance is increasingly recognized as a strategic factor in retaining high-performing faculty. TM practices can support balance through:

1. Flexible Scheduling: Flexible scheduling allows women faculty to adapt their teaching, research, and service commitments to accommodate personal and family responsibilities. This may include adjusting lecture times, offering block teaching, or clustering office hours to maximize efficiency. Flexibility reduces stress, enhances productivity, and supports better work–life integration. For faculty with care giving duties, the ability to tailor schedules can prevent burnout and promote sustained engagement. Institutions benefit from higher morale and reduced turnover when they normalize flexible arrangements as part of their culture. Such practices signal respect for faculty autonomy while

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maintaining academic standards and meeting institutional objectives effectively.

2. Work Options (Hybrid and Remote): Remote jobs and work on a hybrid basis allows women faculty to complete some academic projects off campus like grading, research writing, and even virtual advising. Such arrangements result in savings of commuting time, stress, and giving a larger degree of control over the work environment. Hybrid schemes and blending, which involves both on-site obligations and offsite commitment, sustain community interaction and provide flexibility. Remote alternatives are priceless to the faculty who juggle caring or health demands. Policies, training, and the appropriate digital tools should be made available so that the institutions remain productive. Adopting this flexibility may increase faculty satisfaction, and expand the talent pool, as well as facilitate long-term retention planning.

3 Policies on leave Parental and family leave: Leave policies offer paid or partially paid leave during childbirth, adoption, or when ill family members are ill. Such advantages are essential to women faculty, as there are usually career interruptions associated with such life events. The efficient policies are to guarantee the seamless transition back to the teaching and research opportunities without a penalty to one career speed and tenure tracks. Flexible arrangements with respect to returning to work also promote well-being. Companies, which value family care leave, show responsibility and dedication to fairness and caring, which encourages loyalty and reliance. These policies are not only effective in increasing retention but also assist in drawing the best talents in need of supportive and family friendly academic conditions.

4. Wellness Programs: Wellness programs address the physical, mental, and emotional health of faculty, creating a foundation for sustained performance and satisfaction. These may include stress management workshops, on-campus fitness facilities, counseling services, mindfulness sessions, and nutrition guidance. For women faculty, wellness initiatives can counteract the compounded stress of academic responsibilities and personal obligations. Institutions that integrate wellness

into their culture send a clear message that employee well-being is a priority. Regular participation in wellness programs can reduce absenteeism, improve morale, and enhance resilience. By investing in faculty health, universities strengthen retention, productivity, and overall institutional effectiveness.

ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Work life balance is the measure of the success in keeping up with both professional and family and personal well being. The workload is evenly divided among women faculty, family-friendly policies offered, and organizational culture that provides support of personal priorities with academic requirements. The chances that this institution would hold faculty jobs in the long-term. On the other hand, faculty attrition, both voluntary and involuntary, is another factor that may force a program to lose continuity or to incur recruitment costs that can go a long way. Predominant aspects associated with attrition in women faculty are climate in the workplace, no advancement to look forward to and a conflict between personal needs and a strict institutional environment. Effective TM practices are also used as retention practices in that they align institutional agendas with the institutional/career ambitions of women faculty. Institutional support of professional growth, fair promotion schemes, and evaluation procedures all increase the possibility of the women faculty seeing the fairness of this setup and their chances of career development. In the case of women faculty, the sustained capacity to work congruently between academic demands and care giving and other personal commitments may be a direct contributing factor towards the choice of staying in academia. Institutions incapable of meeting such needs will lose that talent to other industries that may have more accommodative work cultures.

The null hypothesis is tested with the help of parametric tests, Z test.

H0: There is no significant difference in the mean of determinants of various dimensions Retention, Attrition, and Work–Life Balance according to the gender of the respondents

Table: 1

Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Z	Sig.
Retention,	Male	95	19.5895	1.64701	-1.012	.124
	Female	105	19.0190	2.05211		
	Total	200	19.2900	1.88778		
Attrition	Male	95	16.1158	2.76707	-2.153	.037
	Female	105	16.5429	2.44960		
	Total	200	16.3400	2.60737		
Work–Life Balance	Male	95	12.2737	1.80686	-1.084	.231
	Female	105	12.4762	1.54481		
	Total	200	12.4050	1.65184		

For Retention, the mean score for male respondents (M = 19.5895, SD = 1.64701) was slightly higher than that of female respondents (M = 19.0190, SD = 2.05211). However, the Z-value (-1.012) and significance level (p = 0.124) indicate that

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this difference is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This suggests that gender does not significantly influence perceptions of retention determinants.

For Attrition, male respondents reported a mean score of 16.1158 (SD = 2.76707) compared to females with a mean score of 16.5429 (SD = 2.44960). The Z-value (-2.153) and p-value (0.037) reveal a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level, indicating that gender plays a role in perceptions of attrition determinants. Females scored slightly higher, suggesting they may perceive attrition-related issues more strongly than males.

For Work–Life Balance, males had a mean score of 12.2737 (SD = 1.80686) and females 12.4762 (SD = 1.54481). The Z-value (-1.084) and p-value (0.231) show no significant difference between genders for this dimension. This implies that work–life balance perceptions are relatively consistent regardless of gender.

Overall, the analysis shows that gender differences are significant only for attrition, while retention and work–life balance perceptions do not vary significantly between male and female respondents.

TABLE: 2

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AGE AND LEVEL OF TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICE
CHI-SQUARE TEST**

Age Group	Level of practice			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
Less than 30	30 42.9%	28 40.0%	12 17.1%	70 100.0%
30 to 50	3 3.5%	55 64.7%	27 31.8%	85 100.0%
More than 50	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	45 100.0%	45 100.0%
Total	33 16.5%	83 41.5%	84 42.0%	200 100.0%
Chi-Square	0.542	Difference - 4	Sig.	.969

The analysis aimed to examine the relationship between respondents' age group and their level of satisfaction with talent management practices. From the cross-tabulation, it is observed that among respondents less than 30 years old, 42.9% reported low satisfaction, 40.0% moderate satisfaction, and 17.1% high satisfaction. In the 30 to 50 years group, only 3.5% reported low satisfaction, the majority (64.7%) expressed moderate satisfaction, and 31.8% reported high satisfaction. For respondents over 50 years old, all (100%) reported high satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The practices involved in talent management are also influential factors in the retention and attrition of faculty members and work-life balance especially among women in academia. Institutions with higher education that develop and follow through in a pro-active manner on any TM strategy designed to ensure active inclusion of all will enjoy a more diverse, engaged, and productive faculty. By so doing, they can increase performance at the institution and moreover, help to increase gender equity in the academic profession. The Chi-Square value ($\chi^2 = 0.542$, $df = 4$) with a significance level of $p = 0.969$ is well above the 0.05 threshold, indicating no statistically significant relationship between age group and level of satisfaction with talent management practices. This implies that in the given sample, satisfaction levels with talent management practices are not dependent on age, and differences observed across age groups are likely due to chance rather than any underlying relationship. Sustainable success requires a shift from reactive HR measures to proactive, systemic, and gender-responsive talent management policies that value the unique contributions of women faculty members. This conceptual exploration underscores that retaining talent is not solely about offering competitive salaries; it is about creating an academic environment

where women faculty can envision long-term careers, lead with confidence, and maintain healthy work–life integration.

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