Demystifying the Leadership Mechanism: The Mediating Role of Organisational Commitment Between Leadership style and Turnover Intention

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ABSTRACT:

Purpose: This study aims to explore the mediating role of organizational commitment between administrative leadership styles and faculty intentions to quit from higher education institutions (HEIs) and to examine the direct relationships between these two variables.

Design methodology/approach: Grounded in Social Exchange Theory, the approach used was quantitative, explanatory, cross-sectional and research based. The sample comprised of N=250 full-time faculty (FTF) teachers working in public, private, and deemed universities of the educational hub of Delhi and Delhi National Capital Region (NCR). The conceptual framework was empirically validated using variance-based Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM).

Findings: The results indicated that the structural analysis shows that the variables of leadership style positively and significantly affect organizational commitment (β=0.402) and have a negative and significant effect on the variable of voluntary turnover intentions (β=-0.281). Organizational commitment also directly inhibits turnover intentions (β=-0.322) and serves as an important partial mediator (β=-0.129). The operational model accounted for 24% of the variance in faculty turnover intentions (R2adj=0.240) and had a good global model fit (SRMR=0.073).

Originality/value: This is one of the first studies to model these variables collectively in a highly dense environment of Delhi NCR with the help of a rigorous PLS-SEM approach. It uniquely illustrates how organizational commitment can be an important psychological pipeline, yet there is a strong, direct capacity of administrative leadership to minimize faculty "flight risks" beyond emotional attachment pipelines.

Keywords: Leadership Styles, Organizational Commitment, Turnover Intention, Faculty Retention, PLS-SEM, Delhi NCR, Higher Education Institutions.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Faculty turnover in higher education institutions (HEIs) has emerged as a critical institutional concern due to its far-reaching consequences on operational continuity, student learning outcomes, and the overall quality of education. Within the unique and highly demanding academic ecosystem, leadership behaviour plays a pivotal role in shaping faculty attitudes, cultivating workplace satisfaction, and determining whether an academic chooses to remain or exit an institution. Understanding the relationships between leadership and retention has become a strategic necessity for university administrators because universities have become more focused on retaining human capital, particularly for in-demand faculty, due to the high financial and intellectual investment required to replace these key people. In essence, leadership is about guiding, coordinating, and inspiring people to achieve institutional goals through the creation of a shared vision and a conducive work environment (Northouse, 2018). The administration of universities and colleges comes in a variety of shapes, from the visionary to the structured or hands-off. Each mode has a huge effect on employee behaviours and organizational effectiveness. Northouse (2018) states that effective academic leadership involves clear communication, professional development and 'organizational commitment'. 'Turnover intention' is a conscious and intentional cognitive process of one's intention to leave the work unit or organization in the near future (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Turnover intention, as it is called in the human resource literature, is the closest and most powerful proximal predictor of actual voluntary turnover. Various organizational antecedents have a direct impact on this cognitive state, such as immediate leadership behaviours and internal psychological states, like organizational commitment. The motivations of high attrition rates are of critical importance to institutional sustainability as it has an active destabilizing effect on institutional morality and academic excellence.

1.2 Academic Leadership Styles and Retention Metrics

Psychological effects of leadership differ across leadership styles for university faculty. Transformational leadership, which involves intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and individualized consideration, inspires faculty to join with the school's larger vision and creates a collaborative culture that leads faculty to be intrinsically motivated and reduces voluntary turnover (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bogler, 2001). The empirical findings corroborate a negative association between transformational behaviour and 'turnover intention', mainly due to the ability of transformational behaviour to protect faculty members from the risk of burnout at the workplace (Ali & Rehman, 2020). In contrast, transactional leadership is based on the structured exchange of operational conditions, the strict utilization of reward and punishment and correctional measures (Bass, 1985). Transactional structures may help organize on-going administration tasks by outlining expectations (Judge & Piccolo, 2004), but may also restrict faculty innovation, professional improvement, and collaboration, with mixed retention results (Bass, 1999). Lastly, Laissez Faire leadership is a passive, non-interventional leadership style that gives complete autonomy without providing administrative assistance. This lack of direction can lead to high role ambiguity, administrative frustration, and a high turnover rate for academic staff (Skogstad et al., 2007; Yukl, 2013). These direct links are known to exist, but there is a lack of research on the relationship between these styles of leadership and internal psychological attachment, namely organizational commitment, and how this moderates the relationship between the two and impacts on retention outcome in large education centres. This study directly fills this gap because it examines the direct and indirect structural relationships between administrative leadership and faculty's intention to leave in the educational hub of Delhi and Delhi National Capital Region (NCR).

1.3 Research Objectives (RO)

1. To examine the effect of leadership style on organizational commitment among faculty members in higher education institutions
2. To investigate the direct effect of leadership style and faculty turnover intention in higher education institutions.
3. To evaluate the association of organisational commitment on faculty turnover intention in higher education institutions.

4. To analyse the mediating role of organizational commitment between leadership style and turnover intention among faculty members in higher education institutions.

1.4 Research Questions (RQ)

1. Does leadership style significantly effect on organizational commitment among faculty members in higher education institutions?
2. Does leadership style significantly direct effect on faculty turnover intention in higher education institutions?
3. What is the association of organizational commitment on faculty turnover intention in higher education?
4. To what extent does organizational commitment mediate the leadership style and turnover intention among faculty members in higher education institutions?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical and Historical Evolution of Leadership Research

Leadership is a constantly changing field of study in management and organizational publications and has seen many paradigms introduced into the modern academic world. As shown in a detailed bibliometric analysis (1975-2020) done by Doğan et al. (2021), research on leadership has grown considerably since 2009, when the investigation of specialized leadership structures, such as ethical leadership, visionary leadership, charismatic leadership, servant leadership, authentic leadership, transactional leadership, and transformational leadership, began to increase. The structural analysis of the Web of Science database highlights transformative and transactional behaviours, which form the basis of the current paradigms used to analyse organizations in the modern sense (Doğan et al, 2021). These governance models have a direct impact on the outcomes of educational ecosystems. The results of the empirical research carryout by Hatemu et al. (2020) also show that macro-level variables (organizational culture, professional competency, and structural certifications) interweave in determining the performance of the teacher, which makes it necessary to carry out professional development in a systematic way to ensure optimal learning outcomes. Therefore, it is important to have a grasp about the impact of these general styles on individual employees' results, especially within higher education.

2.2 Empirical Review of Structural Paths

2.2.1 Leadership Style and Organizational Commitment

There is ample evidence in organizational behaviour literature that there are significant relationships between leader behaviours and immediate employee attitudes. Transformational leadership, as a concept, which comprises idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support, is of particular interest in higher education because of its direct link with organization commitment and retention (Shurbagi, 2014). As recently reported by the institutions, leadership behaviours are the most important drivers of changing employee attitudes. The findings from the modern empirical evidences make it clear that the key predictors of the transformational leadership have a positive relationship with affective organizational commitment within modern education environments (Matsila, 2026). In the context of Social Exchange Theory, faculty members will consequently feel more connected and committed to the university's main vision once the university administration has acted with high integrity, transparent governance and active support for the profession. On the other hand, an analytical disconnection between constructive leadership structures and day-to-day work can hinder the development of an institution's climate, and administrative action is directly linked to positive organizational results (Deroncele-Acosta, 2026). Moreover, Kılınç et al. (2022) point out that transformative leadership fosters trust and commitment in institutions and sets up a highly supportive environment with faculty objectives that are systematically connected to the central objectives of the university.

2.2.2 Leadership Style and Faculty Turnover Intentions

The retention of faculty has become a significant challenge for faculty administrators in the modern higher education landscape, as recent statistics show it is a major source of faculty turnover in the first one to five years after graduating from college (Samuel Opolot, 2026). What has been found is that certain configurations of leadership correlate directly to the person's decision to leave or remain in an academic position. Structured, collaborative, empowering styles

of leadership can effectively mitigate intent to structural turnover, whereas hands-off leadership such as laissez faire leadership can directly contribute to increased cognitive intent to leave (Magdaong, 2026) and work-related burnout. The negative or abusive behavioural characteristics of a leader are likely to have a significantly greater destructive influence on the development of active flight risks of people under his or her command, and the development of intentional and supportive behaviours are an operational must to directly reduce active flight risks among people under the leader's command (Rodrigues et al., 2026). Such results vary greatly between different leadership styles. Bauwens et al. (2022) note that turnaround results obtained by transformational leadership are very positive in terms of the intention to turnover, whereas the other two models (transactional and laissez-faire) do not produce the same retentive benefits. Institutional efforts focused on faculty retention are not likely to be successful because transactional leadership, which relies exclusively on formal rewards and sanctions, is not attractive to faculty members' psychological and emotional needs (Bauwens et al., 2022).

2.2.3 Organizational Commitment and Faculty Turnover Intentions

The development of organizational commitment is paramount in the process of removing the voluntary flight risks. Transformational leaders foster a sense of belonging and ongoing professional growth among their employees, making it easier to prevent feelings of work-related burn out and dissatisfaction, which are major and strong antecedents to the intention to leave in 'higher education institutions' (Bauwens et al., 2022). The psychological fit of employees in their administration related to value congruence and professional care, which in turn reduces voluntary attrition behaviours (Wnuk, 2026).

2.3 The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

Recent studies explore multi-stage structural pathways to understanding the process underlying faculty attrition. For example, Sarmento et al. (2024) examined the role of transformational leadership in knowledge sharing and change management, which helps to boost the lecturer's productivity and dedication and reduce turnover. Transformational leaders are crucial for academic invention and organizational success because it use intellectual stimulation and individual attention as major tools to reduce the voluntary turnover of faculty (Sarmento et al., 2024). Finally, autonomous workers with open and collaborative governance show higher operational performance and a significantly lower intention to leave (Sarmento et al., 2024). Likewise, Kılınç et al. (2022) highlight that trust in leadership, institutional commitment are key mediators. If faculty members trust their administrators, it tend to feel more attached to the school and to feel more motivated toward the school, which in turn makes them less likely to seek other employment. Advanced multiple regression modelling techniques reveal that organizational commitment is a key psychological process that effectively converts regular aspects of the work environment into structural retention (Rodrigues et al., 2026).

However, the traditional beliefs about mediation are constantly being tested in the exceedingly distinctive and competitive higher education system where competing campuses actively pursue faculty members. (Sofiyan, 2026). Although emotional attachment (e.g. workplace commitment and institutional attachment) partially connects these pathways, administrative leadership still has an assertive and direct power to directly reduce turnover intentions by providing support for employees' immediate workplace environments which does not rely on the internal emotional attachment of the employee (Sofiyan, 2026).

2.4 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

Based on the theoretical mechanics that were reviewed and from the empirical literature, a conceptual framework was constructed to depict the structural pathway among the variables. Leadership Style is the primary exogenous predictor construct in this study, which is followed by an intervening mediator construct (Organizational Commitment), and finally, the endogenous outcome variable (Turnover Intention) as shown in Figure 2.1.

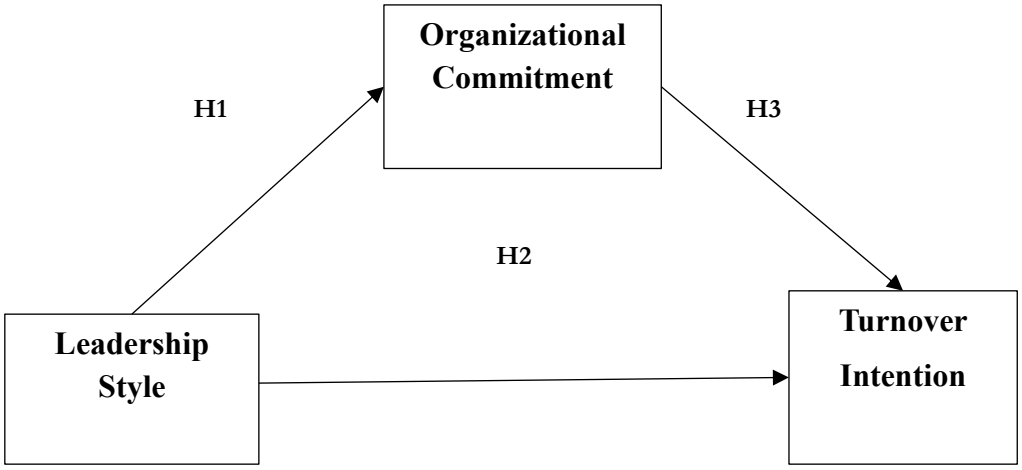

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Source(s): Author own creation

2.4.1 Direct Effects (H_1, H_2, and H_3)

To empirically validate the direct paths outlined in the structural framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

> **H_1:** Leadership style has a significant effect on organizational commitment among faculty members in higher education institutions.
>
> **H_2:** Leadership style has a significant direct effect on turnover intention among faculty members in higher education institutions.
>
> **H_3:** Organizational commitment has a significant direct effect on turnover intention among faculty members in higher education institutions.

2.4.2 The Mediating Effect (H_4)

To evaluate the underlying structural mechanism through which governance behaviors influence retention, the following indirect pathway is proposed:

> **H_4:** Organizational commitment significantly mediates the relationship between leadership style and turnover intention among faculty members in higher education institutions.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional, and explanatory research design to investigate the structural relationships between leadership style, organizational commitment, and faculty turnover intentions. An explanatory approach is highly suitable here as the study seeks to test directional hypotheses and establish the predictive power of the independent constructs using structural equation modelling. Data was collected at a single point in time using a self-administered survey instrument distributed to faculty members.

3.2. Target Population and Sampling Framework

The target population for this study comprises full-time faculty members operating within higher education institutions across Delhi and the Delhi National Capital Region (NCR). This is a geographical location that is a hub of academic life, and is home to a high density of public, private and deemed universities, which is an ideal environment for studying academic governance arrangements.

Sampling Technique and size: A non-probability sampling technique called the convenience sampling was used because it is quite difficult to get complete and centralized faculty registries from different

jurisdictions in the NCR. The number of valid responses received from the faculty members of the region from the universities were N=250. This sample size meets the "10 times rule" that is prevalent in the literature of PLS-SEM and is large enough to satisfy the minimum sample size requirements provided by Hair et al. (2019).

3.3. Measurement scales and instrumentation

he survey instrument was created with reference to standard closed-ended operationalized scales, and translated into a "5 point Likert Scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree)".

Leadership Style (LS): Latent predictor construct with six indicators (LS1 – LS6), inspired by standard institutional leadership questionnaires measuring perceived administrative guidance and operational support.

Organizational Commitment (OC): Measured with seven measures (OC1-OC7) that were adapted from Meyer and Allen's original commitment metrics, and which reflect the emotional and psychological attachment of faculty to their universities.

Turnover Intention (TI): Measured by five indicators (TI1, TI2, TI3, TI4, and TI5) that were based on an individual faculty member's subjective cognitive probability of leaving the institution in the short term.

3.4 Data Analysis Technique: PLS-SEM

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the conceptual framework (figure 2.1) using the software package SmartPLS. For three methodological reasons, PLS-SEM is preferred to covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) (Hair et al., 2019): The primary focus of the study is on predicting key constructs that are target constructs (variance of turnover intention). The framework has a complicated mediation path layout, which is used to trace out complicated organizational interactions. It gives high power for analysis of survey data in the real world that are not normally distributed.

In accordance with Hair et al. (2020) and Henseler et al. (2015), the data analysis is done in two successive structural phases:

Phase 1: Evaluation of the Reflective Measurement Model

Before testing any hypotheses, the outer measurement model must prove satisfactory indicator health. This is assessed via:

Indicator Reliability: Outer loadings must exceed 0.70.

Internal Consistency Reliability: Evaluated via 'Cronbach's alpha' ($\alpha > 0.70$) and 'Composite Reliability' ($\rho_c > 0.70$).

Convergent Validity: Verified by ensuring the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceeds 0.50.

Discriminant Validity: Confirmed through both the classic "Fornell-Larcker criterion" (where the square root of the AVE on the diagonal exceeds any cross-correlation) and the modern Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio (< 0.85).

Phase 2: Evaluation of the Structural Model

Once the measurement model is validated, the inner structural paths are mapped. The structural model is assessed via:

Explanatory Power: Checking the adjusted R^2 values for the endogenous variables.

Global Model Fit: Confirmed using the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), requiring a value < 0.08.

Hypothesis Testing: Running a bootstrapping routine with 5,000 subsamples to generate standard deviations, t-statistics, and exact p-values for the direct paths (H_1, H_2, H_3) and the specific indirect mediation pathway (H_4).

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Respondent Profile

A total of 250 faculty members from higher education institutions participated in the study.

Table 4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)

Gender	Male	145	58.0
	Female	105	42.0
Age	Below 30 years	40	16.0
	31–40 years	95	38.0
	41–50 years	75	30.0
	Above 50 years	40	16.0
Academic Rank	Assistant Professor	130	52.0
	Associate Professor	75	30.0
	Professor	45	18.0
Experience	Below 5 years	60	24.0
	5–10 years	95	38.0
	Above 10 years	95	38.0

Source(s): Author own work

On demographic characteristics of the respondents, it was found that there are more male faculty members (58.0%) than female (42.0%). The age group with the highest number of participants was 31-40 years (38.0%), and 41-50 years (30.0%). In terms of academic designation and teaching experience, 52.0% of respondents were Assistant Professors, and 38.0% each had 5-10 and more than 10 years of professional experience.

4.2 Evaluation of the Measurement Model

Before testing the structural relationships, the internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the measurement model must be verified (Hair et al., 2019).

4.2.1 Indicator Loadings (Outer Loadings)

Individual item reliability was evaluated using outer loadings. As a rule of thumb, loadings should exceed 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). As shown in Table 4.2, all indicator loadings for Leadership Style (LS), Organizational Commitment (OC), and Turnover Intention (TI) range from 0.718 to 0.807, confirming strong individual item reliability.

Table 4.2 Outer Loadings Matrix

Indicator	Leadership Style (LS)	Organizational Commitment (OC)	Turnover Intention (TI)
LS1	0.777		
LS2	0.773		
LS3	0. 807		
LS4	0.735		
LS5	0.757		
LS6	0.803		
OC1		0.734	
OC2		0.744	
OC3		0.736	
OC4		0.752	
OC5		0.720	
OC6		0.774	
OC7		0.739	
TI1			0.718
TI2			0.790
TI3			0.774
TI4			0.784
TI5			0.798

Source(s): Author own work

4.2.2 Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct reliability was measured via "Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (ρ_c)", with thresholds > 0.70 (Hair et al., 2020). Convergent validity was assessed using the 'Average Variance Extracted' (AVE), requiring values > 0.50(Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019). As shown in Table 4.3, all constructs successfully cross these strict benchmarks.

Table 4.3 Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Latent Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Leadership Style	0.868	0.901	0.602
Organizational Commitment	0.866	0.896	0.552
Turnover Intention	0.832	0.881	0.597

Source(s): Author own work

4.2.3 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to the uniqueness of a construct and the ability of the construct to measure phenomena not measured by other constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Two strict criteria were used: the square root of the AVE on the diagonal must be greater than any cross-correlation (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and the 'Heterotrait-Monotrait' (HTMT) ratio must be less than 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015). There were perfect discriminant validities on both tests.

Table 4.4: Discriminant validity (Fornell - Larcker, Criterion)

Construct	Leadership Style	Organizational Commitment	Turnover Intention
Leadership Style	**0.776**		
Organizational Commitment	0.402	**0.743**	
Turnover Intention	-0.410	-0.435	**0.773**

Source(s): Author own work

Table 4.5: Discriminant validity (Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio - HTMT)

Construct	Leadership Style	Organizational Commitment	Turnover Intention
Leadership Style			
Organizational Commitment	0.436		
Turnover Intention	0.476	0.498	

Source(s): Author own work

4.3 Evaluation of the Structural Model

With the measurement model proven to be reliable and valid, the structural model was evaluated to test the hypothesized pathways.

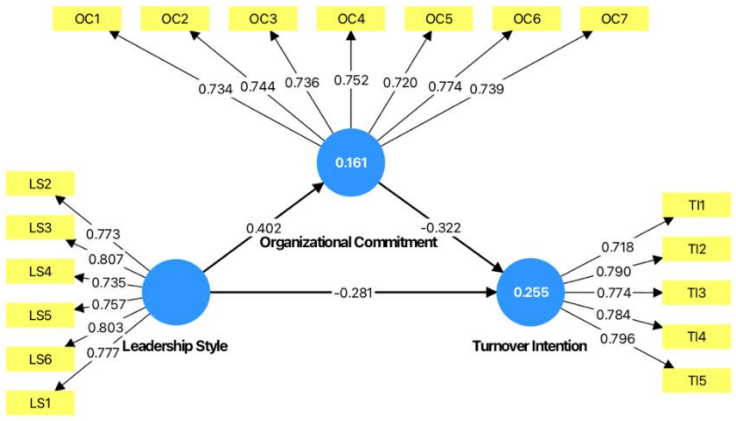

Figure 4.1: PLS-SEM Structural Model Output

Source(s): Author own creation

4.3.1 Model Explanatory Power (R^2) and Fit (SRMR)

In order to assess the power of the explanation of the structural framework, the Adjusted R^2 was used (Hair et al., 2019). This model accounted for 15.3% of the variance in Organizational Commitment (R_"adj" ^2=0.153) and 24.0% of the variance in Turnover Intention (R_"adj" ^2=0.240). The overall global model fit was checked by the 'Standardized Root Mean Square Residual' (SRMR). The estimated model obtained an SRMR of 0.073, an acceptable value in comparison to the strict absolute limit of 0.08 (Henseler et al., 2016), indicating good model fit.

Table 4.6: Explanatory Power (R^2) and Structural Fit

Endogenous Latent Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Organizational Commitment	0.161	0.153
Turnover Intention	0.255	0.240

Source(s): Author own work

4.3.2 Structural Model Direct Path Coefficients

The hypothesized direct relationships were assessed using a bootstrapping procedure, which was repeated 5,000 times (Hair et al., 2020). The empirical results for the direct path assessments are presented in Table 4.7, showing the 'path coefficients (β)', the 'standard deviations' (SD), the 't-statistics' and the exact 'p-values'.

Table 4.7: Structural Model Direct Path Coefficients

Path Relationship	Original sample (o)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV)	P values	Empirical Result
Leadership Style → Organizational Commitment	0.402	0.421	0.069	5.828	0.000	**Supported**
Leadership Style → Turnover Intention	-0.281	-0.285	0.085	3.314	0.001	**Supported**
Organizational Commitment→ Turnover Intention	-0.322	-0.332	0.090	3.587	0.000	**Supported**

Source(s): Author own work

The path from Leadership Style to Organizational Commitment is positive and statistically highly significant ($\beta = 0.402, t = 5.828, p < 0.001$), supporting H_1. 2. The direct path from Leadership Style to Turnover Intention is negative and significant ($\beta = -0.281, t = 3.314, p = 0.001$), supporting H_2. 3. The path from Organizational Commitment to Turnover Intention is likewise negative and highly significant ($\beta = -0.322, t = 3.587, p < 0.001$), supporting H_3.

4.3.3 Mediation Analysis (Indirect Effect)

Specific indirect effect was analysed using bootstrapping methods to assess the significant relationship between Organizational Commitment and employee attrition decisions in between the employee's choice of leadership behaviours. The findings are represented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Specific Indirect Effect for Mediation Testing

Structural Pathway	Original sample (o)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV)	P values	Mediation Type
LS → OC → TI	-0.129	-0.141	0.050	2.603	0.009	Partial Mediation

Source(s): Author own work

The specific indirect effect path (LS → OC → TI) is statistically significant ($\beta = -0.129, t = 2.603, p = 0.009$). Organizational Commitment is also acting as a mediator because both the indirect path and the direct path ("LS"→"TI") are still present in the model. This indicates that leadership style has a direct and indirect impact on turnover intentions by having a positive impact on workplace commitment.

4.3.4 Model Fit Evaluation

The overarching structural validity of the predictive model was verified by checking the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). Table 4.9 provides the model fit breakdown.

Table 4.9 Model Fit Criteria (SRMR Matix)

Model Type	Original sample (o)	Sample mean (M)	95%	99%
Saturated model	0.073	0.068	0.079	0.084
Estimated model	0.073	0.068	0.079	0.084

Source(s): Author own work

Henseler et al. (2016) recommend that an SRMR value lower than 0.08 is regarded as a conservative fit for the global fit of the model. The estimated path framework yielded an SRMR of 0.073, indicating that the structural model fits the empirical data (from the 250 higher education respondents) well.

5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1.Discussion of Empirical Findings

The insights provided by the structural model results are of great importance for understanding the behavioural mechanisms of higher education staff retention. The confirmation of H1 (β=0.402, p<0.001) reveals that the main structural mechanism in shaping faculty members' organizational commitment is the leadership behaviour. With clear leadership, support from academic professionals and effective communication from academic leaders, faculty can feel more aligned with the institution. Importantly, the analysis of the testing of H2 (β=-0.281, p=0.001) and H3 (β=-0.322, p<0.001) indicates that both leadership styles and organizational commitment are direct inhibitors of faculty turnover intensions. In the mediation effect (H4: β=-0.129, p=0.009), the mediation data shows a partial mediation mechanism. This particular setup offers three distinct theoretical advances in the field of higher education:

5.1.1 The Power of Independent Leadership Channels (Partial vs. Full Mediation):

In conventional management literature, the construct of leadership style is typically said to exert an influence on intentions to leave only if it can be conceptualized as flowing through employee's personal emotional commitment (full mediation). This isn't true within higher education. Leadership styles showed independent structural and administrative capacity to keep faculty members (retained completely; β=- 0.281) away from faculty member's internal psychological alignment. In both periods of structural change and when faculty members' commitment is volatile, the quality of administrative leadership provides a durable buffer that prevents faculty members from deciding to exit.

5.1.2 The Asymmetrical Influence Engine:

The interesting mathematical imbalance is apparent from the SmartPLS path coefficients. Leadership is a very strong positive influence of organizational commitment (β=0.402), while having a less strong direct effect on explicitly suppressing turnover intentions (β=-0.281). This reveals a new way of

looking at the nature of leadership in a university: "capacity building" healthy organizational ecology is the main mode of leadership's operation rather than merely a reactionary version of operational brakes designed to manage "flight risks".

5.1.3 Bridging the Fragmented Higher Education Workforce Nexus:

Structures and boundaries are different in higher education institutions, and it often have a disjointed or divided administrative team (deans, directors) and teaching staff. This study provides validation for the model of administrative leadership behaviour that accounts for 24.0% of the variance in overall employee turnover intentions (R^2_{adj} = 0.240) and successfully spans these traditional divisions of operations to help create long-term institutional stability.

5.2. Implications of the research

5.2.1. Theoretical Implications

This study is one of the nascent studies on the institutional governance which tells the exact chain of leadership style impacting behavioural intentions. This paper demonstrates the application of a complex psychological process (LS→OC→TI) in the context of a successful integration of the Social Exchange Theory (SET) within a structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). It also challenges the rigid full-mediation models by demonstrating that institutional leadership has a direct impact on retention decisions, irrespective of psychological attachment mechanisms.

5.2.2. Practical and Managerial Implications

These outputs give every university administration, board member, and human resource department a clearcut data-driven blueprint to cut down on recruiting and operating costs.

Targeted Leadership Development: Leadership style is the leading contributor to commitment and retention, not just technical/academic, so the university needs to change the focus on how department chairs and deans are selected.

Strategic Retention Frameworks: HR Departments should use findings to create dual-intervention retention policies. Commitment is directly correlated with turnover (β=-0.322) and should be strengthened through professional development plans and research support for the internal commitment within institutions, with an eye on dean-faculty leadership dynamics.

5.3. Recommendations

Although this work has led to significant empirical results, several recommendations are also identified which could serve as a basis for future studies: The data was gathered at only a time. Future research should employ a longitudinal design, and examine the changes in leadership styles over multiple academic semesters and how these changes impact turnover intentions. Although the sample size is adequate, larger geographically diverse samples (national or international, public or private, higher education institutions) would enhance the generalizability of the model.

6. CONCLUSION

The objective of research is to decode the leadership processes that facilitate employee retention in higher education entities. Using PLS-SEM analysis, empirical result shows that organizational commitment partially mediates between leadership style and faculty decisions to stay in an institution, but the relationship between leadership style and faculty decisions to stay in the institution is still very strong. Finally, it is important to note that for universities to achieve institutional excellence and retain valuable faculty, it must work to create an ecosystem of supportive, transparent, and structured leadership.

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