



# Influence of Agility on Turnover Intentions among Working Women of Indian IT Sector: A Theoretical Perspective

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**Abstract.** In recent years, the Indian Information Technology sector has witnessed a remarkable increase in participation of women employees and with this rise opportunities for growth have also increased alongside gender-based challenges that influence intentions of leaving or staying in the organization. The current study aims to provide theoretical insights into the interaction of agility with female IT professional's experiences for shaping turnover intentions. Adaptability, resilience and proactiveness are included in the concepts of agility which enable employees to provide prompt responses to dynamic environments and to become change-friendly. However, there is a need to understand the interaction of different factors with the turnover intentions of female employees. This study utilizes a multidimensional theoretical framework consisting of perspectives from human resource management, gender studies, organizational behavior and culture to analyze theories and shreds of evidence based on past research for creating links between employee agility and turnover intentions. It discloses risks associated with work intensification and the significance of flexible policies for the career advancement and retention of women. Ultimately, leveraging agility for the promotion of inclusivity and gender equality calls for structural and cultural changes through holistic, context-specific organizational strategies and national policies emphasizing work-life balance.

**Keywords:** Employee Agility, Turnover Intentions, Women Employees, Indian IT sector, Gender diversity, Work-life balance.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Women's Participation in the Indian IT Sector

The Indian Information Technology (IT) sector has witnessed a significant increase in the participation of women, marking a shift in gender dynamics[1].The female participation ratio in the Indian IT sector is 30 percent which is more than in financial and any other service[2]. The IT industry in India, a forerunner in economic growth,

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has made concerted efforts to attract and retain female talent, yet the rate of female employees leaving IT companies is comparatively higher than others[3] . As per [4] building long-term job security and having steady career progression is often challenging for women as their pathways can be complex, non-linear and fragmented which may be because of the reason that women in the Indian IT sector face challenges such as workplace biases, the double burden of career and domestic expectations, and the glass ceiling [5].In the post-pandemic phase, more women are exhibiting intentions of non-persistency in career[6] the organization because of insufficient attention of organizations toward job resources. The attrition rate of females in the tech industry has doubled in comparison to male employees after a call of return-to-office[7] Understanding turnover intentions among [7] women in this sector is crucial due to its potential impact on organizational diversity and talent retention [8]. Addressing these challenges and fostering a supportive environment for women can contribute to agility - the ability of employees to adapt to changes effectively [9]. The intersection of women's increasing participation, their unique challenges, and the pursuit of employee agility forms the basis for this theoretical exploration.

## **1.2 Employee Agility and Turnover Intentions: Unveiling the Link**

Agility which is crucial for survival in the dynamic Indian IT sector, involves employees rapidly adapting to changes while maintaining stability[10] and is needed for career growth, learning and social capital enhancement in organizations. Turnover Intention involves a “Conscious and deliberate willingness to leave the organization” and the inclination to leave a job, is costly for organizations in terms of talent loss [5].Understanding its determinants is vital for devising retention strategies. Agility encompasses organizational culture, engagement, and leadership, promoting an environment where employees feel valued and have fewer intentions to leave [11]. Employee Agility “stems from employee’s adaptability, their ability to react quickly, and their readiness to rise to the challenges of new demands” [12]. However, it can also affect job security and pressure, impacting turnover [9]. Gender dynamics further shape turnover, with women facing unique challenges like unequal advancement opportunities [13]. Prior studies focused on the increased significance of paying attention to rising dissatisfaction among female employees for their overall

psychological balance and well-being [14]. Organizations must balance agility with support, especially for women managing work-life balance, to mitigate intentions to leave [9]. Understanding how agile practices affect women's turnover intentions in the Indian IT sector is crucial for framing effective human resource strategies [13]. The purpose of the current study is to develop a framework based on different studies and theories. The study will contribute significantly as an addition to the existing pool of knowledge on the subject matter and will help in grabbing the attention of organizations towards the importance of promoting agility among employees especially females so that they become more able to face the challenges in their career path which in return may prove beneficial for organizations in terms of female talent retention and promotion of sustainability.

Thus, the first objective is to identify and examine the existing theoretical framework depicting agility's relation with turnover intentions among female employees in the IT sector of India. The next objective is to do an in-depth literature review of job satisfaction, work-life balance, and gender diversity, particularly in the context of what impact employee agility initiatives have on these factors and to develop of a comprehensive theoretical perspective on the factors influencing turnover intentions. The final objective is to synthesize theoretical insights into a conceptual framework by integrating organizational behavior, feminist, human resource management and gender studies to understand how women's turnover intentions in the Indian IT sector are influenced by promoting agility. However, the study will be limited to theoretical explanation only based on prior research to establish a conceptual framework that may be used for future studies.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Defining Employee Agility**

As per [11] agility can be interpreted as the ability of employees to rapidly adapt, change direction, and thrive in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) work environment. This feature is essential for handling the everchanging advancements in the technological sector and facing cut-throat competition. It

encompasses proactive, adaptable and resilient abilities [12] reflecting how IT employees in India remain responsive and resilient amidst change. Employee agility in the Indian IT sector encompasses strategic adaptiveness, efficiency despite change, innovation, and the human element, shaping how employees navigate change and sustain high performance.

## **2.2 Gender Dynamics in Turnover Intentions**

For the retention of female talent in the IT sector clear understanding of gender dynamics is a must. As per [5] turnover intentions can be expressed as the likelihood of an employee to leaving the organization in a specified time frame. Women often face challenges in organizations and their success is dependent on their ability to mitigate those challenges. Within the context of organization, intention to leave the organization seems to be influenced by gender dynamics and challenges women face in career coping in IT industry[15], these dynamics are of particular interest. The response of men and women employees may be different towards policies of the organization and cultural expectations[16], which may affect their intentions to leave. Gender-based challenges[17] like work-life conflict and inequality are faced by women employees in the IT sector of India. In such cases, an organization's supportive practices like childcare facilities, flexible working hours and such others can prove helpful in mitigating the turnover intentions among women employees [18] by increasing their agility.

## **2.3 Relation of Agility with Turnover Intentions**

As per [19] acceleration in job demand has created pressure on the requirement of agility and has created an increase in turnover intentions. Studies conducted by [20] and [21] have observed an inverse relation between the above-mentioned variables. The Positive and significant effect of agility is there on the turnover intentions of employees [22]. Employee satisfaction in the workplace gets affected by agility [23]. Work engagement of employees is positively related to agility of employees [24]. [25] pointed out theoretical evidence for examining the relationship between agility and employee retention. [21] found an indirect relation between resilience and Job Satisfaction and a negative relation between job satisfaction and turnover intention

among employees. Providing a learning and development platform and organizational support leads to a reduction in the turnover of employees[26].

#### **2.4. Intersections of Work-Life Balance, Culture, and Gender**

In the Indian IT sector, the intersection of work-life balance, culture, and gender profoundly influences turnover intentions and employee agility. Work-life balance which is crucial for employee retention, is particularly significant for women due to expectations of the society [27]. Cultural contexts exhibit an impact on career resilience of women in the organization [4]. Insights into women's experiences navigating multiple roles are offered by various gender theories like role strain and role enhancement theory [28]. As per Role strain theory if roles are balanced it can create an effect on stress and turnover intentions and as per Role enhancement theory, experiences in one role can have an enhancing effect on performance in another role indicating the potential of reducing turnover [29]. Agile employees who get the support of work-life balance can relieve role strain resulting in reduced turnover intentions. So, innovative solutions can be achieved by fostering gender diversity as it seems to promote role enhancement. Understanding this interplay helps in the formulation of organizational policies for the agility and retention of employees.

#### **2.5. Conceptualizing Employee Agility for the Indian IT Sector**

Employee agility in the Indian IT sector demands skills and behaviors enabling employees to respond swiftly to market dynamics and technological advancements. Dynamic capabilities theory emphasizes the significance of integrating and reconfiguring competencies [30]. Gender diversity and inclusiveness are becoming a part of Human resource policies in the IT sector which demands designed agility frameworks to address the expectations of working women from their organizations. Factors that motivate the women to work and their levels of satisfaction are distant from their male counterparts [31]. Organizations should give due recognition to such practices which help them to retain female talent. This holistic approach ensures agility in the era of constant change.

#### **2.6. Incorporating Gender Theories in Organizational Contexts**

For devising strategies for reducing turnover intentions and for having a clear vision regarding employee agility in the IT sector integration of gender theories is essential. As per the prediction of Role Congruity theory emergence of women as leader is less likely to happen when expected role from leader are not alignment with gender stereotypes[32]. In other words, when the characteristics of some group not align with the typical social roles of that group, then it is not evaluated positively which also spots inconsistencies in perceived requirements from leadership roles resulting in not giving due consideration to competencies of women at workplace. How work experiences affect gender differences in perceptions was theoretically explained by Eagly's Social Role theory [33] which towards the influence of stereotypes regarding gender differences on the ability of organization to manage them resulting in placing women in a situation of dilemma. Increased pressure is felt by women employees when they are forced to prove themselves in domains dominated by males. Integration of gender theories in the context of organization disclose the requirement and significance of coming up with such strategies which are sensitized as per the challenges that women face in their workplace with the potential power to promote agility and reduce turnover intentions.

### **2.7. Modelling the Relationship between Employee Agility and Turnover Intentions**

Understanding the relation between employee agility and turnover intentions is pivotal for devising talent retention strategies. A proposed conceptual model integrates theoretical viewpoints like the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model [34] and other theories for empirical testing. As per the Job Demands-Resource model, if employees do not get sufficient resources to fulfil job demands their physiological and mental resources start depleting. Decisions regarding leaving the organization may also be result from stress generated by work abundance in the absence of resource availability [19]. Employee agility, as a personal resource, may reduce work-related stress and enhance job satisfaction, thereby reducing turnover intentions. Social Exchange Theory conceptualizes the employment relationship as transactions[35], suggesting that agility enhances perceived organizational support and fairness, influencing retention. Expectancy theory suggests that meeting women's

expectations regarding outcomes[36] may decrease turnover intentions, particularly in male-dominated sectors by promoting job satisfaction. Role theory posits that organizations have an inherent need to dependency on role performance but the problem arises when role conflicts take place because of conflict in expectations from superiors[21]. There is a negative relation between role ambiguity, role conflict and job satisfaction and performance[37]. Agility clarifies what role is expected from women resulting in the reduction of role conflict and turnover intentions.

Understanding this interplay informs the design of agile skill development tailored to the female workforce, aiming to reduce turnover and foster inclusivity. Continuous refinement with empirical evidence can enhance the model's practical utility, informing interventions to improve employee agility and retain female talent in the IT sector.

## **2.8. Synthesizing Concepts into a Comprehensive Framework**

Creating a conceptual scaffold for employee agility and turnover intentions among women in the Indian IT sector requires a multidimensional synthesis of theoretical domains and empirical insights. Employee agility involves rapid adaptation to changes encompassing the accommodation of the female workforce needed to reduce turnover intentions. Theory of structural empowerment emphasizes role of opportunities, resources, information and support in shaping satisfaction regarding job [38], empowering women through development chances and decision-making autonomy. To provide a conceptual framework a model is proposed to be investigated linking the Agility of Working women and their turnover intentions with mediating and moderating variables (See Fig.1).

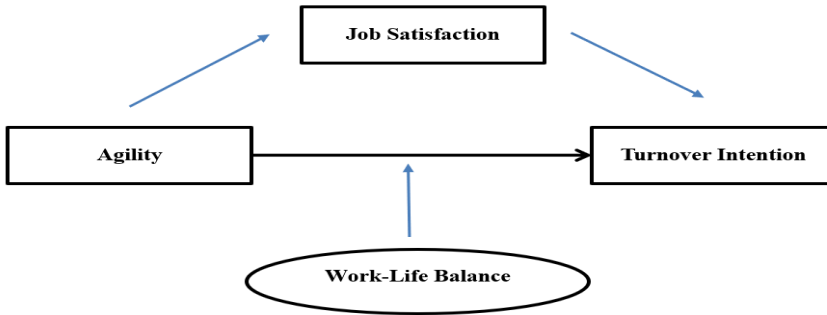


Fig 1 Proposed Conceptual Framework, Source: Author's Compilation

The conceptual model proposed here proposes a direct inverse relation of Agility with Turnover Intentions of Women employees, an indirect relation between Agility and Turnover Intentions mediated by Job satisfaction and the moderating role of work-life balance on the relation based on theoretical explanations and puts forward potential relations in IT sector in India which is required to be tested with empirical data for practical validation. The foremost challenge in front of the IT industry is the reduction in turnover of employees in this era of extensive development [22]. So, this model can come out to be of practical importance for studying the relation and interplay among the factors.

### 3. Research Methodology

To achieve the research objectives following steps are undertaken: -

Step-1: Planning the search strategy -In this stage decision regarding search strategy and database selection has been made. Articles from Scopus have been included as primary sources of study and in addition, comprehensive searches are performed across other electronic databases like EBSCO, and Google Scholar.

Step-2: Searching -After selecting the databases, search variables were finalized including “employee agility”, “Agility”, “turnover intention”, “Indian IT sector”,



“Gender diversity”, “Work-life Balance” and related synonyms. A different combination of Keywords was applied to search relevant documents.

Step-3: Relevant studies were included as per the research objectives.

## **4. Theoretical Analysis**

### **4.1. Insights on Employee Agility and Turnover Intentions**

Indian IT sector is featured by rapid changes in technology and a high level of competition and in such dynamic environment agile employees are the need of the hour. It becomes crucial to understand what factors affect turnover intentions. Agility which includes speed of making decisions and quick responsiveness to the demands of a changing environment has an indirect effect on employee satisfaction, especially for women employees who value work-life balance [23]. In a study by [24], positive relationship between agility and employee work engagement was demonstrated. The insights which are grounded in statistical analysis of previous studies, bridge theoretical models with real-world experiences, informing strategies to retain women IT employees in India.

### **4.2. Gender Disparities in Employee Agility and Turnover Intentions**

Gender disparities and employee agility intersect with each other which in turn impact intentions to leave or stay differently for men and women. Theory of tokenism highlights how women’s minority status in certain IT roles may lead to higher turnover intentions, exacerbated by quick organizational changes that overlook gender-specific challenges [17]. Role strain theory clearly points towards the detrimental effects of multiple overlapping roles and roles that are incompatible with each other on performance of the employee. Similarly, as per the analysis of Role enhancement theory which point towards the effects of experiences in one role improving the linkages between another role and well-being of employees, potential of positive experiences on reduction of turnover intentions cannot be overruled. Fast changing environments have made career boundaryless which influence individual career success [39] and implies that self-directed career management in agile

environments may burden women more due to traditional caregiving roles, influencing turnover intentions.

### **4.3. Theoretical Implications of Organizational Dynamics on Turnover**

Changes in technology at a fast pace are becoming the cause of a revolution in skills, which can provide opportunities or pose threats to an organization [22]. It also demands that organizations as well as employees become agile to cope with the accelerated pace of changes. Various organizational dynamics influence turnover intention in the Indian IT sector among women like job satisfaction, employee agility, work-life balance and gender diversity. Resilience as a dimension of employee agility can act as a coping mechanism which can have an impact on employees' stress level with the potential to reduce turnover intentions[21], especially among women employees who prioritize stability in the organization. Agile employees are not only an asset for the organization as they possess the ability to adjust and resilience by making continuous improvements in their skills and by having the zeal to learn something new but also for the employees as agility can help them in the creation and grabbing of opportunities [22]. Flexible work arrangements which are considered an inherent quality of agile organizations, like telecommuting and flexible hours can prove beneficial for women in managing professional and domestic roles and enhanced job satisfaction and work-life balance[40] which are critical for their retention in the organization. Additionally, working on job-related stress, encouraging involvement in the organization, improvement in relations with superior and peer employees and fostering positive corporate culture can be used as some tactics to make work inspiring for them [41] leading to a reduced feeling of marginalization among women [42], thus lowering their intentions to leave the organization [43]. When women's career advancement challenges are considered, agility depicts a correlation with innovation, adaptability and continuous learning which is an essential requirement for the improvement of skills and progression in a career [44] with the potential to reduce intentions of leaving the organization. However, patriarchal norms in Indian societies[45] affect the effectiveness of agility in the promotion of gender equality which emphasizes the need to take cultural context also in consideration while analysing the impact of agility on turnover intentions.

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

Interpretation of the theoretical outcomes of the current study reveals the complex interplay between work culture and gender dynamics. Agility which is considered a synonym with innovation and adaptation has a deep influence on employee turnover decisions and satisfaction levels [46] and shapes women's career paths and personal responsibilities. Apart from this Gender role theory depicts the influence of traditional roles assigned to women on their decisions and experiences. The job demands-resource model by [34] infers that workplaces that offer resources to the employees promote job satisfaction, reduce turnover intention which is quite important for female employees in the IT sector. As per the application of social role theory agility of employees may strengthen or confront traditional gender roles which may affect women employees' decisions. The need for considering gender dynamics and work-life balance for the promotion of agility and for meeting the multifaceted needs of women is underscored by this theoretical synthesis. Boosting agility may lower intentions of leaving the organization among women which seems to align with goals of workplace equality and inclusiveness. A foundation is provided by this interpretation for adopting practical strategies for the enhancement of agility among women employees in the Indian IT sector. Women in the Indian IT sector face a lot of challenges [17] that are shaped by cultural, social, and organizational factors. The demanding nature of the industry and traditional gender roles, which burden women with household responsibilities, make work-life balance a concern of significant nature. Mentoring as a managerial support and networking opportunities can remove hindrances in the path of women's career advancement [3]. Some IT companies implement gender diversity programs like flexible work schedules and maternity leave policies, but their effectiveness varies [47]. Women's experiences in the Indian IT sector reflect broader societal values and gender dynamics, highlighting the need for holistic approaches to integration and retention. Thus, theoretical implications suggest the creation of an environment conducive to the retention of women in the Indian IT sector through promoting flexibility, job security, inclusive climate and growth opportunities. However, broader socio-cultural landscapes must be addressed to realize these benefits which emphasizes the need for further research in the Indian

context. Challenges that are faced by women employees can be easily mitigated if organizations focus on making them agile by providing mentoring programs, reducing diversities, providing flexible work schedules and adopting an organizational culture favorable to the development of the female workforce. Limitations could be addressed through suggested research directions which are essential for increasing understanding and promoting equity and inclusion in the Indian IT sector. The insights presented here establish a foundation, indicating promising pathways for future inquiry toward building an equitable and sustainable industry.

## **6. Limitations and Future Prospects**

Organizations must prioritize to make their employees agile especially women and must provide support systems like motivation and mentoring for their career progression [4]. When employee-centred strategies are devised by the organization, a team of committed staff is created to gain long-term success [41]. By seeking regular feedback and decentralizing decision-making process essential requirement of workforce agility can be facilitated [48]. The analysis made in the study can help policymakers in understanding the importance of developing skill development regulations and such industry standards that support gender inclusivity and work-life balance in Information technology sector in India. Diverse hiring, retention and career advancement of female employees can be encouraged by providing incentives to the organizations. Redesigning National policies on extended parental leave can further facilitate work-life balance. While offering a comprehensive theoretical perspective, this study has certain limitations that must be acknowledged. Firstly, as it is a theoretical analysis, it lacks quantitative evidence specific to the context of the Indian IT sector. Future research in which surveys, interviews and case studies are incorporated could be used to strengthen the findings. Secondly, the study's focus on gender oversimplifies the complexity of identity by not considering other intersectional factors like socioeconomic status, caste, disability etc. that may complex the challenges faced by women in employment. An intersectional lens is crucial for a clearer understanding. Thirdly, the scope is narrowed to India, potentially limiting the generalizability of insights to other geographic regions with differing

gender dynamics and norms. Cross-cultural comparative studies could broaden the applicability. Furthermore, new technologies are emerging day-by-day like artificial intelligence and automation. The impact of these technologies on agility of working women and gender dynamics is still an unexplored area in context of India. So, Investigating the evolving nature of roles and skills could help in devising retention strategies. Lastly, the rapid evolution of the IT sector necessitates continuous revisiting of the theoretical frameworks as with time, new technologies, business models and workplace practices emerge. Ongoing research will be needed to ensure relevance and alignment with industry developments over time.

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