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Strategies for Reducing Employee Turnover in Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MBA, Lincoln University, 2015

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Employee turnover leads to increased operational costs and workloads and affects sales performance. Reducing employee turnover is essential for managers of small and medium sized enterprises to minimize costs and increase sales performance. Grounded in the job embeddedness theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies managers of small and medium sized enterprises use to reduce employee turnover that negatively affects sales performance. The participants consisted of 3 managers of small and medium sized enterprises in the Bronx, New York. Data were collected using semistructured, face-to-face interviews, and a review of organizational documents. A thematic analysis identified three themes: recognition and rewards, training and career advancement opportunities, and effective communication. A key recommendation is that managers of small and medium sized enterprises devise recognition and rewards strategies to increase employee retention. The implications for social change include the potential to improve service quality and delivery that adds value to customers and may foster the social and economic life of the people in the community. Reduced employee turnover and increased sales may result in increased profits that organizations may use to support education and development programs in the community.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to God, the Omnipotent, for granting me good health and strength and guiding me through this doctoral journey. To my father, Alhaj Mohammed Ahmed, for encouraging me to make education as one of my priorities in life, thank you for inspiring me to take up the challenge. To my mother, Hajia Sirina Iddris, thank you for your love and prayers. I dedicate this study to my wife, Maryam, and my children Hilal and Nidhal, for sacrificing our companionship and allowing me the time to pursue this doctoral program. Thank you for your support.

Acknowledgments

I would not have achieved this feat but for God’s blessings. I thank Him for making it possible for me to undertake this project. I acknowledge my wife, Maryam, and children, Hilal and Nidhal, for being my source of strength, support, and inspiration. Thank you.

I acknowledge my chairperson, Dr. Kathleen Andrews, for her encouragement, support, guidance, and feedback throughout this process. Thank you, Dr. Andrews, for your mentorship. Also, I acknowledge my second committee member, Dr. Chris Beehner, University Research Reviewer, Dr. Mary Dereshiwsky, and Program Director, Dr. Susan Davis. Thank you for your support and guidance.

I am grateful to the study participants for accepting to take their time to share with me their experiences and expertise and for helping to contribute to the body of knowledge on measures for addressing issues of employee turnover. Finally, I wish to extend my thanks to friends and family members for their support and prayers.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Organizational managers consider company employees as valuable assets (Pasban & Nojedeh, 2016). Globalization and technology have led to competition between companies' and managers' need to leverage the skills and expertise of their employees to gain a competitive advantage (Pasban & Nojedeh, 2016). But employee turnover is a challenge that organizational managers face, resulting in a cost to business such as recruitment, training, and advertisement costs, with an estimated annual value of $11 billion (Roche, Duffield, Homer, Buchan, & Dimitrelis, 2015). Information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2015 indicated that business managers in the United States expend $60.6 million because of employee turnover events (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).

The focus of organizational managers is to not only attract employees but also to retain them to minimize cost and improve sales performance (Singh, Dev, & Mandelbaum, 2014). When managers succeed in retaining their employees, they spend less compared to hiring new employees to replace the departed ones (Guilding, Lamminmaki, & McManus, 2014). Consequently, the goal of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore some of the strategies that managers of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) use to reduce employee turnover events that affect sales performance. This section contains a description of the background of the problem, problem and purpose statements, nature of the study, research question, and interview questions. This segment also includes the conceptual framework and a review of professional and academic literature.

Background of the Problem

Employee turnover poses a significant challenge to business managers, as turnover rates at any level may negatively impact organizational performance (Lee, 2017; Wynen, Van Dooren, Mattijs, & Deschamps, 2018). Even a turnover at an individual level tends to affect group performance adversely (Hale, Ployhart, & Shepherd, 2016). Employee turnover may also affect the morale of employees who decided to stay (Wynen et al., 2018).

SMEs play a role in the U.S. economy by serving as sources of employment and avenues for investment opportunities (Simionscu, Bilan, Smrcka, & Vincurova, 2017). About 41% of the private sector paychecks come from SMEs (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2016). But for organizations to remain operational and grow, they need dedicated and committed employees (Akinyomi, 2016). Employees are the driving forces of every organization because they contribute skills and expertise toward organizational success (Hayes, Chawla, & Kathawala, 2015). Therefore, managers reducing employee turnover can ensure that SMEs will continue to provide quality services and products to their clients while reducing costs related to turnover events. Managers need to explore the causes of employee turnover in SMEs and develop strategies that will help address issues associated with employee turnover to reduce the phenomenon and improve organizational performance.

Problem Statement

In 2015, employers reported employee turnover rates of 6.4% (Holtom & Burch, 2016), and according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2019 report, the number of reparations in 2018 was 40.1 million, which hurts the U.S. economy (Eckardt, Skaggs, & Youndt, 2014). Employee turnover also negatively impacts organizational performance (Mathieu, Fabi, Lacoursière, & Raymond, 2015). Additionally, the cost involved in an employee turnover event ranges between 32% and 114% of the employee's annual salary (Collins, McKinnis, Matthews, & Collins, 2015). The general business problem is that some SME managers cannot retain their employees, which results in poor sales performance. The specific business problem is that some managers of SMEs lack the strategies to reduce employee turnover events that negatively affect sales performance.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that some managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover that negatively affect sales performance. The target population consisted of managers of SMEs in the Bronx area of New York. The managers were experienced with success in addressing turnover issues. The study included three managers of SMEs as participants. Increased sales may lead to increased profits, some of which corporations may contribute to the community to support education and development programs.

Nature of the Study

There are three research methodologies: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed. The qualitative approach is interpretive and helps understand a problem in a natural setting as expressed or lived by participants (Saunders et al., 2015). A qualitative method was appropriate for this study because the goal was to understand the problem in a natural setting as expressed by participants.

In contrast, researchers determine cause and effect relationships (Yin, 2018) and examine variables' relationships (Turner, Balmer, & Coverdale, 2013) when using quantitative methods. A quantitative method was not appropriate for this study because the intention was not to determine cause and effect relationships or measure variables. Finally, a mixed research method is a method that researchers use to collect both qualitative and quantitative data (Markle, 2017). Because of the quantitative element of determining cause and effect relationships and examining the variables' relationships, a mixed method did not meet the need for this study.

Considerations for this study also included four major qualitative research designs: case study, phenomenological, ethnographic, and narrative. A case study is an inquiry that researchers use to generate an in-depth understanding of a problem in a real-life context (Yin, 2018). I chose to follow a qualitative multiple case study design because the goal was to seek an in-depth understanding of a real-life problem. A multiple case study was appropriate for this study because it allows researchers to explore the research question widely and have a "robust" study (Yin, 2018, p. 57).

There were considerations for other qualitative designs. However, they were not chosen because they did not fit the study. A phenomenological design entails an inquiry into participants' lived experiences with a phenomenon (Gustafsson, Nyström & Palmer, 2017), but the objective of this study was not to investigate participants' lived experiences. Ethnography is the gathering of data through various data collection methods, including observation, to explore group's cultures of participants in their real-life environments (MacLeod, 2016); however, observation of participants' cultural group was not the main focus of inquiry. Finally, by using a narrative design, researchers can interact with participants and gather information about the stories of participants' lives (Lewis, 2015). A narrative design was not appropriate for this study because no inquiry exists into life stories of participants.

Research Question

What strategies do some managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover events that affect sales performance?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies have you used to reduce employee turnover events that affect sales performance?
2. What strategies did you find worked the best in reducing employee turnover events that affect sales performance?
3. How did you assess the effectiveness of strategies you used for reducing employee turnover events that affect sales performance?
4. What key barriers have you encountered when implementing the strategies to reduce employee turnover that affect sales performance?
5. What steps did you use to eliminate the key barriers to implementing the strategies to reduce employee turnover that affect sales performance?
6. What else would you like to tell me about the successful strategies your organization uses to reduce employee turnover that affect sales performance?

Conceptual Framework

Mitchell, Holton, Lee, Sablynski, and Erez (2001) developed job embeddedness theory (as cited in Kiazad, Holtom, Hom, & Newman, 2015). Job embeddedness is the aggregate of social, financial, and psychological forces that influence employee retention (Nafei, 2014). Job embeddedness provides insights into the factors to keep individuals from leaving their job (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2017). The three dimensions of the job embeddedness theory are (a) link, (b) fit, and (c) sacrifice. Links are the connections that individuals have with others, activities, or their organizations (Zhang, Fried & Griffeth, 2012). These links may be formal or informal, and the attachment that employees have to their families are social, financial, and psychological in nature (Zhang et al., 2012). For example, if an employee has a strong a relationship with his or her associates or team members, the relationship may influence the employee to continue to work for his or her organization. Fit is the perception that employees have about their compatibility with institutions, their place of work, or their community (Karatepe, 2016; Zhang et al., 2012). Compatibility with a job or organization is important because of the ability to foster comfortability (Zhang et al., 2012). Employees tend to stay in organizations where they may feel comfortable in their workplace and receive the support that they need (Mitchell et al., 2001). Sacrifice is the perceived cost of leaving an organization or one’s community (Zhang et al., 2012). Thus, employees may stay in their organization if they believe that leaving will cost certain benefits that are material or psychological in nature (Kiazad et al., 2015).

Job embeddedness theory was an appropriate lens through which to study employee turnover because the theory helps in predicting voluntary employee turnover when compared to other factors such as job satisfaction and potential job alternatives perceived by employees (Lang, Kern, & Zapf, 2016). Through network building, the job embeddedness theory may not only reduce employee turnover events but may also improve sales performance (Cheng & Chang, 2015). Further, managers may use job embeddedness theory to retain employees because of its ability to enhance creative performance such as training and development programs that are used as strategies for retaining employees (Karatepe, 2016). Managers who employ job embeddedness theory effectively can retain their employees for a longer time (Karatepe, 2016). From the employee turnover perspective, managers use job embeddedness theory to serve as a mediating factor in reducing employees' desire to leave by fostering their friendship and a sense of community in the workplace (Kiazad, Holtom. Hom, & Newman, 2015). For example, even when employees feel dissatisfied with their job or salary, they may not necessarily leave the organization because of the attachment that they may have with other colleagues and their feeling of compatibility with the work environment (Kiazad et al., 2015). In addition, beyond employee turnover, job embeddedness theory may result in positive organizational outcomes such as organizational citizenship behavior, improved job performance, and innovation (William-Lee, Burch, & Mitchell, 2014).

Operational Definitions

Employee engagement: Employee engagement involves employees aligning themselves with their responsibility, which leads to more motivation to perform in an excellent manner (Taneja, Sewell, & Odom, 2015).

Employee turnover. Employee turnover is a situation whereby employees leave their organization (Abdullah Al Mamun & Nazmul Hasan, 2017).

Job embeddedness. Job embeddedness is a collection of factors that influence employee retention (Zhang et al., 2012).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are undetermined facts that researchers deem as true (Semenova & Hassel, 2015). Researchers must present unconfirmed fact as assumptions, which influence their interpretation and analysis of the data they gather (Aastrup & Halldorsson, 2013; Kirkwood & Price, 2013). While working on developing this study, there was the need to establish some important self-reflections and beliefs and set them as boundaries within which to conduct this study. Establishing some important self-reflections and beliefs are necessary because of the need to serve as the basis to undertake this study. The study includes two assumptions. First, I assumed that the strategies for retaining employees are the responsibilities of managers. Second, I assumed that participants in the study would respond to the question in an unbiased, honest, and truthful manner.

Limitations

Limitations are a situation where a researcher cannot exercise control of treatment assignment (Deb et al., 2016). In a study, limitations hinder efforts to make quality judgements (Haustein & Lariviere, 2015). One of the limitations of this study was that the validity and quality of the data depended on participants' answers, as the accuracy of a study's results depends on the information that participants provide (Maskara, 2014). The more accurate and honest participant were, the more reliable and authentic the data would be. Because of the confidential nature of some of the SMEs, participants might not have been willing to provide some of the necessary answers. The sample size was also small, which implies that the views of the selected managers may not represent the views of the study population let alone representation of views outside of the study population.

Delimitations

Delimitations are scope and boundaries that a researcher determines for the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2015). The researcher may control delimitations as he or she develops the study (Connelley, 2013). One of the delimitations in a qualitative study is that a researcher might use a sample size that is small in order to have ample time to gather and analyze the data (Yin, 2018). The study included a small sample size of three participants, which allowed me enough time for each participant to interview them, conduct required member checking, and make any corrections based on participants' review of my interpretations. The study was delimited to SMEs in the Bronx area of New York. New York City is big in terms of its size and with many different SMEs. Working with different SMEs in the whole of New York City would require having to deal different sets of rules from the SMEs coupled with commuting from one borough or county to another. Interviewing managers of SMEs met the needs of this study because of the ability to provide information to help answer the research questions.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study may be significant to business because employee efficiency may increase with employee engagement and professional development training. For example, when a manager motivates employees by recognizing their efforts and organizing skills training, the employees may work selflessly and diligently for the good of the organization (Northouse, 2016). The results of the study may also encourage managers SMEs to promote corporate social responsibility programs. Organizational leaders may use corporate social responsibility activities to achieve desired employee outcomes such as increased organizational commitment, improved human capital, and most importantly and reduced employee turnover (Carnahan, Kryscynski, & Olson, 2016). Engaged, motivated, and well-trained employees not only identify themselves with their organization, but they also become competent employees, thereby remaining to increase the organization’s productivity and profitability (Saxena & Srivastava, 2015). These productive employees may enable the business to avoid the costs associated with employee turnover.

Contribution to Business Practice

The results of this study may bring about improvements in effective management practices and work processes within the SMEs. The findings may provide managers contemporary business ideas, essential leadership approaches, and strategies for motivating employees and for creating a conducive workplace atmosphere for all employees. Additionally, the results may provide managers with insights on employee training and development programs such as workshops and seminars on skills, personal, and professional development as a result of job embeddedness. Training programs and opportunities for professional development may lead to (a) improvements in employees' skills, (b) increases in employees' loyalty to their organization, and (c) motivation for employees to stay in their organization, which may result in a reduction of employee turnover costs and increased sales performance.

Implications for Social Change

The significance of the study with respect to positive social change is that the study results may help managers understand the needs of their employees. Understanding the needs of employees may improve the quality of employees' work life. The increased performance of the SMEs may foster the social and economic life of the people in communities, including improved service. The presence of businesses within a locality provide opportunities for the people in the community in the form of jobs and services (Ahlstrom, 2010). Employees, particularly those with skills and expertise, may help SMEs to provide higher quality services to the communities they serve, which may add value to customers. The information in the study may help SMEs to be competitive and continue to operate efficiently enabling corporations to start, maintain, or increase contributions to communities for supporting education and development programs benefiting citizens.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

Before any data collection and analysis exercise, a researcher does an in-depth review of previous studies on the chosen topic for the proposed research (Rowe, 2014). In this section, I include a literature review that comprises of critical analysis and synthesis of previous studies regarding employee turnover, employee retention, and retention strategies. Employee turnover is a significant issue that business managers have to address (Abdullah-Al Mamun & Nazmul Hasan, 2017). Exploring strategies for retaining employees to reduce employee turnover rates may help organizations to increase productivity and improve efficiency (Khalili, 2014), which may also result in service quality and improve sales performance. I used peer-reviewed articles of previous studies in various disciplines, including human resources (HR), management, and business. Searches for the information from different EBSCO databases included ProQuest Central, SAGE Premier, Business Premier, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, Science Direct, ABI/INFORM Global, Emerald Management, Business Source Complete, and Academic Source Complete. The keywords used to search for the published materials included *employee turnover*, *job embeddedness*, *employee retention*, *employee retention strategies*, and *employee engagement*. There are 164 references used for the literature review, with 75.6% of them published in 2014 or later (see Table 1).

Table 1

Frequency of Sources of the Study

Sources	Within 5 years	Older than 5 years	Total
Peer-reviewed journals	149	48	197
Government websites	1	0	1
Books	4	0	4

Total	154	48	202

This review of literature consists of (a) the history of job embeddedness theory, (b) the job embeddedness theory, (c) application of job embeddedness theory, (d) challenges in the application of job embeddedness theory, (e) work engagement theory, (f) leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, (g) employee turnover, (h) employee retention and retention strategies, and (i) the use of the transformational leadership theory to address employee turnover issues.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a structure that researchers use to explain a problem under study (Adom, Hussein, & Joe, 2018). With the help of a conceptual framework researchers can identify and create their worldview about a phenomenon (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). The conceptual framework for this study was job embeddedness theory.

The history of job embeddedness theory. Before the conception of the job embeddedness theory, the traditional measures for predicting voluntary turnover were job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived job alternatives (Ramesh & Gelfand, 2010). The general answer to the question of why people leave was because they disliked their job and had alternative places to work (William-Lee, Burch, & Mitchell, 2014). Job satisfaction is the "affect orientation that an employee has towards his or her work" (Hoboubi, Choobineh, Kamari-Ghanavati, Keshavarzi, & Akbar-Hosseini, 2017, p. 68). Organizational commitment is someone's loyalty to their organization (Ramalho Luz, Luiz de Paula, & de Oliveira, 2018), whereas perceived job alternatives are those opportunities that lead to the likelihood of finding a desirable job (Rojanasarot, Gaither, Schommer, Doucette, Kreling, & Mott, 2017).

In 1995, scholars revised some materials on the model of voluntary turnover and involuntary turnover, including other related topics. For instance, William-Lee et al. (2014) proposed a shift in focus from the reasons that cause people to leave to the factors that make people stay at an organization. The job embeddedness theory was a new perspective that helps provide an insight into the factors that make employees stay in their organizations (Yildiz, 2018). For example, Mitchell et al. (2001) indicated that comfortability and fit at workplace may affect retention rather than job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which did not take into account the impact of nonwork aspects of employees' lives. Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived job alternatives have accounted for about 4-5% of the difference in employee turnover decisions (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Therefore, the job embeddedness construct was developed, which managers may use to reduce employee turnover.

Job embeddedness theory. Mitchell et al. (2001) introduced the concept of job embeddedness to help predict employee turnover intentions. Mitchell et al. derived the job embeddedness theory from Lewin's (1951) field theory, which proposes that human action is a result of the individual and his or her environment, which includes a broad cluster of influences on employees' intention to continue working for their organization. Thus, the study of job embeddedness was to inquire into the reason people stay on their job, as opposed to other constructs - job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job alternatives - that focused on events that lead to people leaving their jobs (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Another objective behind the study of job embeddedness was to synthesize the different perspectives in important researches on voluntary employee turnover (Mitchell et al., 2001). The concept of job embeddedness pertains to establishing connections between employees and their job, peers, and their community (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017; Mitchell et al., 2001). A combination of factors connect employees with their organization (Yildiz, 2018).

The three dimensions of job embeddedness are (a) link, (b) fit, and (c) sacrifice. There are two factors associated with each of the attributes: on-the-job embeddedness and off-the-job embeddedness (Jiang, Liu, McKay, Lee, & Mitchell, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2001; Robinson, Kralj, Solnet, Goh, & Callan, 2014). On-the-job embeddedness, also known as organizational embeddedness, is a combination of affective and nonaffective constraints associated with a job, which make employees remain on a job in organizations (Darrat, Amyx, & Bennett, 2017). The affective and nonaffective constraints are the links, fit, and sacrifice (Harris, Wheeler, & Kacmar, 2011). The interest that employees have to “accumulate and protect organizational job embeddedness” helps in predicting employee turnover-related intentions, turnover behaviors, and job performance (Harris, Wheeler, & Kacmar, 2011, p. 273). Off-the-job embeddedness, also referred as community embeddedness, are the factors outside of an organization and its affiliates that influence employees’ decision to stay on their job (Darrat, Amyx et al., 2017). These forces are the social ties one has in the community, the anxieties to relocate, and pressures from families (Darrat et al., 2017). On- and off-the-job embeddedness does not depend on job attitude factors, which are (a) organizational commitment, (b) job satisfaction, and (c) perceived job alternatives (Jiang et al., 2012).

There is also a relationship between organizational and community embeddedness in some respect (Ng & Feldman, 2013). In some cases, both corporate and community embeddedness result in mutual reinforcing effects as organizational embeddedness may reinforce community embeddedness, or vice versa (Ng & Feldman, 2013. For example, an employee with strong ties with his or her current job may decide to keep his or her career even if organizational fit or link is low.

Links. Links are the connections that exist between an individual, people, or an organization (Zhang, Fried & Griffeth, 2012). These links may be formal or informal. The attachment that employees have to their families may be psychological or social (Choi & Kim, 2015; Karatepe, 2013; Zhang et al., 2012). The links are social, financial, and psychological (Zhang et al., 2012. According to Mitchell et al. (2001), when the connection between employees and their families is high, the bond between the employees and their organization as well as their job becomes strong, making the employees feel at home in their environment. In an organization where employees have more links both on and off the job, these employees may stay and work for the organization (Ma, Mayfield, & Mayfield, 2018). For instance, employees may remain in their organizations if they develop strong relationships with their colleagues at work. This situation may lead to a reduction in employee turnover (Ma et al., 2018). Additionally, when employees remain actively involved in the community where they work or live, it is sometimes hard for those employees to leave their current job.

Links may also result in pressures from coworkers, community members, or family members, which may influence employees to stay at their job for a considerable period (Maertz, Stevens, Campion, & Fernandex, 1996). By using the *link* dimension as an attribute of job embeddedness, employers or organizations may increase the connections between employees both internally and externally (Ma et al., 2018). For example, HR managers may employ internal recruitment methods to “identify potential candidates from existing employee networks” (Ma et al., 2018, p. 6). One method that manager may use is the skills or talent inventory. By using recruitment methods such as skills or talent inventory, there may be an increase in the links between employees as well as the creation of potential fit, as there is the likelihood identifying an individual that will fit in the organization through recommendation by other employees.

Organizational link. Organizational link is the formal and informal connections that employees have with their colleagues at workplace (Halvorsen, Treuren, & Kulik, 2015). The environment and policies of organizations play a role in a person’s decision to either stay or leave their organization. Employees have a link to their organizations by their close relationships with their coworkers and team members that leads to building an organizational community, making the employees feel even more like they are a family (Gonzalez, Ragins, Ehrhardt, & Singh, 2016). Results of a study by Cheng and Chang (2015) showed that network building enhances the embeddedness of salespeople both on- and off- the job. For example, through network building, salespeople may rely on each other for assistance on effective ways of dealing with customers, which SMEs and other organizations may use to improve their sales performance.

Employees who feel connected with organizational projects and the people within the organization, such as colleagues and supervisors, may feel fit for their respective jobs and may not want to leave their job and the organization for that matter (Greene, Mero, & Werner, 2018). Connecting employees and project and instituting programs that bring employees together have a significant effect in retaining employees to reduce turnover rates (Holtom et al., 2006). For example, a manager at a Citibank Asian branch introduced a program called the pulse lunch (Holtom et al., 2006). The aim of creating the plan was to bring employees together to get the opportunity to listen to their concerns regarding their job and what they think the organization should do to address those concerns (Holtom et al., 2006). Not only did the program help to reduce turnover intention, but the program also helped in boosting customer loyalty (Holtom et al., 2006).

Community link. Community link is the extent of the ties that employees have with their community concerning their relationship with community members, interest in community programs, and cultural relations with the community (Mallol, Holtom, & Lee, 2007; Mitchell et al., 2001). The feeling of a sense of belonging and attachment by employees may influence an individual's intention to stay in their organization (Reitz, 2014). For example, if an employee is a member of community leadership who engages in community activities, the employee may find difficult to leave the community. Having close friends and meeting with them to discuss interests may influence a person's intention to remain a resident of that community (Özçelik & Cenkci, 2014). Taking action like sponsoring or supporting employees' children to enroll in summer camp within their community may help strengthen the link between employees and their community (Zhao & Liu, 2010). Organizations may also help increase the ties that employees have with their community by assisting their employees in serving their communities (Zhao & Liu, 2010). For example, managers at Timpberland support their employees by giving them 6 months paid leave to allow their workers serve their communities (Holtom et al., 2006). The company helped their staff take part in a 2-month environmental internship with not for profit organizations to allow them some flexibility to take time off while serving their community.

Fit. The fit dimension is the perception that employees have about their compatibility with institutions, their place of work, or their community (Karatepe, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2001; Zhang et al., 2012). Compatibility with a job or organization is crucial because of the ability to foster comfortability (Holtom et al., 2006). Employees tend to stay in organizations where they may feel comfortable (Holtom et al., 2006; Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006). For example, research has shown that employees felt good about their job and workplace because they thought they were comfortable in their company (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006). A situation of this kind may lead to employees continuing for their organization for an extended period (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006).

Additionally, employees who think there is a perceived alignment between their values and their organization's mission work diligently for their companies even amid crisis (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006). Conversely, lack of congruence between personal values and their company's purpose may cause employees to leave their organization

(Tarquinio, 2016). Based on the job embeddedness theory, anything that an employee considers valuable, such as his or her career goals or personal values, must fit with the organization's culture, policies, and the employee's capabilities and skills (Mitchell et al., 2001). Employees become more attached to their organization when they perceive that they are more fit with their job and organization. The fit dimension has two categories: organizational and community fit.

Organizational fit. Organizational fit is how employees perceive themselves as compatible with the organization they work for (Ghosh, & Gurunathan, 2015). One of the aspects that an employee may fit into is organizational culture (Ma et al., 2018). For example, when employees find compatibility with the company's organizations culture, they may stay in their organization. Organizational culture is a set of commonly held beliefs and values in an organization (Idowu, 2016). Further, corporate culture impacts employees' behavior and performance, resulting in job satisfaction and a subsequent reduction in employees' intention to leave (Haggalla & Jayatilake, 2017). For example, in an organization where there is a culture of excellence in job performance, managers may create a pleasant working environment and support employees with training and the needed tools for them to succeed.

Compatibility with teammates or work groups and the organization's values are also important in predicting turnover intentions (Choi & Kim, 2015). For example, a study conducted by Azam, Rafique, and Butt (2017) revealed a negative correlation between coworkers' relationship and turnover intentions, with a correlation of - 0.323. Thus, meaningful relationships and compatibility with one another at the workplace help in predicting turnover intentions. This situation implies that there may not be a strong relationship between teammates if there is not an element of compatibility between them.

Additionally, an employee may stay on his or her job if his or her values are in congruence with the organization's values such as innovation (Yildiz, 2018). Employees who feel that they can realize their professional goals by working for a particular company that values employees' career development may intend to stay in the organization (Reitz, 2014). When there is misfit between an employee's values or career goals, separation occurs faster than when there is a high level of fit to the organization (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991) However, if an employee feels that he or she may not achieve his or her career goals while working for a particular organization, the employee may quit his or her job (Yildiz, 2018). For example, administrative clerks who have the experience of operating an office phone and computer skill for managing employee information system may find themselves fit to discharge their duties as well as fit to work for their company (Mitchell et al., 201). Employers might strengthen organizational fit during recruitment processes. For example, during the time of hiring, employers can provide job candidates with the information that will help them to have an idea of the content of the job and what employers expect of them (Tanova, & Holtom, 2008). Managers or employers should therefore hire employee whose values and skill fit those of the organization (Vafeas, 2015).

Community fit. Community fit factors such as the weather, neighbors, and community culture help to determine a person's commitment to his or her organization as well as intention to leave or stay (Reitz, 2014). A peaceful and serene environment, climate, social life and culture in a city or town may make some employees feel a sense of belonging, a situation that could lower turnover intentions of such employees (Qiu, Haobin Ye, Hung, & York, 2015). Community and organizational embeddedness include a positive relationship (Ng & Feldman, 2013). This association means that managers that need to increase organizational embeddedness should consider assisting their employees with housing and information about social amenities (Ng & Feldman, 2013). Managers and corporate leaders should also consider establishing branches of their organizations where a considerable number of their employees can commute easily to and from work. For example, North Shore Bank in Wisconsin used a strategy of recruiting its staff mainly from the community of the bank, helping them to reduce employee turnover in the company (Holtom et al., 2006). North Shore Bank managers went further and encouraged their staff to partake in community activities such as community parades and festivities (Holtom et al., 2006) to help in fostering social integration, friendship, and community citizenship.

Sacrifice. Sacrifice is the belief that employees have about what they have to forgo when they quit their job (Reitz, 2014). Sacrifice entails those benefits and conveniences that individuals give up for leaving their job (Allen, Peltokorpi, & Rubenstein, 2016). Sacrifice is about the opportunities employees miss when they quit their job (Qiu et al., 2015). According to Mitchell et al. (2001), the sacrifices that come with leaving a job are material and psychological. Example of a material sacrifice is a perceived benefit such as decent pay, company cars given to some employee (in some cases), and awards that employees may forgo when they quit their job. For a psychological sacrifice, one example is the loss of job security that one perceives he or she may lose; then they leave their organization. According to Edwards and Peccei (2007), psychological linkages are the self-defining affective and cognitive bonds that employees have with their organizations. Sacrificing this deep sense of feeling of a connection with their organization is critical in one's decision to leave their job.

Organizational sacrifice. Organizational sacrifice is the anticipated cost of leaving a job (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015). Examples of some of the things that employees forfeit when separating from their organizations are the relationship with colleagues, exciting and challenging projects, job stability, and professional or career advancement (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015). Organizational sacrifice may also include health insurance, nearness to the workplace, and educational benefits. In their study on corporate sacrifice, Gupta and Jenkins (1980) found that sacrifices involving factors such as stock options and benefit pensions may have relations with employee turnover. Employees may consider some organizations to be a better workplace because of the benefits that those organizations provide for their workers. Benefits such as paid medicals – dental and vision – are essential that employees may want to continue to enjoy such programs until they retire. Earning regular income after retirement, even if it not sufficient enough to help pay for most of one's needs, is a wish that every employee has in mind.

People who work for companies that offer 401(k) for example, may consider the organization in question as an outfit to work for a long time, if not for a lifetime. Because of the importance that employees attach to these types of benefits, it is difficult for them to give up those programs, thereby ending staying on their job for as long as they can (Reitz, 2014). The higher the interest, the more the sacrifice (Harris et al., 2011). Thus, organizations try to do more by providing different kinds of benefit to their employees in hopes that such programs may help embed the employees and reduce turnover intentions and for that matter actual turnover. For example, management of Deloitte Consulting succeeded in reducing employee turnover by introducing some benefit schemes to their employees (Holtom et al., 2006). One of such programs provides flexibility in employees' work schedules (Holtom et al., 2006). The goal is to support their staff to build their professional career while having ample time for their personal lives (Holtom et al., 2006).

Community sacrifice is the sacrifice that an individual has to make by forfeiting certain benefits after leaving the community (Reitz, 2014). Some of the sacrifices one must make include going far from friends and relatives because of relocation, giving up living in a peaceful and loving community. A safe neighborhood and quality schools are some of the desirable benefits that a person may forego when one leaves a community (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015). The inconvenience of one having to sell their property is also a sacrifice that people may make when they change jobs.

Application of Job Embeddedness

Many researchers used job embeddedness in their studies to determine how several factors entice employees to continue to remain in their organizations for an extended period (Nigli & Joseph, 2017). Each element may have a different influence on an employee depending on the employee's perception of a particular factor such as pay, professional development, or recognition for achievement. Ghosh and Gurunathan (2015) asserted that job embeddedness' importance and impact differentiate the concept from the known model of employee turnover because the goal of using job embeddedness is to help understand why people intend to stay in their organizations.

Job embeddedness has a negative relationship with employee turnover (Borah & Malakar, 2015; Collins & Mossholder, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2001), meaning the more embedded employees are in their jobs, the less likely that they express their intentions (implicitly or explicitly) to leave their organization. The perceptions of employees about their work-life balance and how employees' attitude change following the perception are critical to the success or otherwise of any organization (Nigli & Joseph, 2017). According to Ghosh and Gurunathan (2015), a commitment based on human resource practice impacts the behaviors and attitudes of employees by directing efforts by both the employee and the organization towards achieving common goals. The link between the organization and employee's objectives is psychological, fostering employees' commitment to work in a manner consistent with the organizational goals (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015).

The application of job embeddedness may produce different outcomes in different countries or cultures based on specific characteristics. In their study of job embeddedness across context using samples from employees in China and Switzerland to determine the effects of on-the job and off-the job embeddedness, Sender, Rutishauser, and Staffelbach (2017) found that using on-the job embeddedness may help reduce turnover events more in Switzerland than in China. One of the reasons could be that the Chinese employees did not have sufficient resources related to on-the job embeddedness that would make them consider staying (Sender et al., 2017). The results of the study also showed that in China, there was a stronger relationship between turnover rates and unsolicited job offers when level of off-the job embeddedness is low (Sender et al., 2017). The implication is that, managers should hire employees who lived in the community or neighborhood of their organization for a longer period of time (Reitz, 2014). This strategy may help in increasing the level of off the job embeddedness (Sender et al., 2017).

In their study to explore how HR managers in Chines organizations use job embeddedness to reduce employee turnover, Bambacas and Kulik (2013) found that performance management and reward systems are critical in successfully embedding employees and reducing turnover rates. According to Bambacas and Kulik, by using performance management and reward systems, employers may increase staff's perception about organizational fit, which may increase intention to stay and therefore reduce employee turnover. Thus, to retain employees and lower turnover rates, one effective strategy Bambacas and Kulik proposed, is to use employee development programs with performance appraisal and reward systems to strengthen organizational fit.

The application of job embeddedness goes beyond organizational context. Nations or governments and their agencies may use job embeddedness to help to nationals – returning students, employees on assignment abroad, professionals, or diplomats – re-integrate into the society and or fit into local jobs or organizations. In a research by Andrianto, Jianhong, Hommey, Damayanti, and Wahyuni (2018) to determine the relationship between job embeddedness and difficulty in re-entry adjustment using perceived sense of professional identity as the mediating factor, the result indicated that when returnees have a perceived sense of professional integrity, there is the likelihood that such returnees may fit into organizations of the home country. Thus, there was a positive correlation ($r = 0.194$) between job embeddedness and professional identity with a P-value of 0.01.

Expert status is the degree to which a person perceives their professional roles as vital, marketable, attractive, and fits and supports other job roles (Andriano et al., 20118; Moore & Hofman, 1988). According to Andriano et al. (2018), designing post-arrival programs may help returnees to adjust and embed into jobs or organizations in the home country. The goal for instituting such programs Andriano et al. asserted, will be to foster returnees' professionalism and employability, a situation which may result in the sense of loyalty, a feeling of organizational citizenship, and a high level of embeddedness in the home country organization.

Challenges in the application of job embeddedness. Job embeddedness (job embeddedness) may be a useful tool for managers and business leaders as contributes to the understanding of turnover intents (Kiazad, Holtom, Hom, & Newman, 2015). For example, job embeddedness ties and binds employees to their organizations thereby reducing the possibility of them leaving their organizations (Aboul-Ela, 2018). A study showed that the relationship between job embeddedness and role ambiguity is negative, implying that through job embeddedness, employees get a sense of what their job or role is and can perform as expected (Aboul-Ela, 2018; Dechawatanapaisal, 2017). Role ambiguity is the uncertainty about the kind of employment an employee assigned with a particular responsibility should do (Palomino & Frezatti, 2016). For example, job or role ambiguity may occur when a manager hands out a task to his staff without adequate instructions or information about how to do the job. Additionally, job ambiguity may happen when an employee does not have the requisite training to handle a particular task (Palomino & Frezatti, 2016). Task ambiguity may lead to stress, which may impact job satisfaction and trigger intentions to leave (De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2017; Hussein, 2015). Using job embeddedness may help reduce address issues related to job ambiguity and for turnover intentions (Naidoo, 2018). Also, by using the organizational fit dimension of job embeddedness, managers, and supervisors reduce employee turnover by providing employees with the need training and specific information about their assigned tasks or roles (Holtom et al., 2006).

Despite being a predictor of turnover, there are some remaining questions whether or not job embeddedness has the productive power to cause employees to stay in their organizations (Jiang et al., 2012; Nicholas, Mensah, & Owusu, 2016). For example, there is not yet proof how job embeddedness can predict voluntary turnover based on the organizational or community dimension of job embeddedness (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015). However, some researchers hold a different view about this indicating that job embeddedness helps predict voluntary turnovers. This gap in literature provides an opportunity for further studies into job embeddedness supporting this current study. HR experts have not come up with how the Society for Human Resources Management can foster embeddedness of employees in their organizations as a means for establishing relevant psychological links between individual employees and their respective organizations (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015).

According to Ghosh and Gurunathan (2015), there are different opinions about whether or not organizational or community measures of job embeddedness can help in predicting voluntary turnover. For example, while some studies revealed that on-the-job embeddedness helps to predict employees' intention to leave (Allen, 2006; Mallol et al., 2007), another study conducted by Lee, Mitchell, Sablynski, Burton, and Holtom (2004) showed that only off-the-job embeddedness helps in predicting the intention to quit and voluntary employee turnover. However, based on Holtom, Mitchell, and Lee's (2006) research, both measures, on-and-off-the-job embeddedness, help to predict employees' intention to quit and voluntary turnover. Job embeddedness may lead to unproductive outcomes when employees are not happy with their job and yet cannot leave (Crossley, Bennett, Jex, & Burnfield, 2007). For example, some employees may not be a position to separate from their organization even though they are not satisfied with their job because of the relationships they may have with their managers, supervisors, and colleagues. This situation makes difficult for the employees, resulting in frustration and attitudes that may be counterproductive (Crossley et al., 2007). This situation negatively affects employee morale, and even though it may reduce employee turnover because the affected employee cannot leave his or her job, the organization may not benefit much from such an employee.

Work Engagement Theory

The concept of work engagement in the form of job involvement or job empowerment (Kuok & Taormina, 2017). Research on work engagement began in the early 1970s following studies on burnout, which is a negative work-related state of mind as a result of fatigue and a lack of mental concentration on work (Freudenberger, 1974). Scholars have different views on the application of the idea as there is no inappropriate measure to explain the concept (Kuok & Taormina, 2017; Listau, Christensen, & Innstrand, 2017). As Schaufeli and Bakker (2010) indicated, practitioners mostly viewed work engagement as related to affective commitment, job satisfaction, and identification with an organization, and this view tends to provide confusing perspectives about work engagement as though they are "putting old wine in new bottles" (p. 12). Work engagement is "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002, p. 74). Employees with a high level of vigor are highly motivated and energized toward working excellently and accomplishing more for themselves irrespective of the difficulties they may face (Lu, Lu, Gursoy, & Neale, 2016).

According to Bakker and Schaufeli (2015), vigor is the display of energy and mental resilience while working, the desire to put more effort in one's work, and even work persistently in spite of the challenges that one faces. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) argued that a positive state of mind leads to employees' preparedness to handle their daily tasks with more efforts and deal with any job-related challenges that they might encounter. While dedication is a wholehearted approach to work, absorption refers to the level of concentration one has on their work, “whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work” (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). Absorption puts an individual in a state whereby they try to give their best to accomplish the task efficiently and effectively. Thus, absorption makes separation of individuals from the jobs difficult, which may likely influence the employees’ intention to stay and subsequently reduce turnover rates (Lu et al., 2016)

Work engagement fosters a favorable working condition which in turn helps to improve the performance of organizations and most importantly, influences turnover intentions (Lu et al., 2016). Work engagement includes concern with employees’ experience while working rather than their attitudes toward job characteristics (Gupta & Shaheen, 2017). For example, a study conducted by Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002) revealed that work engagement results in positive employee attitude toward to their job, and this situation leads to lower employee turnover rates. Engaged employees happen to be more happy and positive about their job and find their organization to be a good place to work, work with diligence, respect their colleagues, and consciously improve their skill to perform better (Lu et al., 2016). This kind of feeling of a sense of significance and identification with one’s job and organization in employees may help to reduce their intention to quit their job. Halbesleben (2010) and Schaufeli (2008) indicated that engaged employees demonstrate increasing level s of self-efficacy about taking care of their career and dedicating a substantial amount of energy in their job. Thus, when people feel the need to invest more energy into their career or work, they may want to continue with the said job and may not think of quitting the job, a situation that is likely to reduce employee turnover. This finding is in line with the assertion by Bakker (2009) and Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli (2009) that engaged individuals have the tendency to remain engaged, allowing the persons in question the opportunity to "develop a positive state of mind" (Blomme, Kodden, & Beasley-Suffolk, 2015, p. 2) toward their job. Stalcup and Pearson (2001) argued that there is the likelihood that highly engaged employees may perceive their present job as a secure career and therefore be more committed to their position for a long time. Employees' commitment to their job may mean that the intentions of such employees to leave may be low.

Work engagement could be an alternative to job embeddedness as a conceptual framework for this study. However, job embeddedness included selection over work engagement because research shows that work engagement and burnout are two opposing extremes (Villavicencio-Ayub, Jurado-Cárdenas, & Valencia-Cruz, 2015), inconsistent with the real situation of employees in their workplace. In other words, engaged employees may simultaneously experience burnout at a workplace, which may influence employees intentions to leave their job and thereby increase employee turnover rates (Kuok & Taormina, 2017).

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

LMX theory is one of the approaches used to study organizational leadership (Cropanzano, Dasborough, & Weiss, 2017). According to Yoon and Bono (2016), LMX emerged to be one of the prominent, successful approaches within the leadership domain that practitioners and scholars use to examine the quality or otherwise of the relationship between a leader and their follower. As Burch and Guarana (2014) stated, the concept of

LMX is in line with the assertion that the relationship leaders establish with their follower depends on whether the leader invests or withdraws resources from the followers. Thus, the kind of interpersonal relationship and the level of interaction between a manager and an employee, coupled with the material support resources are vital in shaping the exchanges that take place between employees and their leaders, managers, or supervisors. The relationship between LMX and employee turnover intentions continues to be a vital area in research which scholars use to investigate the impact of such links on employees and organizations (Yildiz, 2018).

Based on the premise of LMX, the dyadic relationship that individual employees have with their managers and the level of the quality of the connection varies (Adil & Awais, 2016). In other words, the quality of LMX can range from low to high. For example, high-quality interpersonal relationship between a leader and a follower could mean mutual trust and accordance of respect between the leader and the follower (Martin, Guillaume, Thomas, Lee, & Epitropaki, 2016). Followers may be satisfied with the task assigned to them if a leader gives them proper attention, give them autonomy to make individual decisions, provides the necessary information to do their job, and avails them with opportunities for career advancement through different assignments, workshops, or project (Adil & Awais, 2016). With some level of support and opportunities such as autonomy and access to work-related information (Lapil & rastogi, 2018), employees may feel motivated, satisfied with their job, and show affective commitment to their organization, which may reduce employee’s intention to leave.

Through LMX, leaders may reduce employee turnover by instituting policies that foster inclusion and equality at the workplace, which may help to promote more power sharing and lively exchanges within groups and between a leader and his or her followers (Nishii & Mayer, 2009). This approach may be particularly appropriate for a workplace with diverse employees, for example. Because every employee thinks they get the same treatment and opportunities as their colleagues, they feel empowered and exhibit a positive attitude towards their work, a situation that may result in lower employee turnover (Firth, Mellor, Moore, & Loquet, 2004). LMX allows managers to improve communication with their subordinates, and this measure helps to reduce role stressors and their accompanying effect of turnover intentions (Nishii & Mayer, 2009; Zhang, Tsingan, & Zhang, 2013). Thus, employees who feel a sense of relief as a result of a reduction in role stressors may tend to like their job (Firth et al., 2004) and therefore would wish to stay and continue working for their company.

Adil and Awais (2016) found a negative correlation between the LMX and the turnover intention, with the standardized and unstandardized estimates of - 0.599 and-0.251 respectively. Using the hypothesis "LMX relationship is negatively associated with turnover intention," Adil and Awais found a significant negative relationship between LMX and turnover intentions. According to Adil and Awais, LMX helps to reduce the power gap between a leader and a follower, and followers find such a reduction in the difference as fostering career development and growth. When employees have easy access to their leader, they can ask the leader work-related questions and also give their input on what they think may be useful for them and the organization (Adil & Awais, 2016). This situation may not only make the employees feel respected and valued but also lead to a stronger relationship between the leader and the follower and for that matter a more extended working period.

Job embeddedness theory included selected as the conceptual framework for this study over LMX theory because despite the mediating role that LMX theory plays in reducing turnover intentions, there have been contradicting results from previous studies regarding the relationship between LMX and employees' intention to leave (Sheer, 2015; Shaalan et al., 2018) as some followers may experience lower level of exchanges with their leader. Saeed, Waseem, Sikander, and Rizwan (2014) indicated that there is a negative correlation between LMX and intention to leave. However, research by Shaalan et al. (2018) on the effect on LMX on employee turnover intention revealed a positive relationship between LMX and employee's intention to leave. These equivocal results of the studies attest to the argument put forward by Saeed, Waseem, Sikander, and Rizwan (2014) that it is hard to for one to just draw a conclusion on the effect of LMX on an employee's intentions to stay or leave, , as the level of exchanges between the leader and the subordinate may not be the same. Also, according to Martin, Epitropaki, Geoff, and Topakas (2010), LMX approach does not allow leaders to provide subordinates with the same level of support and leadership style as there may be limited resources, time, and perhaps limited power for leaders to apply the theory in a workplace effectively.

Employee Turnover

During the lifetime of an organization, some of its employees leave in search of better opportunities while others have to leave their job for one reason or the other. This situation affects the performance of the organization. This phenomenon that impacts organizational performance is employee turnover. Asamoah, Doe, and Amegbe (2015) defined turnover as "an individual's perception of the possibility of leaving an organization or withdrawing from an organization permanently" (p. 11). Punnoose and Ajit (2016) also defined turnover as the departure of a human capital from an organization. Employee turnover is of two types; voluntary turnover, involuntary turnover, and downsizing (Parker & Gerbasi, 2016). According to Park and Shaw (2013), a voluntary turnover occurs when an employee decides to leave the organization on his or her own. This situation could be for reasons such as job dissatisfaction or getting a new job perceived to be better than the current one (Park & Shaw, 2013). In their study, Parker and Gerbasi (2016) stated that voluntary turnover happens due to involuntary intentions by the employee. Sometimes, the employee leaves their job because of pressure from management, mainly if the leadership of the organization cannot fire the said employee for legal or contractual reasons (Parker & Gerbasi, 2016). According to Ferreira and Almeida (2015), the 1970s was the period when studies about employee turnover began to get more attention. This turn of events made the phenomenon a critical issue for management scholars and business executives, and industry practitioners (Saraih, Aris, Sakdan, & Ahmad, 2017). A report from the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018) showed that total separations (quits, layoffs, discharges, and other forms of employee turnover) increased from 60.9 million to 63.0 million from 2016 to 2017 respectively.

The global economy affects individual nations and the businesses operating in them, a condition that puts persistent pressure on some organization. The fact the business leaders are conscious about reducing cost leads to the dismissal of some employees and thereby resulting in an involuntary turnover (Manz, Fugate, Hom & Millikin, 2015). Involuntary turnover occurs when an organization dismisses its employee(s) (Park & Shaw, 2013). A leave of absence is also an involuntary turnover (Kovner, Brewer, Fatehi & Jun, 2014).

Downsizing can also lead to involuntary turnover in organizations. Downsizing is an induced turnover through an action taken by an organization to achieve an economic or political goal (Parker & Gerbasi, 2016). Downsizing can also be a management plan when the managers of the organization in question are strategizing to outperform competitors (Parker & Gerbasi, 2016) through cost reduction. According to Nair and Salleh (2017), turnover intentions are voluntary decisions employees make to separate from their organization. Turnover intention is the crucial stage leading to the actual occurrence of a turnover event.

The impact of employee turnover. Employee turnover can have negative implications for organizational performance. According to Park and Shaw (2012), human and social capital theories indicate that there exists a negative correlation between turnover rates and organizational performance. Employee turnover is detrimental to organizations because of its adverse impacts on the finances of organizations. The relationship between corporate performance and collective employee turnover has been understood from different theoretical perspectives (Lee, 2017). But what most scholars agreed on is that employee turnover negatively impacts organizational performance.

Hale, Ployhart, and Shepherd (2016) asserted that the consequences following a turnover event are in most cases detrimental. However, the level of implications depends on an array of factors such as the nature of employees' work – whether the employee works independently or otherwise and whether it is very challenging to replace the said employee financially and process-wise. Besides, turnover involving "*newcomer*" [differs from turnover involving] "old timers" (Holtom, Tidd, Mitchell, & Lee, 2013, p. 1338). Turnover leads to disruption experienced by team members in a unit (Hale Jr., Ployhart & Shepherd, 2016).

Current theories do not give an estimation of how long a disruption (following a turnover event) would last. However, a study conducted by Hale Jr. et al. (2016) showed that the separation generally does not last long but managers may experience its impact immediately after the occurrence of a turnover event. According to Lee and Ha-Brookshire (2017) and Sun and Wang (2016), employee turnover may result in a waste of resources for recruiting new staff and cause disruptions in company operations as some employees may find it challenging in completing the tasks of the departed worker.

Studies indicated that more than 25% of workers only work for their organizations for less than 1 year whereas 40% of employees have been with their organizations for less than 3 years (Holtom et al., 2013). Employee turnover has been a concern to organization, particularly managers of SMEs because of the cost associated with it

(Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). Financially, the Employment Policy Foundation (EPF) reported that the average employee turnover cost is $14,224.

Employee turnover may be good for some organizations. Contrary to the views of many scholars such as Wynen, Dooren, Mattijs, and Deschamps (2019), employee turnover rates do not always impact negatively on organizational performance (Parker & Gerbasi, 2016). Some scholars found the phenomenon to be beneficial to organizations (Zhang, 2016). Those scholars argue that turnover may not be bad entirely and that some turnover events are a blessing rather than a curse to the organization (Wynen et al., 2018). According to Shakeel and But (2015), a balanced turnover rate may lead to a well-functioning organization. For example, when the turnover event involves an underperforming employee, it is in the best interest of the organization (Parker & Gerbasi, 2016). The departure of an underperforming employee could reduce deficiencies in the activities of the organization and therefore result in positive outcomes (Wynen et al., 2019). Some organizations benefit from employee turnover (Lee, 2017; Philipina-Ampomah, & Cudjor, 2015). To those organizations, turnover rates can help them reduce compensation costs and also allows organizations to eliminate poor performers (Lee, 2017).

Employee Retention

The concept of employee retention is about how to keep and encourage employees to stay in an organization and work for some time (Kossivi, Xu, & Kalgora, 2016; Vasantham & Swarnalatha, 2015). Employee retention should be one of the top priorities for organizations because skilled employees form the core assets of every organization. According to Das and Baruah (2013), the survival and growth of any organization depends on the key employees in the organization that managers succeed in retaining. Prioritizing the interests of employees and ensuring that managers make rational decisions about retention strategies would be crucial in keeping employees in an organization (Das & Baruah, 2013). Losing skilled employees negatively impacts production and service quality (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018).

Employee retentions remains a significant concern for many organizations (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018). This concept helps beg the question as to how managers identify what determines employee retention. A study indicated that a cluster of factors determines employee retention and commitment (Kossivi et al., 2016). Every employee is different, and so it is essential for managers to know what makes each employee like his or her job as this point is crucial to facilitating employee retention. Understanding what makes employees committed to their jobs is in the interest of organizational managers because knowing the needs of employee may help managers to give their employees the desired support, which in turn improves productivity and service quality (Fu & Deshpande, 2014). Das and Baruah (2013) argued that happy and satisfied employees tend to be more dedicated to their work by increasing the satisfaction of the organization’s customers.

The concept of employee retentions is crucial because it fosters organizational stability (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, Pemberton-Jones, 2015). In stable organizations, employees can work effectively and efficiently because of incentives such as trust, employee advancement opportunities, and friendly management practices. According to

Singh and Satpathy (2017), emphasis on the implementation of friendly practices in an organization is key to not only attracting employees but also retaining them. Employees need a work environment where they get opportunities for learning and skills development that can lead to career progression.

Managers can sustain effective retentions strategies if they incorporate those strategies in their daily operations (Cloutier, 2015). The reason is that every passing day, employees think about how to better their career to achieve their professional goals. When managers match those daily thoughts by employees with continuous retentions strategies, the managers may succeed in keeping some of their employees (Fu & Deshpande, 2014). Managers may succeed in retaining their employee through continuous daily retention practices by adopting a culture of knowledge sharing (Naim & Lenkla, 2016). Knowledge sharing helps to motivate employees, which leads to improving the competencies and commitment of the employees (Naim & Lenkla, 2016).

Retention strategies to reduce employee turnover. Most of the businesses operating globally are not the same regarding size, shape, and mode of operation. However, one thing that is common to all the companies is the fact that they highly depend on key employees who have the requisite skills and experiences that the organizations need for success. Thus, an organization's fortunes are as important as the individuals that work in the organization. The long-term, successful operation of any organization depends on the effectiveness of the retention policies of the said organization (Ibidunni, Osibanjo, Adeniji, Salau, & Falola, 2016; Vishwakarma & Rao, 2017). The fact that employees are every organization's valuable assets means that their importance not only requires that companies attract the most talented employees but also put specific strategies in place to retain those employees for as long as they can (Kossivi et al., 2016). According to Singhapakdi, Lee, Sirgy, and Senasu (2015), high levels of employee turnover are indications that managers or employers encounter difficulties in retaining their employees. For this reason, retaining employees should be an integral part of employers' strategies to ensure that employee becomes not only efficient in exercising their duties, but also be loyal and stay on their job for a long time, if not until they retire. Different factors influence employee retention and management need to identify such factors and incorporate them into their daily strategies (Das & Baruah, 2013).

Career development opportunities. Employees who perceive that their career opportunities in their organization are low may quit their job (Ambrosius, 2016). Personal and professional growth of employees influence employee retention and opportunities for promotions lead to employee commitment and intention to stay on their job (Kossivi et al., 2016). According to Olsen and Stensaker (2014), a manager should institute skills development programs for their employees because skills development is critical in times of organizational change. Employees with requisite skills will be able to fit for their assigned roles in their company and may not find work extremely challenging in an uncertain corporate environment (Olsen & Stensaker, 2014).

Kossivi et al. (2016) found that there exists a correlation between resignation from job and career development programs. There is also a positive correlation between retention and employee development opportunities (Herman, 2005). Manager should design professional development programs for their employees such as training programs, seminars, and workshops (Damij, Levnajić, Skrt, & Suklan, 2015; Kossivi et al., 2016). Peng et al. (2016) suggested that company leaders incorporate employee development programs to meet the company's objectives for career development and management. Managers must also ensure that the skills and or training programs are in line with the specific needs of each employee or department (Grissom, Viano, & Selin, 2016; Peng et al., 2016) and invest in their HR (Jeffrey, 2015). Employee training and career development programs increase retention and organizational commitment (Fletcher, Alfes, & Robinson, 2016) and employee loyalty (Vi, Vi, & Quang, 2018). Employee training is necessary because of the ability to foster work engagement, which reduces employees' intention to quit their job (Lu et al., 2016; Memon, Salleh, & Baharom, 2016). Employers should endeavor to provide the employee with opportunities for promotion and career advancement recognizing employees' achievements and supporting paths to professional development.

Job embeddedness. Through job embeddedness, managers can increase the commitment of their employees to the organization (Karatepe, 2016). By using organizational culture, employers may increase employees' desire to stay in an organization (Peltokorpi et al., 2014). For example, employees become more embedded in an organization when the organizational culture is in congruence with the values and career goals of the employees (Mitchell et al., 2001; Peltokorpi et al., 2014). Employees' connections with their workplace can occur through some relationships they have in their community, and those relationships may go beyond the employees' nuclear family such as children and spouse (Gonzalez et al., 2016). An employer can increase organizational or workplace attachment through recognition of the achievements and roles that friends play and also instituting some work-life programs that foster family and friends-centered environment (Gonzalez et al., 2016). The following table demonstrates how some organizations use job embeddedness to increase employee retention and reduce employee turnover (see Table 2).

Table 2

How Job Embeddedness Can Increase Retention Through Link, Fit, and Sacrifice

Embeddedness dimensions	Company	Examples
Links	Cytokinetics	Cytokinetics creates links between employees by having frequent and desirable outings to professional sporting events, Friday employee gatherings, and training off sites in relaxed attractive sites.
Fit	Zappos	Zappos prioritizes cultural fit during the interview process. Trainees are guided by a culture book and are paid to exit if strong assimilation does not happen.
Sacrifice	SAS	SAS increases an employee's sacrifice for leaving the company by offering extensive and ongoing training, high pay, and such desirable benefits as onsite daycare.

Note. Information adapted from Mayfield et al. (2015)

Work-life balance. The concept of work-life balance continues to gain attention in the corporate world, becoming a matter of interest for employers that tends to affect employees' decision to stay on their job (Kaushalya, & Perera, 2018). According to de Sivatte, Gordon, Rojo, and Olmos (2015), the idea of work-life balance came about as a mediating measure to address work-related issues, including health stress, absenteeism, labor retention, and most importantly to promote a sense of socially responsible organizations in the corporate world. Work-life balance is critical for organizational stability because of affecting employee retention (Haider, Aamir, & Hamid, 2016; Umamaheswari, & Krishnan, 2016). Employees may want to continue with their job if they find a balance between their work and their free time (Ambrosius, 2016).

The extent of a work-life balance depends on the level of sacrifice that employees can make to forgo other aspects of life needs. Kossivi et al. (2016) asserted that through work-life balance, employers and organization managers could increase retention by ensuring that they provide emotional support to their employees. A study conducted in the United Kingdom showed that intervention of work demands that affect people's lives, such as overtime schedules and working during weekends, leading to stress and emotional tiredness ((Das & Baruah, 2013). Thus, a highly work-life balance may increase employees' intention to stay. Managers should find ways to harmonize work and life to ease the pressure of work overload on their employees, which may influence employees' intention to stay and subsequently reduce employee turnover (Helmle, Botero, & Seibold, 2014; Lyons & Akroyd, 2014).

Challenges in retaining employees to reduce employee turnover. Employee retention is the key to sustainable organizational performance. According to Nasir and Mahmood (2018), the idea of employee retention remains a severe workforce management challenge in need of solution. Employee retention is necessary because when an employee stays and work for an organization for a long time, the organization in question benefits from the talent and expertise of the employees (Nasir & Mahmood, 2018). Additionally, organizations tend to avoid the costs associated with employee turnover if they manage to retain their employees (Abdullah-Al Mamun & Nazmul Hasan, 2017).

Employee retention appears to be a challenge in some organizations. One of the reasons is that different factors hinder retention efforts (Das, 2013). Because of the complex nature in identifying the specific needs of each employee, the concept of retention requires more than just one strategy or solution (Sinha & Sinha, 2012). Lack of effective leadership may not help in employee retention efforts. There is the possibility that employees will not have the intention to stay in an organization if the leaders of the organization do not have managerial know-how to provide employees with the support they need (Abdullah-Al Mamun & Nazmul Hasan, 2017).

Employee retention is critical to HR manager teams, and it is one of the top priorities that organizations consider for success as far as reducing employee turnover rates is concerned. However, some organizations face challenges in trying to retain their employees. The reasons vary depending on the individual employee or the conditions in the organization in question. According to Gharib, Kahwaji, and Elrasheed (2017), one of the reasons managers find difficulty to retain employees is that some employees believe that their career advances when they change jobs. This reason may not apply to all employees.

Globalization and improved technological advancements also contribute to the challenges that employers and managers face in retaining their employees to address employee turnover issues (Uitzinger, Chrysler-Fox, & Thomas, 2018). Because of technology, employees can obtain information about new job opportunities and globalization fosters the movement of employees from one job to another across borders. Some employers cannot retain their employees because of weak retention strategies (Uitzinger et al., 2018). Lack of competitive pay and the fact that employees do not get promotion are other reasons that make employee retention challenging (Munn, 2018).

Addressing employee turnover using transformational leadership theory. The framework of transformational leadership theory is one of the assumptions that apply to employee turnover (Amankwaa & Anku-Tsede, 2015; Gyensare, Anku-Tsede, Sanda, & Okpoti, 2016; Waldman, Carter, & Hom, 2015) and fosters sustainability in organizations (Caillier, 2014). The constructs of the transformational leadership theory are evident of the usefulness in contemporary leadership approaches. Transformational leadership theory has four key factors which are (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration (Banks, McCauley, Gardner, & Guler, 2016). These factors serve as the guiding principles of the theory and the premise upon which the approach came into being (Northouse, 2016). According to Tonvongval (2013), the idealized influence or charismatic behavior of a leader supports the leader's ability to act as a role model worthy of emulation by their followers. These are the leaders who live an exemplary life, empower followers, and instill a sense of determination in their followers (Tonvongval, 2013). The idealized influence, as Northouse (2016) stated, is the "emotional component of leadership" (p. 167). Followers wish to behave like the leader and would like to identify themselves with the leader so that they (followers) can also achieve success as the leader while putting extra effort to serve their organization through a high team spirit and self-determination.

Lack of adequate HR practices such as employee involvement in decision-making could cause employees to change their attitudes towards work, leading to lack of interest to stay and work for the organization (Hom, Lee, Shaw, & Hausknecht, 2017). The extent of the impact of turnover on organizational performance depends on the type of HR practices that leaders of the organization in question implement (Kovner et al., 2014). HR systems can be employed by managers to moderate turnover events and organizational performance (Kovner et al., 2014). Thus, effective HR practices can reduce turnover rates in an organization.

Leaders inspire and motivate followers to be more engaged and active in a bid to achieve the goals set by the leader. Banks et al. (2016) asserted that inspirational motivation refers to the extent to which a leader inspires his or her followers by defining for them a clear vision for the organization. A transformational leader can make followers "transcend their self-interest for the sake of others" (Northouse, 2016, p. 175). Through this selflessness, followers may begin to have a sense of organizational citizenship and would want to increase their commitment to their organization (Northouse, 2016). The leader can inspire followers, making them enthusiastic and engaging in behaviors that are pro-organizational (Körner, Wirtz, Bengel, & Göritz, 2015) to the extent that inspiration may lead to a reduction intention to leave (Salem, 2015).

According to Northouse (2016), intellectual simulation as a transformational leadership factor entices followers to be creative in their general activities. This component enables an individual to motivate followers and encourages them to challenge not only their beliefs and values but also the beliefs of the leader and those of the organization as well (Northouse, 2016). An individual who applies transformational leadership theory in their organization's functions enhance followers' value and use them to foster the vision and objectives of the organization (Manzoor, Wei, Nurunnabi, Subhan, Shah, & Fallatah, 2019; Wang, Kim, & Lee, 2016). This factor shows the level at which a leader challenges prevailing assumptions relative to organizational culture and supports followers to try new things and develops new techniques of dealing with the issues in the organizations (Effelsberg et al., 2014). When a leader promotes individual follower's effort, for example, and helps them to come up with new ways of solving the organizational problem, that leader in question exhibits the intellectual simulation component of transformational leadership (Northouse, 2016).

Individuals who exhibit individualized consideration behavior tend to simulate follower to bring out their best for the sake of the success of the organization (Tonvongval, 2013). Intellectual stimulation enables leaders to encourage their followers to challenge assumptions; they think innovatively and instill confidence in them (followers) to approach issues with new techniques and methods (Tonvongval, 2013). According to Northouse (2016), these leaders who demonstrate behavior that pertains to individualized consideration provide an enabling climate for followers to learn and grow professionally. The leader supports followers to realize their full potential and become self-actualized (Northouse, 2016). Followers get the full attention of the leaders who also provide followers with their needs by acting as an advisor, a motivator, a coach, and a mentor (Lan & Chong, 2015). Individual consideration promotes attentive listening on the part of the leader (Northouse, 2016), which means that the leader engages in a dialog with followers individually, tries to understand their problems and concerns, and device the best way of helping them succeed (Lan & Chong, 2015).

Transformational leadership theory emphasizes employee engagement (Northouse, 2016). Results of a study conducted by Tonvongval (2013) showed that the earning per share growth rate for an organization with high employee engagement was 28% while that of organizations with low employee engagement was 11.20%. Banks et al. (2016) defined corporate identity as the feeling of psychologically intertwined with the organization and with their organizations' welfare and success. Tonvongval's study for assessing the impact of transformational leadership on behavior showed that after 120 days of leadership organizational development intervention, there were in transformational leadership behavior of managers, recording improvements of 6.04% for idealized influence, 3.81% for inspirational motivation, 3.76% for intellectual stimulation, and 8.17% for individualized consideration.

Effelsberg et al. (2014) found that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational identification with a regression weight of 0.23. This regression weight explains the fact that transformational leaders can influence their followers and strengthens their sense of belongingness in the organization, a situation that may lead to employees working for their organization for a longer period of time. Followers sacrifice their self-interest and seek to help the organization achieve its goals (Steinmann, Klug, & Maier, 2018). In comparing transformational leadership to servant leadership about their impact on organizational learning, Choudhary, Akhtar, and Zaheer (2012) discovered that transformational leadership had an estimated regression weight of 0.477 while regression weight of servant leadership was 0.326. The implication is that, though both have a positive correlation with organizational learning, transformational leadership has a stronger positive relationship than servant leadership. Transformational leadership may be producing more significant effects on moderating employee turnover. However, transformational leadership has some issues. According to Northouse (2016, p. 178), the theory "lacks conceptual clarity" because of encompassing a wide range of functions, making the concept difficult to identify its scope. Thus, leaders using transformational theory to address employee turnover issues may not be able to make the most impact, as they might have too much to do concerning reducing employee turnover events and might end up doing little.

Transition

Section 1 of this study comprises the foundation of the study, which highlights the phenomenon under investigation that pertains employee turnover issues in the SMEs and the background for the problem, which introduces the research topic. The section also includes the problem and purpose statements, the nature of the study, a research question as well as the conceptual framework, operational definitions, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations, the significance of the study, and a literature review of the primary conceptual model and other related models. This chapter also includes of a review offering discussion of strategies that some managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover event that affect sales performance with the job embeddedness theory as the conceptual framework for the inquiry.

Section 2 covers the aspects of the research including (a) the of the researcher, (b) details regarding recruitment of participants, (c) research methodology, (d) research design, and (e) population and sampling. Section 2 also provides insight into some data collection techniques and data analysis. In addition, this section will include additional details regarding measure employed to ensure reliability and validity of the study. Section 3 includes discussion of the presentation of the findings of the inquiry, an application of professional practice, and implication for social change. Chapter 3 also covers some recommendations to help managers address issues of employee turnover.

Section 2: The Project

As the primary data collector in this research, there are specific procedures and principles to follow. This section includes the following topics: (a) the purpose of the study, (b) the role of the researcher, (c) participants, (d) research method, and (e) research design. The rest are (f) population and sampling, (g) ethical research, (g) reliability, and (i) validity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that some managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover that negatively affect sales performance. The target population consisted of managers of SMEs in the Bronx area of New York. The managers were experienced with success in addressing turnover issues. This study included three managers of SMEs as participants. Increased sales may lead to increased profits, some of which corporations may contribute to the community to support education and development programs.

Role of the Researcher

In conducting a research study, there is the possibility that the researcher may encounter some ethical issues that may affect the progress or outcome of the research (Mealer & Jones, 2014). There is also likelihood of bias during a study (Galdas, 2017), during data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation (Simundic, 2013). Bias is any act that may lead to a false account of an event or provide incorrect results of research (Polit, & Beck, 2014). As the primary data collector, I took steps to mitigate biases and avoid viewing data through a personal lens. Researchers may be biased in data collection if they let their personal beliefs to affect the process or manner of gathering information (Saunders et al., 2015; Smith & Noble, 2015). I reduced bias during data collection by letting participants freely to give an account of their experience instead of responding with “yes” or “no” answers. For example, I asked “How did you assess the effectiveness of strategies you used for reducing employee turnover events that affect sales performance?” instead of “Were the strategies you used to reduce turnover events that affect sales performance successful?” This strategy ensured that all participants could share how they felt about their experience without limitation. In addition, I collected information in a manner convenient for participants.

It is also the responsibility of the researcher to gather data that are accurate and consistent with the objective of the study. It is important for researchers to ask the right questions and be attentive listeners to participants’ responses (Bolderston, 2012). I asked appropriate questions and listened to the participants to accurately transcribe after recording the interviews. Additionally, bias is possible in how a researcher interprets participants’ responses (Saunders et al., 2015). During data analysis, researchers may search for data that are in congruence with their experiences (Smith & Noble, 2015), which may make the researcher focus on only a part of the information they gathered. I minimized biases in data analysis by analyzing the data collected including answers not in line with my personal beliefs. I also mitigated bias in data interpretation by trusting the participants and interpreting the data from the viewpoint of the interviewees rather than understanding the information through my worldview. This allowed me to appreciate participants' experiences from the different perspectives. The goal was to ensure that bias was as low as possible.

Further, a researcher should follow the interview protocol and remain ethical while undertaking a research study (Metcalf, 2016). The Belmont Report of 1979 provides ethical principles important in conducting a study such as respect for persons, beneficence, and administering justice (Miracle, 2016; U.S. Department of Health, 1979). I respected participants by ensuring that I received their informed consent first before making any arrangements for interviews or any data collection. Additionally, in the Belmont Report, there are 3 elements regarding informed consent: (a) information, (b) comprehension, and (c) voluntariness (U.S. Department of Health, 1979). Some of the information in the informed consent included the purpose of the study, an in-depth description of the research procedure, and voluntary participation (Miracle, 2016). I provided participants with the relevant information to help them to understand their rights so they could decide to participate in the study or not in the informed consent. Thus, participants had the autonomy to determine whether they would want to participate in the research (Miracle, 2016). I was also just by providing the same information to all the potential participants as well as applying the same selection criteria and asking them the same questions during the interview.

Safeguarding research participants ensures that they are free from any form of physical or psychological harm (Williamson & Burns, 2014). This study included protecting the participants from harm by preserving their personal information. For example, I did not to disclose participants' identities and what they shared with me to a third party. I also ensured that the interview locations were safe and private by asking participants to choose their preferred location and time for the interview. An interview protocol also helps to enhance data quality (Castillo-Montoya, 2016), which I used in this study to treat participants with respect and make ethical judgments in data analysis (see Appendix A). The protocol also ensures that interview questions aligned with the research question. Further, I established a good relationship with participants to build confidence and ensure trust between participants and myself as well as develop faith and trust by communicating clearly with the participants and allowing them to ask questions on issues that they did not understand.

My familiarity with the topic from experience as an administrative assistant in charge of managing employee information systems involved in the onboarding process, organizing workshops for staff, and standing in for the manager in his absence. Therefore, my experience relates to the participants to a certain extent. However, because of the likelihood of the existence of a difference between my personal view of the world and those of participants, there is the tendency of bias during data collection and analysis (Polit & Beck, 2014). I employed an interview protocol (see Appendix A) as a strategy to mitigate some of the biases and to ensure that data analysis reflected the views of participants.

Participants

It is important for a researcher to select participants that meet the selection criteria (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). The participants included in this study were managers of SMEs in the Bronx area of New York. Gaining access to participants is important in qualitative studies (Shenton & Hayter, 2004). One of the strategies used to gain access to potential participants was by first obtaining approval from the respective organizations whose employees would serve as potential interviewees in this research. Identifying and choosing potential participants who meet the selection criteria to ensure obtaining the right information (Miller & Schertzer, 2014).

Researchers may get an endorsement from organizations to allow their employees to participate in a study by contacting the company by phone to find out about the appropriate person to contact (Johl & Renganathan, 2010). I first called as many companies as possible to speak with the persons with authority to facilitate communication with potential participants. During the conversation, I introduced myself and explained the reason for the assistance of the managers of SMEs. After the phone calls, they received e-mails explaining further about the research project, which contained the objective of the research and a request for participation in the study (Johl & Renganathan, 2010). I formally requested the involvement of some of their employees in the project and also asked to visit the organizations to meet with the potential interviewees. I also requested the company representatives to recommend employees with experience in addressing employee turnover issues. Additionally, I e-mailed each potential participant about the study and its purpose.

A purposive sample of participants is recommended (Yin, 2018), as it satisfies the requirement for obtaining valuable information (Palinkas et al., 2013). The participants were people with successful contributions to the implementation of strategies for reducing employee turnover. The criteria for selecting participants is important to gathering credible and authentic data (Palinkas et al., 2013). The choice of participants in a qualitative study should be purposeful because the researcher expects participants to be able to provide information that is relevant to the research question (Sargeant, 2012). I followed the identified research protocol in the Belmont Report that provides the criteria for recruiting study participants. The protocol includes providing potential participants with expert information, selecting participant based on their qualifications and not because of their relationship with the researcher. The same selection criteria applied to all potential participants to ensure fairness in the selection process.

Following instructions is also important for a successful research study. I followed the guidelines of Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) by receiving permission from the IRB before conducting any interviews (approval number 11-25-19-0730387). Researchers should also allow prospective participants to decide for themselves whether to participate in the study (Largent & Lynch, 2017). To ensure that potential participants took part in the research willingly, they received an informed consent form, which explained the process and nature of the study. I provided the potential interviewees consent forms after obtaining the IRB approval to request their signatures to consent to participate in the study.

After obtaining the consent of participants to take part in the study, I established a good rapport between participants and myself by being open and showing a positive attitude toward the participants. I communicated to participants through emails and phone calls. Establishing a rapport with study participants helps to promote healthy interactions during interviews (Bell, 2014). Thus, researchers should ensure that they engage positively with participants (Von Benzon & van Blerk, 2017).

Research Method and Design

This study entailed an exploration of strategies that some managers of SMEs used to address employee turnover issues. I employed a qualitative research method and a case study design to conduct the research. In the following subsections, I explain the chosen research method and design for this study.

Research Method

The types of research methods that a researcher may choose from to meet the objective of the study are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Saunders et al., 2016). A qualitative approach is a research method used to explore opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and views (Hammarberg, Kirkman, & de Lacey, 2016). In this study, the objective was to explore the strategies that some managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover events that affect sales performance. A qualitative method was appropriate for this study because I was able to gain insight about the study phenomenon through interviews, including participants' opinions, beliefs, and attitudes. A qualitative method also helps researchers to focus on details of the problem under investigation (Anyan, 2013). By using semistructured interviews, I was able to understand participants' views on the successful strategies they used in reducing employee turnover and their experiences in dealing with employee turnover events.

In contrast to a qualitative method, a quantitative research method is about data sample collection and testing of a predetermined hypothesis by using numerical data for analysis (Oleinik, 2011). Researchers analyze data to help them reveal the defining pattern, trends, and relationships that exist in the study results (Albers, 2017). A quantitative approach did not meet the needs for this study, which was to help in exploring alternative ways of retaining employees. A quantitative method was not be appropriate for this study because the study did not involve the use of numerical data and the testing of the hypothesis. Additionally, researchers use quantitative methods to determine the causes and effects of clinical trial studies (Yilmaz, 2013), which did not apply to this study.

Additionally, a mixed approach is the application of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to collect, analyze, and interpret data in a study concurrently or sequentially (Saunders et al., 2016). A mixed methodology is a combination of deductive and inductive methods if the researcher believes that using both qualitative and quantitative methods will be appropriate to achieve the study objective (Bansal & Corely, 2012). Researchers use mixed methods if they intend to integrate the data from both approaches (Bansal & Corely, 2012). Because mixed methods has a quantitative component, it was not appropriate for this study. The objective of this study was to describe human’s lived experience. It is not possible for researchers to explain human experience only in numerals by employing quantitative methods (Bernard, 2013), which was the objective of this study, because numbers cannot capture the entire meaning and the description of experiences that interviews help to provide in qualitative case studies. Further, according to Yin (2018), researchers should never use mixed methods with case study research. Thus, a mixed method approach was not appropriate.

Research Design

In qualitative studies, some of the most notable research designs are case study, ethnography, phenomenology, narrative research (Yin, 2018). The design for this study was a case study. A case study may help researchers to explore different perspectives through a comprehensive analysis of people's experiences to fully gain insight into the lessons in a real-world context (Reiter, Stewart, & Bruce, 2011; Saunders, 2016). Researchers who use case study designs facilitate an inquiry into a problem in an intricate and in-depth manner (Sangster-Gormley, 2013) by asking *how* and *what* questions that lead to a more in-depth exploration of the problem under study (Yin, 2018). A case study also helps researchers to investigate a phenomenon by collecting data information from a range of sources (Saunders, 2016). By interviewing different participants and reviewing company documents about employee turnover and strategies used to address the employee turnover issues, I was able to gather data from an array of sources. I chose a case study design over other qualitative research designs (ethnography, grounded theory, and narrative research) because the design enabled me to identify strategies that managers of SMEs use to retain their employees to reduce turnover events and appreciate the different views that participants held.

Other designs not chosen included ethnography, phenomenology, and narrative. The ethnographic design is a combination of approaches and techniques researchers use to gather data by observing participants (Bolderston, 2012). Ethnography involves an explanation of observations and the patterns of cultural groups based on the group's day-to-day routines (Venzon-Cruz & Higginbottom, 2013). However, this study's focus was not to observe participants and gather data. Additionally, a phenomenological model did not meet the needs for this study because the objective of this study was not to investigate participants' lived experiences (see Roberts, 2013). Finally, by using a narrative design, researchers can interact with participants and gather information about the stories of participants' lives (Lewis, 2015). Narrative designs help researchers to investigate in detail participants' views when participants give an account of their personal stories (Yin, 2018). However, in this study there was no intention to inquire into the life stories of participants.

I used interviews to collect primary data. I selected a sample of three participants to interview. A sample of 1 to 10 participants may be appropriate to conduct a qualitative study using a case study design (Rowley, 2012). A sample consisting of more than 10 participants may not be suitable for a case study because of the ability to compromise the richness of the data through data saturation (Rowley, 2012). Not reaching saturation impacts the quality and content validity of the study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data saturation not only helps to determine research quality but also helps avoid unnecessary collection of data that may result in repetitions and an unethical waste of resources (Varpio, Ajjawi, Monrouxe, O'Brien, & Rees, 2016). To achieve data saturation, I collected more data through follow-up questions and compared themes to minimize redundancy in data and to ensure that there was no need for additional data collection. Additionally, an interview protocol includes semistructured interview questions and recording notes that may help a researcher to have a reflection of the interview (Hudson et al., 2014). I used an interview protocol to obtain rich and quality data (see Appendix A).

Population and Sampling

The population for this study were managers of SMEs within the Bronx area in New York. I selected three managers of SMEs to ensure to obtain enough information to answer the research question. Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Fontenot (2013) recommended a sample size be between 3 and 5 participants. Yin (2018) is of the view that researchers may use a sample size of 2 to 3 participants. Based on these two views on sample size, the study included a sample of three participants for this study as the participants could provide me with insights that would help solve the problem under investigation. The managers also would have successfully used some strategies to reduce turnover events.

I purposefully selected the sample to enable the ability to gather enough information regarding the problem. As stated in Bezzina and Saunders' (2014) work, a purposeful sampling allows researcher to focus on the research topic that participants can relate to and provide rich information and data about to the phenomenon. Yin (2018) posited that a purposeful sampling is appropriate for qualitative studies as researchers benefit from selecting potential interviewees that know about the topic under study. By using purposeful sampling, I established a sample size with a population made of people with specific ideas relevant to the research topic. As Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, and McKibbon (2015) and Martínez-Mesa, González-Chica, Duquia, Bonamigo, and Bastos (2016) indicated, a purposeful sampling fosters rich data gathering and allows researchers to get the opinion and perspective of experts in a specific on the topic of interest. Thus, I purposefully select the study sample to allow the ability to gain insights into participants' divergent perspectives to provide rich data in addressing the issues of turnover events. A purposeful sample requires that potential participants should not only be willing to participate in the study, but they should also be interested in providing enough information (Palinkas et al., 2013). The intention was to ensure that managers of the organizations recommended employees ready to avail themselves for the study and were in a position to express themselves in detail about the phenomenon in a way reflective of their experiences.

An interview location should be appropriate to achieve the study purpose (Bolderston, 2012). According to Bolderston (2012), researchers should choose a place that is quiet and private for the interview. The selection included secluded location devoid of noise but secure to conduct interviews (Bolderston, 2012). A convenient time and venue for an interview are critical for interviewees (Oltmann, 2016). I considered the location and time that were convenient for the participants. There was a request to participants for their opinion on the scheduled time and venue for the interview to ensure that we had an uninterrupted, memorable experience. I provided participants with water and coffee to show some courtesy to them. I ensured that we began and ended the interviews at the scheduled times as a way of respecting participants and building of trust between us.

Achieving a data saturation is crucial because contributing to the quality of a research study (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Marshall et al., 2013). Data saturation is a situation whereby the researcher obtains enough data to the point that additional data cannot make any difference regarding the richness of the data (Marshall et al., 2013). I continued to gather data until I achieved data saturation. Sim et al. (2018) asserted that data saturation serves as a guide to collecting data and data analysis concerning data *redundancy* or regarding the theoretical understanding that the researcher develops as he or she gathers data. I interviewed selected participants and did follow-up interviews as needed to ensure to attain data saturation.

Ethical Research

Researchers should work to promote social responsibility, maintain personal integrity, and ensure to protect the welfare of participant, to support international standards for safety and security (Akaranga & Makau, 2016; Johnson, 2014). Matise (2015) stated the need for researchers to bear the responsibility of protecting research participants and ensuring the validity of the research findings. A researcher must conduct a research study whose design does not infringe upon the interest, rights, and safety of their participants (Akaranga & Makau, 2016).

Before beginning to contact potential participants and collecting data, I sought the approval of the IRB. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1979), Fiske and Hauser (2014), and Yin (2013), a researcher must obtain approval from the IRB before data collection and engaging any participant in the study. Because of the ethical issues that characterize research studies that involve humans, it is imperative that researchers are careful about how they approach and deal with participants (Morse, Lowery, & Steury, 2014; Rodrigues, Antony, Krishnamurthy, Shet, & De Costa, 2013).

Ethical principles such as respect for participants, beneficence, and ensuring that researchers treat all participants treated justly are critical to enhancing the quality of a research study (Morse et al., 2014).

I protected study participants' identity and the information or data that I obtained from participants. According to Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, and Cheraghi, (2014), one of the effective ways of protecting data is the "removal of identifier components, bibliographical detail amendments and pseudonyms" (p. 4) that reveal names of people and places of their work or organizations that provide the data. The intention was to ensure confidentiality by identifying the participants with different numbers. For example, I replaced participants' names with P1, P2, and P3 as a way of ensuring anonymity regarding participants' names and their positions or titles. It is important that researchers work hard to minimize any chance of undermining participants' rights (Sanjari et al., 2014).

An informed consent form is a form that explains the purpose and processes of the study and participants rights concerning their participation (Kadam, 2017). After receiving IRB approval, I served potential participants who confirm their attendance with informed consent forms, explaining to them the purpose of the study and the procedures involved. Informed consent contains information that helps participants to make an informed decision regarding their participation in the study (Kadam, 2017; Yin, 2018). I stated in the form that the involvement in the research was voluntary and that a participant had the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and they would not be liable for opting out. Upon receiving participants' consent with their signature on the form, I then started the data collection.

I also protected any data (audio recordings, transcripts, notes, and data stored in the computer) obtained from participants and their organization. The intention was to store the data in a file locker for 5 years to prevent access by any other person. After the 5 years, I will destroy all data (audio recordings, transcripts, notes, and electronic data).

Data Collection Instruments

In a qualitative case study, a researcher may collect data by conducting interviews, using focus groups, or through observation (Anyan, 2013; Paradis, O'Brien, Nimmon, Bandiera, & Martimianakis, 2016; Sutton & Austin, 2015). Interviews are a means of collecting data, and the interviews may be structured or semistructured (Paradis et al., 2016). I was the primary data collection instrument in this study. This person conducting qualitative research serves as the instrument for data collection and analysis at all the stages of the research (Carenza, 2011; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Kaczynski, Salmona & Smith, 2014). Before beginning on data collection exercise, I obtained IRB approval and also sought the consent of participants. According to Sutton and Austin (2015), it is the responsibility of the primary data collector to protect interview participants and the data they wish to collect by obtaining the approval of a designated research ethics review before starting to conduct the research.

Using semistructured interviews for collecting data allows interviewers and interviewees to understand each question and response, respectively (Kristensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2015). Semistructured interviews are one of the sources for collecting primary data (Petty, Thomas, & Stew, 2012). The intention was to collect data using semistructured interviews to enable me to appreciate the participant's views on the phenomenon under study. The goal was to ask each participant the same questions and allocate the same time frame for each interview. Semistructured interviews are a way of getting a deeper understanding of the problem that the researcher is investigating; they foster the ability to compare transcripts and promote data quality (Young et al., 2018). I took note during the interview process. Besides the use of semistructured interviews, I requested for company data on the strategies they use to address employee turnover. According to Dunn, Arslanian-Engoren, DeKoekkoek, Jadack, and Scott (2015), secondary data pose less risk to research participants and require less time and resources to gather them. The use and analysis of information in documents allow researchers to collect secondary data (Yin, 2018).

Ensuring reliability in research is vital and following a research protocol is one of the means to achieve reliability (Yin, 2018). I employed an interview protocol (see Appendix A) to enable me to focus during the interview and to ensure the study was reliable. Interview protocols foster the ability of the researchers to obtain quality data in qualitative studies (Yeong, Ismail, Ismail, & Hamzah, 2018). I used an interview protocol as a guide for the interview process. The goal was to invite potential participants to take part in the interviews by email. After potential participants agree to participate in the study, I sent out consent forms to them via email for their respective signatures. I asked all participant same questions and allotted equal length of time to each interviewee. As

Jacob and Furgerson (2012) posited, an interview protocol serves as a procedural guide for novice researcher during an interview process.

Member checking allows researchers to validate data after an interview by seeking confirmation from a participant about their responses so to foster clarity, accuracy, and authenticity of the data (Birt et al., 2016). I used member checking to check the accuracy of the data I intended to collect. Member checking is a way of validating data and promotes data credibility (Birt et al., 2016; Harvey, 2015) where the researcher seeks clarification and checking of the interpretation of data collected by the researcher (Harper & Cole, 2012). After gathering and interpreting data, the intention was to give participants copies of their interpreted responses. Obtaining copies of interpretation of their responses may help offer the participants the opportunity to validate my interpretations their answers and mitigate bias. The steps outlined by Morse (2015) during member checking includes (a) conducting of an initial interview, (b) interpreting participants' responses, and (c) allowing participants to validate one's interpretation of data.

Data triangulation fosters a better understanding of research data (Casey & Murphy, 2009). In addition to member checking, I employed a data triangulation method to enhance the reliability and validity of the study results. Methodological triangulation is the use of more than one way to collect data to ensure study validity (Bekhet, & Zauszniewski, 2012; Yin, 2018). Researchers use methodological triangulation to improve the completeness of data and enhance study validity (Bekhet, & Zauszniewski, 2012). I used semistructured interviews and company documents to collect data for this study.

Data Collection Technique

Data collection techniques enable researchers to collect data systematically. A researcher who uses semistructured interviews may be able to get a sense of participants' evaluation and analysis of the information they provide (Elsawah, Guillaume, Filatova, Rook, & Jakeman, 2015). I conducted face-to-face interviews in a semistructured form using the open-ended questions I created (see Appendix B). Semistructured interviews helped to obtain information from the study participants on their views, experiences, and strategies used to reduce turnover. Face-to-face interviews help in fostering honesty in participants' responses (Flanagan, Greenfield, Coad, & Neilson, 2015). Semistructured interviews are useful because of providing opportunities to participants to express their views and feeling about their experience (Boudville, Anjuo, & Taylor, 2013; Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016). According to Morse, Lowery, and Steury (2014), a researcher gathers data on perceived and lived experiences of the people about an event and gives reasons for the singularities that may result in improvements in some areas of study. I conducted interviews with participants and used their responses to address the research question. I employed semistructured interviews to enhance the richness of data collection.

Yin (2018) posited that in qualitative research interviews are the primary means of data collection and discussions lead to more in-depth and rich data (as cited in Paradis et al., 2016). Open-ended questions are means used to encourage participants to respond using higher-ordered thinking (Çakır & Cengiz, 2016) and to help obtain facts about presenting the problem (Saunders et al., 2015). The goal for using open-ended questions was to understand the participants' perspectives and their reactions to the research problem as clearly as possible. I interviewed three participants in an in-depth manner, and the interview questions (see Appendix B) were open-ended to enable participants to express their feelings and experiences on the strategies they use to address turnover issues. The use of open questions allowed the ability to understand the meaning that participants ascribe to their skills. I used open-ended interview questions to enable participants to provide detailed descriptions of the problem that led to information central to answering the research question. I treated all participants equally by asking them the same focus questions (see Appendix A and Appendix B) with individual follow-up questions based on reaching answers to the research question and audiotape the interview. I also requested for company documents with information related to this study. Some of the primary data collection sources of in qualitative research are interviews, observations, and company documents (Garcia & Gluesing, 2012; Yin, 2018).

Data triangulation fosters a better understanding of a phenomenon under study and enhances the validity of the data (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014). Triangulation helps to develop a comprehensive understanding of the problem and improves the rigor of the study (Høyland, Hollund, & Olsen, 2015; Jones & Bugge, 2006). I also took notes during the interview to put together the main points during meetings with participants. Notes writing is a way researchers employ to get cues (both verbal and nonverbal) and also to include observation the body language of participants (Bakare, 2014). In addition to interviews, I used other secondary sources such as documents that contain strategies or information about employee turnover, which participants may be willing to provide from their organization. Such records might offer insight into the kind of strategies participants use to motivate and retain their employees.

For a researcher to access interview data effectively, the appropriate means is to record the interview (Jamshed, 2014). In most cases, researchers audiotape and transcribe interviews (Paradis et al., 2016). With the permission of participants, I audiotaped the discussions with research participants. Audiotaping facilitates the interview process and allows the researcher to concentrate on the content of the conversation, thereby generating a verbal transcript of the interview (Jamshed, 2014). I used my cell phone to record participants' responses during the meetings.

Member checking is a way of getting feedback and helping to determine the validity of interview transcripts from study participants (Thomas, 2016). Data validation is key to a credibility study result (Varpio, Ajjawi, Monrouxe, O'Brien, & Rees, 2016). I used member checking after data collection to validate the data. For example, after writing the transcripts, I asked participants to review the interview transcripts to ensure that there was a match between the words and what they intended to say. I provided each participant with a summary of the results of what they contributed. Then, they reviewed that, and I used the changes there to augment my interpretations to increase the validity of the study results. The study included the use of member checking to validate the responses of participants by sharing my interpretation of the interview responses for their review and validation. Member checking fosters data accuracy and helps researchers to validate their understanding of data (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Member checking improves research credibility (Birt et al., 2016). Member checking involves conducting the initial interview, interpreting participants' responses, and letting participants to validate the interpretation (Morse, 2015).

Data Organization Technique

Data organization and emphasis on rigor are essential when working with a large number of qualitative datasets (White, Oelke, & Friesen, 2012). Researchers use carefully organized data ensures easy data management and protects the integrity of the data in all formats (Luo, 2011). According to Yin (2018), researching with the help of a system enables researchers to organize, manage, and present data that foster rigor in analysis. Using semistructured interviews and documents from the companies, I collected data from participants. I transcribed and audiotaped the interviews to enable the ability to manage the raw data and compile for analysis.

I transcribed the interviews on Microsoft Word documents and transferred the script to NVivo v12 software to facilitate data organization and analysis. As Davis (2013) suggested, reproducing data on Microsoft Word improves data organization. NVivo v12 software helps researchers to organize, retrieve, and manage data efficiently (Birt, et al., 2016; Zamawe, 2015). The intention was to upload interview transcript data into NVivo v12 software, to organize the data and do the coding and theming analysis of the data. Edwards-Jones (2014) recommended the use of NVivo v12 software because, apart from its primary function of helping researchers to develop codes, this tool also helps in planning collating, visualizing, and presenting data. I used the NVivo v12 software to facilitate reshaping and reorganization of data.

I created files and their respective folders and labeled them for easy identification. Data sets in each location had titles and sub-titles. Each envelope contained data with similar content. For example, I put interview transcripts and consent forms in one folder and audio recordings in another. To ensure data protection and safety, I set up a password for my laptop. This idea ensures the prevention of unauthorized use of my computer, which may lead to other persons getting to access the data. Having a password restricts admission into a database (Mainz & Olesen, 1997). I stored the data collected in different locations, including on my laptop, a flash drive, on interview transcripts, and in an audio recorder. Lin (2009) posited that researchers could store data in hard copies and electronically to allow for data validation. Mainz and Olesen (1997) recommended storing qualitative data electronically as it provides better documentation of data. I created backup files for data storage using audiotaped recordings and interview transcripts. I protected the flash drive by encrypting and creating a password.

Storing data and protecting ensures confidentiality in the research process. As Lin (2009) noted, researchers should maintain secrecy for the protection of participants and third parties that may participate in the research. I protected participants' right to confidentiality and the entire data stored. For example, I did not refer to participants by their name or any location that could compromise the privacy of participants. I named participants as P1, P2, and P3. Adhering to ethical principles means researchers should not include any information that helps in identifying participant (Vaitkevicious &

Kazokiene, 2013). When conducting research, it is essential to keep data in a secure, locked location to allow only authorized personnel access to the data. I will store the data in a safe and secure place for 5 years and adhere to the data retention policy. Researchers should be mindful of the data storage and retention policies put forward by the agencies that fund their research (Lin, 2009). After 5 years, I will destroy the data by burning and deleting the data on the computer and audio recorder.

Data Analysis

Data analysis entails discovering of essential themes, patterns, participant's descriptions of their experience that help in answering the main research question (Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018), there are 5 stages involved in data analysis. These include a) a compilation of data, b) disassembling of data, c) reassembling of data, d) interpretation of the meaning of the data, and e) concluding the data. At the beginning of the analysis of research data, I compiled the data, put the data into categories, and disassembled them to ensure to minimize the number of themes that are not variant.

According to Moser and Korstjens (2018), for a researcher to have a well-analyzed data, it is crucial to see to the accuracy of transcripts in a manner that is consistent with the interview, taking into account "pauses, punctuations, and non-verbal data" (p. 15). Content analysis and interpreting qualitative data continue to gain prominence (Schreier, 2012). According to Elo et al. (2014), qualitative content analysis enables researchers to present data systematically and objectively that reflects the subject of inquiry. Researchers establish trustworthiness when analyzing qualitative data using content analysis (Elo et al., 2014). I conducted content analysis by determining the words, ideas, and themes contained in the data and their pattern to help understand their meanings.

Data analysis may be useful through methodological triangulation. Methodological triangulation is the collection of data using multiple sources (Grossoehme, 2014; Yin, 2018). I used interviews and any available documents from the organizations involved in the study to gather data. I used semistructured interviews to help answer the interview questions and gain an understanding of the successful strategies that managers of SMEs use to address employee turnover issues. I requested documents that have information related to means of reducing employee turnover from participant's organizations and review to deepen understanding of the problem. I focused on identifying the critical themes in the data, correlate the essential ideas with the academic literature and the conceptual framework.

NVivo v12 software is computer software used for theming, coding, and analyzing qualitative data (Edwards-Jones, 2014; Zamawe, 2015). After collecting data, I used NVvivo v12 software to compile and arrange them in an orderly manner to ensure smooth management of the data. Using a data coding technique and nodes, I used NVivo v12 to disassemble the data to categorize, label, and catalog. As Lancaster, Di Milia, and Cameron (2012) noted, NVivo v12 software helps to facilitate data categorization per the research concepts. With the help of NVivo v12, I reassembled the clusters of data in themes. I interpreted the data by analyzing data from different sources to cross check the interpretations.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability is the stability of study results (Bolarinwa, 2015; Mohajan, 2017; Swanson, 2014). Ali and Yusof (2011) asserted that reliability matters in qualitative studies, mainly when researchers conduct a case study to achieve consistency. Achieving accurate and trustworthy results in research is essential, and one way to ensure that is by creating reliable and precise strategies in data collection and analysis (Morse, 2015). In qualitative research, some researchers refer to reliability as dependability to explain the extent to which a measurement produces consistent and stable results (Mohajan, 2017). In their study, Marshall and Rossman (2011) argued that reliability and validity are concepts associated with quantitative studies. Swanson (2014) and Jacob and Furgerson (2012) interpreted reliability in qualitative studies to mean precision, trustworthiness, consistency, and repeatability. In qualitative research, data trustworthiness is an essential element of reliability and validity (Ali & Yusof, 2011), and researchers must conduct studies that are transferable, credible, confirmable, and dependable (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012; Shah & Corley, 2006). Daigneault and Jacob (2013) recommended that researchers who wish to ensure reliability in their study to conduct a complete evaluation of the context of the research using rigorous sampling, design alignment, transparency, and data analysis.

According to Mohajan (2017), there is a close association between reliability issues and subjectivity on the part of a researcher, which is a significant concern in a qualitative study, especially if the researcher is the only primary data collector. When researchers become subjective in conducting a research study, they tend to compromise the degree of reliability of the study outcome (Mohajan, 2017). To minimize bias and the likelihood of jeopardizing the level of trustworthiness of the findings of this study, I ensured that interview questions aligned with the research questions, as well as were consistent, and straightforward.

Lewis (2015) asserted that researchers use reliability to assess the quality and accuracy of a study's findings. Researchers can achieve reliable study results by employing the member checking technique to allow participants to review the interviewer's interpretations of their responses to validate the results of participants' responses (Reilly, 2013; Yin, 2018). After collecting and interpreting data, I shared a summary of the findings with the interviewees for improvement and authentication of the results. Through member checking, researchers will be able to improve the level of reliability and validity of their data, as well as the results of the study (Harvey, 2015; Yin, 2018). By doing member checking and audiotaping of interviews, researchers can ensure a reliable study result (Morse, 2015; Yin, 2018). According to Cope (2014), audiotaping provides researchers the opportunity to have a reflection of the participants' responses.

Marshall and Rossman (2011) indicated that dependability is a result of accuracy and strength of research data. I ensured to obtain dependable research findings by using the same semi-structured, interview questions (see interview protocol) throughout the interview process. Reliability refers to having consistent or reliable results of a study (Sullivan, 2011). Wahyuni (2012) indicated that researchers might ensure trustworthiness in their work if they do not discuss with participants the nature of the study before conducting the interviews. I did not have any discussion with participants in a manner that will influence their responses.

Validity

The qualities that come to mind when addressing validity issues are credibility, transferability, and confirmability. Munn, Porritt, Lockwood, Aromataris, and Pearson (2014) defined credibility as the match between original data primary source and the analysis that a researcher does from the said data. According to Noble and Smith (2015), researchers must adopt specific strategies to establish the credibility of the study results. Noble and Smith recommended supporting research findings with participants' verbal descriptions of events as one of the strategies. I took into account a rich and verbatim account of participants' views on the phenomenon by focusing on the participants' worldview of the problem and incorporating into my analysis and interpretation of data. I interpreted the data in a manner that the interpretation was reflective of participants' account of the problem under study. I was consistent and transparent in the interpretation of the data by allowing participants to review my interpretations and analysis of their responses for corrections and validation.

Sullivan (2011) posited that allowing participants to review interview transcripts and determine whether the contents of the transcripts, including the themes and concepts, reflect the problem under investigation ensures validity. Another strategy that Noble and Smith (2015) suggested is that researchers should employ data triangulation to ensure that the findings of their studies are more comprehensive and grounded. I collected data from different sources such as interviews, secondary data from participating organizations, and field notes to ensure triangulation of data and evidence to support the study. Researchers gather data from multiple sources, including interviews, field notes, and secondary data to enable them the support triangulating proof of their research (Yin, 2018). Methodological triangulation is the collection of data by using multiple methods such as interviews, observations, and secondary data (Yin, 2018). By using methodological triangulation, the intention was to establish trustworthiness the trustworthiness of the study. The instruments for assessing the validity of research require the use of evidence from many sources so that researchers can argue that the tool can measure what it is meant to measure (Sullivan, 2011).

Transferability is the likelihood of applying the results of a study to a similar situation or cases without changing the meaning of the findings (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). When researchers transfer the results of qualitative research to other contexts, this referred to us transferability (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). The study will include the use of semistructured interviews and probing questions to enable participants to provide full descriptions of the phenomenon that will focus on the context of the research. As Korstjens and Moser (2017) asserted, ensuring transferability of research findings should not only focus on describing behavior and experiences but also on their contexts to provide the meaning of the expression and experiences to readers. I documented and explained each stage of the research process to enable any outsider to transfer the finding of this study to other research with similar procedures and settings. Transferability of qualitative research depends on the extent to which a researcher can apply the results of their investigation to other studies with similar contexts (Anney, 2014). I worked to enhance the transferability of this study by giving a more detailed description of the problem and selecting participants purposively.

Confirmability refers to the degree to which researchers can support, confirm, or corroborate the findings of others' work (Anney, 2014). Confirmability is proving that research findings are a true representative of participants' views about the subject of inquiry (Cope, 2014). According to Anney (2014), confirmability is about proving that the researcher's interpretations of research findings are in line with the data collected. Researchers ensure confirmability if the data and interpretation of the research findings remain independent of the researchers' point of view or imagination (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). I enhanced conformability by interpreting based on the data gathered, not based on my opinion. As Korstjens and Moser (2017) suggested, researchers derive their interpretation from the data and their perception, and preferences should not affect their interpretation.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 began by restating the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study, which was to explore the strategies that some managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover events that affect sales performance. Section 2 also included a description of the role of the researcher, a detailed account of participants' selection, and the methodology and design of the inquiry, building on the research method and design identified in Section 1. Section 2 also encompassed ethical considerations on the conduct of this research followed by a discussion of the population and sampling of participants. Section 3 constitutes an introduction to the chapter followed by presentations of findings and their analysis relevant to addressing the research question. Section 3 also includes recommendations for action and for future studies regarding business practices and fostering positive social change.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that some managers of SMEs within the Bronx, New York, use to reduce employee turnover that negatively affect sales performance. I gathered data by conducting face-to-face, semistructured interviews with three managers of SMEs. The interview questions were open ended. In addition to the interviews, I reviewed partner organizations' public documents to help foster data triangulation. The interviews each lasted for about 45 to 50 minutes, and I conducted the interviews at venues preferred by the participants. During the meetings, participants contributed to providing ideas and insights regarding strategies for reducing employee turnover.

After conducting the interviews, I transcribed each of the interviews. Then, I uploaded the transcripts into NVivo v 12 software to help me create codes, identify themes, and analyze the data. I concealed participants' identities by replacing their names with P1, P2, and P3. To ensure the accuracy of my analysis of the data, I prepared summaries of my interpretation of participants' responses and sent them to each of the interviewees for review and validation. Section 3 includes the presentation of the findings, applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for further research, reflections, and the conclusion.

Presentation of the Findings

I conducted semistructured interviews to help me gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies that managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover. The overreaching research question I used to help me explore the measures for reducing employee turnover was "What strategies do managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover?" The four themes that emerged from the analyzed dare were (a) recognition and rewards, (b) training and career advancement opportunities, (c) effective communication, and (d) pay, compensation, and benefits. These findings aligned with some the literature themes in Section 1.

Theme 1: Recognition and Reward

Recognition and rewards emerged from the analyzed data as one of the strategies used to address employee turnover and its associated problems. Managers recognize employees' achievements and reward them for their effort. Employees who believe in having exceeded the expectation of their management would want the managers to acknowledge their effort (Bussin & Van Rooy, 2014). Every employee wants their management or supervisor to recognize their achievement (Facer, Galloway, Inoue, & Zigarm, 2014). Recognition helps to reduce employees' intentions to leave their organization because when management rewards them, they feel satisfied and wish to stay and contribute more to the organization's success (Langove & Isha, 2017; see also Herzberg, 1974).

All the participants (P1, P2, and P3) indicated that they used recognition and reward as a strategy to reduce employee turnover. According to P1, "When employees are aware that you recognize their contributions, they become motivated and committed to the organization." P2 and P3 also indicated that employees consider reward and recognition as a stimulus that energizes them and makes them want to stay longer and do more for the organization. Recognition and rewards are a form of openly acknowledging and appreciating the work of an employee so he or she may continue to work harder (Ning et al., 2016). P1, P2, and P3 said that recognition and rewards helped to reduce employee turnover because "recognition and rewards serve as incentives bring satisfaction and a feeling of importance to the employee." Employees feel valued by their leaders when they get recognition and reward for their performance (MsenOni-Ojo, Salau, Dirisu, & Waribo, 2015), which may influence the said employees' decision to stay and therefore reduce employee turnover. P3 disclosed to me that recognizing employees' effort leads to increased job satisfaction to the staff, and satisfied employees feel encouraged and cared for. For example, walking to employees at their desks and letting them know how appreciative they are for their contribution makes them feel at home and respected, and the fact they came to the person to express the gratitude to them means a lot to them.

Another aspect of this theme is that using monetary and nonmonetary incentives are effective strategies for reducing employee turnover. On nonmonetary incentives used as rewards for employees, P2 told me the following:

> We have instituted monthly and annual rewards to celebrate hardworking employees… yeah. We reward the employees in recognition of their excellent performance and contribution to the success of the organization. The selection of

> the employees depends on the feedback we receive from supervisors and my observations of how they handle customers. There is a system that our workers use to recognize their colleagues and recommend them to us for a reward. We also do get feedback from customers about our employees. I tell you that… recognition and rewards are effective in enhancing the employees' commitment and loyalty to the organization, and this program uh… makes them want to be with the organization for a long time.

Additionally, P1 indicated that they recognize and reward employees by hanging their pictures on a "wall at the reception and in my office" for some time. P3 stated that although the organization collectively recognizes and rewards individual achievers, departmental heads and supervisors also acknowledge and reward the employees. P2 added that they also acknowledge their employees' contribution by rewarding them with pay raises and also pay the workers on certain days that they are off: "This is a way of showing our appreciation to the employees for playing important roles in the organization."

The literature discussed in Section 1 supports participants' views on the strategies for reducing employee turnover. For example, Bambacas and Kulik (2013) linked rewards to job embeddedness, suggesting that reward systems are essential in ensuring employee embeddedness in organizations (Bambacas & Kulik, 2013). Thus, through recognition and rewards, managers of SMEs may increase employees' embeddedness, which may help reduce turnover intentions. Gonzalez et al. (2016) also stated that employers might increase organizational embeddedness through recognition of the achievements and also instituting some work-life programs that foster family and friends-centered environment.

The literature also suggested that a high-quality-LMX employee may get recognition and receive rewards from their leaders or supervisors compared to low-quality-LMX employees (Shu & Lazatkhan, 2017). The workers who receive incentives may develop a positive attitude toward work, which may reduce employee turnover. However, because leaders treat their followers unequally, followers (employees) who do not receive favorable treatment from their leaders may be unhappy and decide to quit their job (Shu & Lazatkhan, 2017).

Theme 2: Training and Career Advancement Opportunities

The second theme that emerged from the data was training and career advancement opportunities. Managers can create opportunities for their employees so that the employees can challenge themselves by handling tasks where they can improve their skills and competencies (Beattie et al., 2014). P1 said, “We provide our employees with training and career advancement opportunities and help them to have a long-term goal which they work on accomplishing with our organization, and this helps reduce employee turnover.” P1, P2, and P3 all emphasized the essence of training and educating workers and the concept of employee professional growth, which influences employees’ intention to stay longer on their jobs. P1 shared that “developing a path for growth enhances employees’ attachment to their organization.” The literature discussed in Section 1 supports this idea. For example, Singh and Sharma (2015) posited that some of the long-term strategies for reducing employee turnover are training and coaching. The use of training and career advancement opportunities as a strategy to reduce employee turnover also aligns with Kadiresan, Selamat, Selladurai, Ramendran, and Mohamed's (2015) view that providing tailored training and career advancement opportunities to workers helps in improving employee's performance productivity, which can lead to a reduction in employee turnover events.

All the participants also noted that training and career advancement lead to knowledge of job content and satisfaction. According to P2 and P3, training advances employees' skills and competence, which results in job satisfaction. P2 said, "We provide training to all our employees at all levels, and… the training begins once the individual is employed." P3 noted,

> We have a comprehensive onboarding training program that helps us to assess new employees' skills and competence levels so that we can provide them with the required training. Training not only makes employees efficient and fit for their respective roles… but also appreciate their value and capabilities.

Jang, Kim, and Yoo (2017) supported this view that training opportunities for improvement not only make employees competitive, but it also helps to retain employees. P1, P2, and P3 mentioned that they organize workshops and seminars for employees. P1 said, "The workshops help skills development and prepare our staff for challenging tasks." P2 and P3 mentioned that in-house training serves as a means of education, and such programs help keep their workers in the organization. A review of P2's organizational documents revealed that the management had scheduled workshops and training programs for employees. P2 indicated that recruits are required to attend orientation programs, and the orientation helps provide the workers the opportunity to learn about their specific roles. P2 said, “Every quarter, we provide training and mentoring for staff, and those programs help us to set goals for job advancement in our company, and this idea helps keep the employee working for the company.” According to P1, “When employees know how to handle their job well, they perform better and become satisfied with their job, which can make them remain in the organization.”

P1 further mentioned that employees who get training and education that advance their careers are motivated and have the tendency to maintain their job. As Xie, Xin, and Bai (2016) indicated, career advancement is an essential motivating stimulus for causing workers to continue working for their organization, which reduces employee turnover. Xie et al.’s assertion is also in line with P3’s explanation that employees who value personal and professional growth view opportunities for advancement from management as a sign of appreciation, so they commit their time and expertise to the development of the organization.

The job embeddedness theory aligns with participants’ responses regarding training and career development opportunities. Embedded employees may have the chance to develop their potential and grow professionally (Mitchell et al., 2001). For example, employees with a good fit with their job may have the opportunity to learn more skills and improve their know-how through on-the-job training, seminars, and conferences (Mitchell et al., 2001). There is also a positive relationship between job embeddedness and the development of human capital (Holtom et al., 2006). For instance, highly embedded workers may have some amount of resources for advancement (Ng

Feldmen, 2013). The problem with opportunities for improvement is that it furthers the marketability of employees and may increase their intention to leave if they feel that they do not get the compensation and benefits that commensurate with their skills and experience.

Also relating theory to Theme 2, a high-quality LMX may increase employees' attachment to their organization (Adil & Awais, 2016). Followers sometimes compare the support and resources they receive from their leaders. Employees with a high level of LMX relationships may have more opportunities for growth (Dulebohn, Bommer, Liden, Brouer, & Ferris, 2012). For instance, workers with a high level of LMX relationships may have some unique means of communicating with their leader in a way that helps to provide them the opportunity advancement (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

Theme 3: Effective Communication

The interviews revealed that P1, P2, and P3 used effective communication as a strategy for reducing employee turnover. Effective communication leads to interpersonal relationships, and interpersonal relationships can help decrease employee turnover (Adil & Awais, 2016). The participants agreed that effective communication is a means of motivating employees to remain in their company. P2 indicated, "I sit down with my employees every month to interact with them and discuss any issues they are facing and help them resolve the problem." P3 posited,

> Employees value my interaction with them. Whenever I have a one-on-one chat with my employees, I can see the excitement on the face. The interactions and exchanges of ideas that I have with the employees give them a feeling of being

> important valued by the company management. I believe… that… every employee wants to be at an organization where their input counts.

P3 further explained that honest and constructive communications foster long-term interpersonal relationships between him and his staff. As P1 puts it, “Because of my strong personal and professional relationship with my employees, one of our workers who left the company came back, and he is now working with us.” A participant’s company public document also showed that they organize monthly occasions to bring all employees together to chat and share ideas. According to P2, “We organize mini functions, where employees gather to share food, listen to music, and interact with each other, and sense of community makes the employees want to stay and work together for a longer period.”

Further, employees may not accomplish their goals without clear and effective communication (Van De Voorde & Beijer, 2014). P1 noted that “interacting with our staff provides us the opportunity to identify their needs which we provide for them to make them achieve their short and long-term goals, which they hope to accomplish in our organization.” According to P2, employees receive positive feedback through effective communication: “When you interact with employees, and they receive honest, constructive feedback, their confidence level goes up, as well as their commitment to the organization, and this approach helps retain the employees.” P3 also explained that in business, it is essential always to have effective communication bottom-up and vice versa, stating that open and objective communication enhances job embeddedness and organizational commitment. P2 also said, “Effective communication with useful feedback can increase employee loyalty, which can help reduce turnover intentions." Being available to all the staff so they can come in and discuss their issues is essential because it leads to employee retention and engagement (P1, P2, and P3). P1 posited that the feedback employees receive from him is an integral part of communication that plays an essential role in employee retention. Effective communication means contributing ideas and listening to others' views and reflect on those ideas positively in the interest of the organization (Van De Voorde & Beijer, 2014).

Open and honest communication also fosters respect. As all participants noted, employees show respect to their superiors when the superiors engage them in discussions that help the employees improve their performance and meet their expectations. P1 reported,

> We take transparency seriously in this organization. We deem it essential everyone in this company knows and is aware of their respective roles. We make uh each employee know that they have individual goals that they need to achieve toward the broader organizational goal. We accomplish this mission by communicating everyone's role to them; we make sure that each employee had a full job description so that they can perform well without difficulty. Employees get frustrated if they do not understand what is expected of them… which can lead to dissatisfaction and intention to leave.

P1 stated that he spends ample time communicating with his staff, and the approach has produced meaningful results over the years by making their company an exciting place to work. P2 postulated, "We not only encourage communication between management and employees, but we also promote open and respectful communication between employees." P3 suggested that people always want to be "where they are welcome, where they can share their views, and where they receive constructive feedback that can help them overcome challenges and accomplish goals." Communication can lead to reduced turnover events if the one communicates in a timely, consistent manner (P2 and P3). Practical, honest, and open communication can help facilitate teamwork and collaboration among employees and reduce turnover intentions (P1, P2, and P3).

Theme 3 relates to the link component of job embeddedness theory, which promotes an increase in the level of connection between co-workers and between workers and their supervisors or managers as a result of effective communication. Effective communication brings people together, and when people feel connected at their workplace, they find it difficult to leave each other -a situation that improves employee retention. The LMX theory helps in furthering effective communication, personal, and professional relationship in the workplace and supports participants' responses on theme 3. Manager and supervisors engage their subordinates meaningfully through direct and honest communication and constructive feedback, which are some of the tenets of work engagement theory, which managers employ to reduce employee turnover. All the participants agreed that effective communication fosters job embeddedness.

Theme 4: Pay, Compensation, and Benefits

Mayfield et al.'s (2015) conclusion in Section 1 that fair pay and benefits can help reduce employees' intention to leave their organization supports the findings in this study on pay, compensation, and benefits. All the participants indicated that compensation makes employees happy and committed to their organization. According to (Pouramini & Fayyazi, 2015), when employees do not receive fair compensation, their motivation and commitment decrease. P1 noted, “Offering very competitive and fair pay can boost employees’ morale and make them give out the best in them for the company.” P1 reported, “One of the means of reducing employee turnover is by offering fair pay or wages that commensurate workers’ experience contribution.” P2 and P3 agreed that a package that includes a fair pay attractive benefits is an effective strategy for retaining employees. Managers should come up with an employee benefits package that can motivate employees and influence their decision to stay in the organization (Green, 2016). P2 said,

> As a small business, some employees would like to use our company as a stepping stone. For this reason, we make efforts to ensure that wages are competitive to reduce the intention of employees searching elsewhere for jobs. So far, most of our workers are happy with the benefits they receive because we have not received any complaint regarding benefit. But… you know… people will always wish for more of everything that is good. We are humans, and I hope you understand.

Although monetary compensations may not be effective retention strategies (Idris, 2014), P1 and P3 were of the view that compensation and benefits such as increased pay helped to reduce turnover intentions. P1 mentioned that “offering pay or wages below the industry’s average does not help in retaining employees.” P3 insisted, “Financial incentives can positively impact morale and performance, and it can reduce turnover intentions." Compensation strategy, such as flexible work schedule and hours, coupons, perks, and bonuses, increase employees' commitment and intention to stay in their organization (P1 and P3). P2 stated that:

> I work with our employees on their schedules; I consult them for their input regarding their other appointments and plans outside of their work schedule to get a sense of which days they might want to take a day off. This approach is another way of engaging the employees on matters that affect the company, which makes them feel valued and respected by the management.

The views of P2 and P3 on the impact of competitive pay and benefits on employee turnover are in line with Ugoani's (2016) assertion that competitive salaries can cause employee satisfaction and reduce employee turnover. P1 indicated that employees become more engaged, productive, and dedicated to their work and the organizations when they receive pay and benefits that are proportional to their efforts and experience. P2 posited that bonuses are effective in increasing employees' morale and commitment. "For example, if employees do an outstanding job, I give them bonuses to acknowledge their efforts and to encourage them to do more" (P2). P3 explained that "even though we do not have a huge budget for employee benefits, we support our staff by sharing their expenses on health insurance. The employees understand our position financially, and so they are happy with the kind of support we offer them."

Happy employees tend to be hard-working, more productive, and loyal to the organization (P1, P2, and P3). P1 explained that they offer health coverage to all employees. However, one has to be with the company for at least six months before they become eligible for the coverage. When you see employees showing commitment to the organization, it is essential to reciprocate with goodwill to ensure that there is a mutual benefit for all parties, P2 opined. This view by P2 aligns with Adil and Awais's (2016) assertion that organizational policies that foster mutual benefits for both employer and employee can help reduce employee turnover.

The strategies mentioned by P1, P2, and P3 are in agreement with Sankar's (2015) findings that one of the ways to retain employees to show care for the workers and offer fair compensations. Barnes, Reb, and Ang (2012) supported Sankar's position that inadequate compensation package could result in increased turnover intentions. According to P2, they endeavor to help their employees in any way possible. For example, employees who need money before the payday get financial support from management, which they arrange to pay back on flexible terms (P2). P3 revealed that they give their workers coupons to purchase things such as some items, gas, or anything of their choice. A well-packaged compensation benefit means taking good care of your workers (P1, P2, and P3). "Some days, I order for lunch for everyone in the company. All of us share the food and take some to our homes. It is another way of relieving our workers of the burden of having to buy food on such days," said P1. Although money may not be a motivating factor to some workers, P1 and P3 agreed that employees need to take care of their basic needs and move on with life, and offering competitive wages can achieve this goal. According to P1, "as a small business, our long-term goal is to expand to other cities. Most of our workers have been with the organization for a long time because we compensate them for what is worth their time and effort to keep them in the company." Sarmad, Ajmal, Shamim, Saleh, and Malik (2016) postulated that managers could succeed in retaining their workers by paying and compensating them fairly.

Job embeddedness theory aligns with participants' responses regarding pay and compensation. The concept of organizational sacrifice, which managers use to increase the level of sacrifice employees might make if they leave their organization, is in line with the idea of offering fair or above-average pay and compensation, which managers use to attract and retain employees. By sitting at around a table, share meals, and chat, as P1 indicated, members of an organization may improve their personal and professional network, which enhances embeddedness and reduces employee turnover (Cheng & Chang, 2015). Since leaders (managers) are those who determine the resources for motivating their followers, high-level exchanges between the leader and followers may lead to the provision of benefits such as salary and bonuses (Wobker, 2015). These benefits may foster employee satisfaction and reduce turnover intentions (Wobker, 2015).

Applications to Professional Practice

The findings of this study are of relevance to HR practitioners, managers of SMEs, and organizations in other industries. Organizational managers may use the results of this study to develop their employees personally and professionally through education and skills development programs (Kossivi et al., 2016). Mohamed (2015) indicated that employee training and development helps increase organizational performance, leads to job satisfaction, and reduce employee turnover. For instance, managers may organize workshops for their workers to help the employees acquire new knowledge and skills.

These skills may help improve the employees' efficiency and competency, which may result in job satisfaction and increase employees' commitment to their organization. Business leaders may employ the study results to achieve desired employee outcomes, including an increased commitment to the organization, improved human capital, and reduced rate of employee turnover in their organizations (Carnahan, Kryscynski, & Olson, 2016). For example, when organizational managers understand their employees' needs and expectations through effective communication, the understanding may help improve the quality of employees' work-life and efficiency.

Employees like to stay in a company where they can build their careers through training and education (Ambrosius, 2016). Managers may devise programs and policies that may foster workplace attachment by openly expressing their appreciation to their employees or subordinates. For instance, managers may institute a reward system to acknowledge employees' performance. Another is that, organizing mini parties to celebrate employees' achievements may not only result in employee satisfaction, but such events may also promote a sense of loyalty on the part of the worker to their organization. Recognition and rewards may foster employee loyalty and organizational commitment (MsenOni-Ojo et al., 2015). Loyalty to an organization may cause a reduction in turnover intentions. Having the opportunity to take some time off while at work to celebrate achievements and socialize may create a conducive work environment for employees and increase their tendency to stay in the organization.

Each employee may have needs or concerns that they need to address to discharge their duties efficiently and effectively. To help resolve such issues, organizational managers need to identify those concerns through effective communication. Through communication, both employer and employees may learn what is required of them to perform their duties (Van De Voorde & Beijer, 2014). Acting professionally on the information shared through effective communication may enhance the level of trust and interpersonal relationships between management and employees to create a sense of community at the workplace and lead to job embeddedness.

By engaging employees with open and honest communication, employees may let their managers and supervisors know the tools, materials, or equipment they need to do their job efficiently and happily. Mangers must have an open-door communication system to promote constructive communication between managers and employees and between employees. This idea will foster information sharing in organizations and enable managers and supervisors to engage one another on vital issues that affect the company. Through communication, employees receive feedback, which may bring satisfaction to the employees and result in a decrease in intention to leave the organization. Employees have basic financial needs. They need earn to enough, so they do not get into debt. Managers of SMEs should endeavor to offer their workers a pay and compensation package that will not only help the employees to cater to their financial needs but also be competitive enough to convince the employees to not search for jobs elsewhere. Fair compensation may help improve employee retention (Sankar, 2015).

Managers of SMEs can apply the findings of this inquiry to help them reduce employee turnover and improve sales performance and services that may bring about competitiveness and foster positive social change. For example, well-trained employees may work to improve processes and productivity and quality services, which may increase revenues. Increased revenues may enhance the management's ability to employ more people, offer fair compensation and opportunities for employee growth, reduce employee turnover, and result in positive social change for hiring people and providing quality services.

Implications for Social Change

Small businesses play a vital role in economic development, the social welfare of communities, and the establishment of new SMEs. This assertion is due, in part, attributed to the success of the existing SMEs (Hyder & Lussier, 2016). The findings of the study may boost managers of SMEs to promote corporate social responsibility programs in the community. In Saha's (2014) view, small business owners are among the people who bring positive social change in communities by sharing their success stories and contributing to the skills development of community members through their organizations.

Managers of SMEs and other organizations may employ the strategies identified in this study to improve the lives of their employees and their families. For example, by increasing employees' pay, the employees may be economically sound to afford their basic needs and those of their families. Reduced employee turnover may lead to sustained business operations and the opening of new branches, which may result in the creation of jobs and the reduction of unemployment. Increased job creation may help boost the economy, a situation that fosters human and social conditions of the people. According to Hyder and Lussier (2016), small businesses a key role in socio-economic development and support public policies that foster the protection and establishment of new business enterprises, which help reduce unemployment.

Harhara, Singh, and Hussain (2015) posited that reduced employee turnover leads to sustained organizational operations and a viable U.S. economy. For example, when people work, they pay taxes. Governments may use the revenue from the fees to improve public institutions and programs such as infrastructure and health systems. The study results may serve as a source of reference, which scholars may use to gain an understanding of the phenomenon. Scholars may use the knowledge gained from the findings of this study and impart the knowledge to their students to help the students some of the concepts related to employee retention. This knowledge may help broaden the students' understanding of the subject matter.

Recommendations for Action

The findings and recommendations from this inquiry may help managers of SMEs, business leaders or owners, and HR personnel to reduce employee turnover and improve sales performance, profitability, and competitiveness. First, I recommend that managers of SMEs and other organizations show appreciation and gratitude to their workers for their contribution to their organization. Thus, managers should devise recognition strategies to enable the ability to retain employees (Kim, 2014). By recognizing employees' performance and rewarding them, one may encourage and motivate the employees to transcend their personal goals for those of the organization, where they may wish to stay as long as it may take to accomplish the goals.

Second, managers of SMEs and organizational leaders should provide their employees with training and advancement opportunities. Training and advancement opportunities may help the employees understand their tasks, perform their duties efficiently, develop professionally, and be satisfied with their job. Chen, Hou, Li, Lovelace, Liu, and Wang (2016) indicated that while there is positive relationship between job satisfaction and career advancement, the relationships between training and career advancement opportunities and turnover intentions is negative. Thus, managers of SMEs and other business owners should endeavor to understand the needs of their workers, particularly in areas where employees need to grow professionally. Offering employees the opportunity acquire new skills may not only help reduce employee turnover, but it may lead to having satisfied and well-performing employees (Kassar, Rouhana, & Lythreatis, 2015).

Third, SMEs managers should take appropriate measures to identify employees' needs and concerns by effectively and openly communicating with their employees. Sincere communication with constructive feedback may foster coordination between employees and between departments, and this idea is in the interest of the organization. Effective communication can improve interpersonal relationships in the workplace and reduce employee turnover (Adil & Awais, 2016).

Fourth, managers should offer a competitive pay, compensation, and benefits package to motivate their employees, which may enhance their satisfaction, and increase their loyalty to the organization. Commitment to an organization may increase an organizational link and reduce employee turnover. As Olawale and Olanrewaju (2016) asserted, competitive benefits package can help create satisfaction in workers and reduce employee turnover. Happy employees may have a low tendency to leave their organization. According to Singh and Sharma (2015), creating career advancement opportunities serves as a strategy for reducing employee turnover.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that some managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover that negatively affect sales performance. The findings of the study shed light on some of the measures the participants used to address employee turnover issues. Varying motives may lead to employee turnover, and managers need specific, tailored strategies to reduce turnover rates. Researchers must conduct further studies in other organizations other than in SMEs to determine the strategies that managers in those organizations use to address employee turnover. Such research may help unravel different employee retention strategies that this project did not reveal.

The study population for this project may not reflect the perspectives of the managers in the banking industry in general. I recommend that researchers replicate this study but employ a more extensive study population to help improve the understanding of retention strategies from a more diverse and broad number of participants. Future research in the same organizations where this study took place may help in determining whether some of the employees have stayed in their organizations for a more extended time. The researcher may ask the employees in question about their motives for staying to work for their organizations. Such an approach may help determine the strategies that have impacted employee decisions to stay.

Future research might focus on an exploration of strategies used in reducing employee turnover in different sizes of SMEs in various industries and different geographical locations. The themes identified in this research are revealing concerning reducing employee turnover in SMEs. A focus on each of those themes may provide additional information for more detailed investigation. I recommend further studies to include SMEs whose managers had increased sales performance and profitability by addressing employee turnover issues. This idea may help provide comprehensive, practical, and effective strategies for reducing employee turnover rate.

Reflections

Pursuing the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) program has been a fulfilling experience. Although the doctoral journey has been a challenging one, I must say that it was also rewarding. More so, having the opportunity to conduct this research not only prepared me to be a scholar, but it also helped me to build my professional career. During the program, I had the opportunity to study under the instructions of experienced scholars and professionals, one of whom was Dr. Kathleen Andrews, my Chair. The experience of working with Dr. Andrews is one that will last forever; she was committed to my success and provided me with timely feedback. Her guidance helped me to achieve my set goals in this project.

The academic residencies that I attended were incredible. I got to interact with some professors and colleagues where we shared ideas about our respective projects and measures that would help us to succeed as independent scholars. I connected with many residency attendees and broadened my professional network and appreciated the fact that the residencies were a platform for knowledge enhancement.

As a life-long learner, this project has helped deepen my understanding of employee turnover and the strategies for addressing the phenomenon. Conducting the research was another learning process by itself. The procedure for contacting potential partner organizations and participants instilled discipline in me. The interviews helped revealed valuable information that deepened my understanding of some retention strategies. Participants were enthusiastic, helpful, open, and friendly.

Notwithstanding the different perspectives of the participants on the phenomenon, the findings of the research revealed the commonalities that exist concerning the employee retention programs. Thus, retention strategies are critical to the successful operations of SMEs and any other organization, for that matter. My understanding of employee turnover issues and retention strategies not only helped me to conduct this research successfully, but I also hope to implement those strategies to address turnover problems going forward.

Conclusion

Employee turnover can cause businesses to incur losses financially, a situation that negatively impacts sales performance. Employees are every organization's greatest asset. Reducing employee turnover in SMEs is a matter of concern to the managers of SMEs (Ugoani, 2016). Addressing employee turnover issues is critical to sustaining the operations, profitability, and growth of SMEs and other organizations. The general business problem is that organizations spend between 32% and 114% of an employee's annual salary for a single turnover event (Collins, McKinnis, Matthews, & Collins, 2015). The specific business problem is that managers of SMEs lack the strategies for addressing employee turnover problems. The purpose of this study was to investigate the strategies managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover. The central research question for this inquiry was: What strategies do some managers of SMEs use to reduce employee turnover events that affect sales performance?

Managers of SMEs should devise and implement strategies that will help them address employee turnover issues. Such measures include recognition and rewards, training and career advancement opportunities, effective communication, and pay, compensation, and benefits. Implementing these strategies may not only help reduce employee turnover, but it will also help improve competitiveness. Devising and implementing these strategies may not only reduce employee turnover, but it may further boost organizational managers' efforts in promoting positive social change. Thus, a reduction in turnover events may result in increased profits, part of which managers of SMEs and other organizations may use the finding to support education and development programs that may benefit individuals and communities.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Topic: Strategies for Reducing Employee Turnover in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

1. Introduce myself to study participant(s).
2. Remind participants that they signed the informed consent.
3. Thank study participants for accepting to participate in the research study.
4. Give a brief overview of the purpose of the interview and state the allotted time for the interview. The expected duration for the interview will is 1 hour and may continue up to 2 hours.
5. Remind participants that continuing the study is voluntary.
6. Remind participants that I will record the interview.
7. Turn on the recording device to make sure that it is functioning.
8. Begin conducting the interview, staring with question #1 through to question #7.
9. Follow up with additional questions in between questions 1-7 for clarity required.
10. Conclude the interview by thanking participants and indicate appreciation for their time.
11. Schedule an appointment for member checking.
12. As a proactive measure, I will inform participants of my right and duty to report any criminal activity or child/elder abuse to the appropriate authority.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. What strategies have you used to reduce employee turnover events that affect sales performance?
2. What strategies did you find worked the best in reducing employee turnover events that affect sales performance?
3. How did you assess the effectiveness of strategies you used for reducing employee turnover events that affect sales performance?
4. What key barriers have you encountered when implementing the strategies to reduce employee turnover that affect sales performance?
5. What steps did you use to eliminate the key barriers to implementing the strategies to reduce employee turnover that affect sales performance?
6. What else would you like to tell me about the successful strategies your organization uses to reduce employee turnover that affect sales performance?