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Strategies to Improve Employee Retention in the Small Retail Industry

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2020

Abstract

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MSM, Troy University, 2006

BSc, La Grange College, 2000

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Doctor of Business Administration

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Abstract

The high turnover rates of entry-level employees adversely affect the profits of small retail businesses. Small business owners in Ghana may benefit by retaining entry-level employees and reducing replacement and training costs. Grounded in Herzberg's two-factor theory, the purpose of this descriptive, single-case study was to identify strategies some small retail business leaders in Accra, Ghana, used to reduce the high rate of entry-level employee turnover. The participants were 6 retail business leaders recommended by their director of human resources because of the participants' experience implementing strategies to minimize entry-level employees' high turnover rates. Data were collected from face-to-face interviews with 6 leaders and a 3-member focus group discussion. The data were analyzed using Yin's five-step process of analysis, and 5 themes emerged: training, trust, mentoring, motivation, and incentives. Small business leaders should provide mentoring, training, and incentives to develop new employees' trust and motivation. Improving retention rates of entry-level employees may contribute to positive social change by increasing employees' incomes and business growth, thereby contributing to additional tax revenue that will benefit hospitals, schools, community infrastructure, and job creation. Also, a better work environment contributes to the worth and dignity of entry-level employees.

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Dedication

This doctoral study is dedicated to the Almighty God Christ for His love and blessings and for giving me the knowledge and strength to complete this doctoral program. First and foremost, I dedicate this doctoral study to my lovely mother, Margaret Manu Sarpong. My mother was my biggest supporter and my role model. Margaret, a woman who never stepped foot in a classroom, understood the importance of education and promised to give all of her children a formal education. Thank you, Mom, for your hard work in giving my siblings and me the chance to have better opportunities in life.

Second, I dedicate this study to my sister, Mrs. Felicia Boamah, and her husband, Joseph Yaw Nsafoah. Thank you for raising me as one of your children. I am forever appreciative of the genuine support and sacrifices that you made.

Lastly, I dedicate this degree to my wife, Victoria Thompson, and my two children, Afuah Owusu and Kwaku Owusu. Thank you for your support and encouragement throughout this doctoral journey. To my children, never stop striving to achieve your ultimate goals. Be mindful where you stop to inquire about the direction of life and remember that the principal enemies of success are negative people and unproductive people. Those who never succeed themselves will always be the first to tell you how they think that you can succeed. Thank you for your love and unconditional support. I made it, and you can, too.

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To Dr. Christopher Beehner, my second committee member, thank you for helping me to become a better scholar. I appreciate your contributions, quick responses, constructive criticism, and feedback when reviewing my doctoral study. I also wish to thank Dr. Diane Dusick, the university research reviewer, for reviewing my study and ensuring that it adhered to Walden University's requirements. This journey would not have been successful without your professional input.

Finally, I wish to thank my other family members and course mates for their kind support, assistance, and encouragement during my time at Walden. To my course mates, I wish all of you success in completing your own studies.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

I conducted this study to identify the strategies that some retail business leaders have used to reduce the high rate of employee turnover, a business issue that requires leaders' attention and involvement. Losing well-trained employees can have a negative effect on the profitability, productivity, and customer satisfaction levels of companies (Woods, 2015). The retail industry has a higher turnover rate among all business sectors, and employee retention rates can be improved when employers enhance employees' skills and improve employees' morale (Sandhya & Pradeep, 2011). Woods (2015) asserted that the cost of employee turnover is 150% of employees' annual compensation figures. Ferreira and Almeida (2015) concluded that the turnover of employees adversely affected business profit and cost the local Brazilian economy nearly R$88.623 million, or 9.8%, of annual sales revenue. According to Afif, Sanjay, and Hussain (2015), employee turnover rates cost organizations approximately $2.7 billion a year in direct (e.g., exit interviews, new recruitment, training, and compensation) and indirect expenses (e.g., loss of valuable organizational knowledge and decreased employee motivation).

Retail leaders continue to struggle to keep their top-performing employees. Research was needed to identify the strategies used by some retail leaders to reduce employees' turnover intentions. The results may help other managers to increase their rates of employee retention. Some small retail leaders lack the strategies to improve employees' retention rates.

Background of the Problem

Retaining entry-level employees has been a major problem for small retail businesses (Abolade, 2018). More than 50% of entry-level employees leave their employers within 2 years (Covella, McCarthy, Kaifi, & Corcoran, 2017), and one in four entry-level employees leaves within 6 months of employment (Michael, Prince, & Chacko, 2016). According to Younge and Marx (2016), 70% of organizational leaders have reported negative financial implications of staff turnover resulting from the cost of recruiting, hiring, and training new employees. Babu and Masthanvali (2017) stated that the negative effect of turnover not only affects the productivity of organizations but also extends to customers.

The inability to retain employees may be the result of poor workplace environments and working conditions, inflexible schedules, inadequate compensation packages, and so on (Hossain, Roy, & Das, 2017). Business leaders in the small retail sector find it particularly challenging to retain younger entry-level employees, who often seek salary increases too soon in their careers. Retention strategies need to be implemented to ensure that entry-level retail employees remain with their employers (T. W. Kim, 2014). Retail business leaders need to understand how they can use retention strategies to reduce the turnover rates of entry-level employees. Therefore, I sought to identify the strategies that some retail business leaders have used to minimize employees' turnover intentions so that they might help other managers to improve their own employee retention rates.

Problem Statement

The high turnover rates of entry-level employees adversely affect the profits of small retail businesses (Bakare, 2014; Justus, 2017). Rodriguez (2016) reported that the annual turnover rate of U.S. retail employees increased from 26.8% to 33.5% between 2011 and 2014. The general business problem is that the high turnover rates of entry-level retail employees negatively affect the financial sustainability of businesses in the small retail sector. The specific business problem is that some business leaders in the small retail sector lack the strategies to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, single-case study was to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have implemented to improve the retention rates of their entry-level employees. The sample comprised six managers selected from a retail business in Accra, Ghana, who have developed and implemented strategies to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees. The implications of this study for positive social change include the potential to improve employees' income levels and business growth, both of which can contribute to tax revenues to benefit hospitals, schools, and infrastructure, and provide jobs.

Nature of the Study

The three research methods that I considered for this study were qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. I chose a qualitative research method with a single-case approach to interview six retail business managers to obtain my data. I conducted

individual interviews with the six participants and set up a focus group discussion (FGD) with three of the interviewees to gather the data. Qualitative researchers use structured, semistructured, unstructured, and in-depth interviews to study groups, cultures, and organizations, or they make participant observations to understand the underlying reasons for the phenomena being studied (Yin, 2018). The qualitative method is based on descriptive phenomenology, which focuses on a structured phenomenological approach and applies to interview questions based on capture event and to explore the insights and lived experiences of individuals who have knowledgeable on a phenomenon (Deep, Salleh, & Othman, 2017). I did not consider following a quantitative approach because it involves the use of instruments and statistics to test hypotheses and analyze variables (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016). I did not consider using a mixed methods approach because I did not measure variables or use numeric data that needed to be analyzed statistically. Holcomb and Hickman (2015) stated that mixed methods research integrates qualitative and quantitative data within a single study. A qualitative method was appropriate for this study to analyze the nonnumerical interview data and answer the research question (RQ).

I considered three qualitative approaches to this study: phenomenology, ethnography, and case study. Researchers have used the case study method to gain insight into business practices and understand phenomena established within individual organizations (Yin, 2018). A case study design facilitates in-depth inquiry that focuses on applicable elements of the case within the scope of the respective environment (Abd-Rahman & Mohr Shariff, 2003). According to Saunders et al. (2016), a

phenomenological approach focuses on the participants' lived experiences. I did not

select a phenomenological approach because the sample of six participants was small and

did not satisfy the requirements of a phenomenological approach.

Cooper, Endacott, and Chapman (2009) stated that ethnography is a research

method designed to describe and analyze cultural practices and beliefs. I did not study a

culture or an ethnic group, cultural beliefs, and communities, so ethnography was not an

appropriate design for this study. The case study approach allowed me to explore a

problem to understand several decisions, as well as the reasons for and implementation of

those decisions (Yin, 2018). Conducting a case study allowed me to identify the hiring

strategies that some small retail business leaders have implemented to improve the

retention rates of entry-level employees.

Research Question

The study was guided by one RQ: What strategies have some small retail business

leaders used to retain entry-level employees?

Interview Questions

1. What type of training do you offer to retain entry-level employees and reduce

   employee turnover?

2. What strategies have you used to retain entry-level employees?

3. What are the most effective strategies that you have used in retaining entry-

   level employees?

4. What strategies do you consider the least effective in retaining entry-level

   employees?

5. How do you measure the effectiveness of your strategies to retain entry-level employees?

6. What obstacles do you face when attempting to implement your retention strategies?

7. Do you have any additional information to share about your strategies to retain entry-level employees?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study was the hygiene-motivation, or two-factor, theory. The theory, which was first published in 1959 by Herzberg (as cited in Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959), was developed from the study of individuals in the workplace using a sample of 203 engineers and accountants. Herzberg suggested that two factors, namely, motivation and hygiene, can lead to employee satisfaction (i.e., retention) or dissatisfaction (i.e., turnover) in the workplace (as cited in Herzberg et al., 1959). Motivation and the subsequent job satisfaction include recognition, achievement, responsibility, work, advancement, and the possibility of advancement (Adair, 2009). Hygiene factors relevant to job dissatisfaction include work conditions, salary, opportunities for personal growth, company policies, management, job security, relationships with subordinates, and job status (Grandison, 2017). Therefore, I conducted this study to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have implemented to reduce the turnover rates of entry-level employees. Five themes emerged from the analysis of the participants' responses to the interview questions and the FGD.

I used Herzberg's two-factor theory (as cited in Herzberg et al., 1959) to explain if motivation and job satisfaction affected retention rates. I sought to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have implemented to engage entry-level employees and reduce their turnover rates. I used the two-factor theory to guide the research design, data collection, and data analysis. Applying the two-factor theory allowed the participants to share their knowledge and experiences regarding job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction related to employees' retention or turnover rates, respectively (Combs, 2017). Application of Herzberg's two-factor theory (as cited in Herzberg et al., 1959) within the context of the Ghanaian retail environment might help the leaders of other small retail businesses to implement effective strategies of their own choosing to establish an attractive work environment that reduces the turnover rates of entry-level employees.

Operational Definitions

The following operational definitions and terms were used throughout the study:

Entry-level employees: Entry-level employees are employees who do not have prior experience or education working for businesses or organizations (Tepayakul & Rinthaisong, 2018).

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction describes the contentment of employees with their employers (Tepayakul & Rinthaisong, 2018).

Leaders: Leaders are individuals or groups of people who make major business or organizational decisions (Covella et al., 2017).

Organizational productivity: Organizational productivity describes the financial performance of an organization (Younge & Marx, 2016).

Retail industry: The retail industry describes the process of selling goods and services using different distribution channels to make a profit (Goyal & Gupta, 2016).

Retention: Retention is the effort that business or organizational leaders make to support and retain current staff (Michael et al., 2016).

Termination: Termination is the act of ending employment with businesses or organizations (T. W. Kim, 2014).

Turnover: Turnover is the rate at which employees leave their places of employment and are replaced by other employees (Bibi, Ahmad, & Majid, 2018).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions are unproven facts that researchers consider true (Beato, 2017). Limitations do not allow researchers to generalize their data or results (Forrest, 2017). Limitations also are any restrictions that might influence the study (Beato, 2017). Yin (2018) noted that delimitations are boundaries that researchers set. Beato (2017) stated that researchers use delimitations to limit the scope of their studies. Delimitations are characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of studies.

Assumptions

Assumptions refer to unverified information researchers assume to be true in the absence of evidence (Yin, 2018). Making assumptions is the act of taking something for granted that has not been proven theoretically (Schoenung & Dikova, 2016). In this study, I made four assumptions. I assumed that the participants would provide honest and

accurate answers to each interview and focus group question regarding strategies that they have used to retain employees. I assumed that the participants would show an interest in participating in the study by finding the time to join the study voluntarily. I assumed that interviews would be the best method to collect the data. I also assumed that the interview and focus group data would be sufficient to achieve data saturation.

Limitations

Limitations are elements of studies that researchers cannot control. Limitations are the restrictions, hindrances, and challenges that may delay or obstruct the collection of data (Grandison, 2017; Nakkeeran & Zodpey, 2012). One potential limitation was that the participants might not have been straightforward in answering the interview questions. A second potential limitation was the small sample of only six some small retail business leaders. A third limitation involved restricting the sample to small retail business leaders who have employed strategies to establish an attractive work environment to improve entry-level employee retention rates. A fourth potential limitation was that the participants could have breached confidentiality by discussing their interview responses with each other. According to Asanda, Chisoro, and Anis (2016), limitations are influences that researchers cannot control and that these deficiencies and conditions may influence the results by putting restrictions on the research.

Delimitations

Delimitations refer to the restrictions that researchers impose to focus on the scope of their studies (Forrest, 2017; Grandison, 2017; Yin, 2018). One delimitation was

the target population, which comprised only small retail business leaders who had a minimum of 3 years of retail supervisory experience and had used retention strategies to reduce employees' turnover rates. The second delimitation was the small sample of six retail managers who were interviewed and the three-member FGD. The third delimitation was the location, with all participants working in Accra, Ghana, at the time of the study. Hence, participants who were located outside of Accra were not in the study. Delimitations gave me a more manageable quantity of data to analyze and interpret (Asanda et al., 2016).

Significance of the Study

The goal of this study was to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have implemented to reduce the high turnover rates of entry-level employees and increase their profits. According to Furmanska-Maruszak and Sudolska (2016), some retail business leaders use strategies to decrease employees' turnover rates; increase business productivity and profitability; and expand the number of products offered by analyzing organizational governance strategies, corporate environment, and workforce behavior. The positive behavior of management in the retail workplace is the application of positively oriented human resource (HR) strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and managed effectively to improve employee performance (Azic, 2017). Younge and Marx (2016) stated that employees are interested in receiving career packages that include a comfortable workplace culture, career opportunities, diversity of responsibility, and a work-life balance.

Contributions to Business Practice

The retail industry continues to endure high employee turnover rates that can result in adverse effects linked to financial loss, reduced organizational competitiveness, and decreased profitability (Tam & Le, 2018). Tso-Jen and Chi-Min (2017) mentioned that high turnover rates and the high turnover intentions of frontline employees increase the HR management costs of recruiting new employees and retraining them so that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to do their jobs. Finding a positive relationship between employees' satisfaction and job performance can be one way for businesses to reduce the turnover rates of employees and increase profitability (Hugo, 2016). In addition, the findings might help retail business leaders to coordinate strategies to find ways to improve employees' retention rates and increase profitability. Similarly, the leaders of small retail businesses might be able to use the findings to evaluate the success of the strategies of extant organizations to improve their own retention rates of entry-level employees and increase profitability.

Implications for Social Change

Employee retention is critical to business success because retaining high-skill employees influences the efficiency and sustainability of companies (Tso-Jen & Chi-Min, 2017). HR practices such as rigorous staffing, extensive training, fair compensation, employee relations, flexible work arrangements, and empowerment will strengthen the value of human capital by encouraging satisfactory employee attitudes and behaviors (Kundu & Gahlawat, 2016). Communities can benefit from productive and profitable companies through positive social change investment programs like sponsorships,

charitable donations, and financial investment in the communities (C. A. Adams, Potter, Singh, & York, 2016). The factors relevant to positive social change might include improving workplace conditions, increasing employees' pay, reducing the high turnover rates of employees, increasing employee morale, and improving employee relationships.

The positive social change implications resulting from this study include improvements in employees' incomes and business growth, both of which can contribute to additional tax revenue that will benefit hospitals, schools, infrastructure development, and job creation. Retaining employees is crucial to the success of retail businesses. Employee retention leads to increased productivity and profitability, both of which allow businesses to make positive social change in the communities in which they operate.

Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

Business leaders need to offer different benefits to encourage their employees to remain (Babu & Masthanvali, 2017). Idris (2014) stated that retaining talented entry-level employees is a difficult situation frequently faced by businesses in the retail sector. Because offering increased financial benefits is an unsustainable strategy to retain employees, businesses have begun to consider offering flexible working hours, instead. To explore this idea further, Idris conducted a qualitative study to explore working practices in terms of flextime, job sharing, flex leave, flex career, and flex place on employee retention. Results identified the need to reexamine the business cultures and HR management systems related to retaining employees.

Covella et al. (2017) explored the role of the relationship between employees and leaders in making future career decisions. Results suggested that the person-job fit had an

invested relationship to turnover intentions and was mediated through the leader-member exchange. Michael et al. (2016) investigated the impact of compensation packages on employee retention. The researchers' objective was to compare compensation packages to employee retention rates and to determine if there was any relationship between compensation packages and job satisfaction. Results identified a significant relationship between the variables: The more satisfied employees were with their compensation packages, the longer they stayed with the businesses.

The study will contribute to the business literature by highlighting the different strategies that some small retail business leaders have used to retain entry-level employees. Research has shown that training employees reinforces their sense of value in the workplace (Younge & Marx, 2016) and that mentoring also helps employees to believe that they have long-term futures with their current employers (Abolade, 2018). Soundarapandiyan and Ganesh (2015) stated that integrating a mentoring program into a goal-oriented feedback system can lead to a strong employee-employer relationship and can serve as a solid foundation for employee retention and growth.

Other research has shown that employers can retain entry-level employees by showing appreciation for their work efforts and by offering competitive salaries, profit sharing, bonuses, health care insurance, and other benefits (Hossain et al., 2017). These benefits send a powerful message to employees about their importance to the businesses (Tepayakul & Rinthaisong, 2018). To ensure that good employees are retained (Abolade, 2018; Bibi et al., 2018), leaders need to provide employees with attractive incentive packages that motivate them to stay.

Organization of the Literature Review

The organization of the literature review contains a brief discussion of the literature that includes a critical analysis and synthesis of the various sources (i.e., peer-reviewed articles, journals, reports, scholarly seminal books, etc.) to convince readers of the depth of the inquiry. The research topics that I selected for discussion in the literature review included management strategies to retain employees, job dissatisfaction, employee engagement, employee turnover, organizational ethics, and training and education. The Herzberg two-factor theory provided a lens to study the relationship among job satisfaction, motivation, and retention of employees in the small retail sector.

The purpose of this qualitative single-case study was to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have used to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees. The review of the literature supported the basis for exploring employee retention in the retail sector. I searched such databases as ProQuest Central, EBSCOhost Central, Emerald, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, Google Scholar, and Business Source Premier to find literature supporting this study. I found 107 relevant studies, 94 (88%) of which were peer-reviewed articles published in 2015 or later and 1 (1%) that was a dissertation. The remaining 12 (11%) peer-reviewed articles were published prior to 2015 (see Table 1).

Table 1

Summary of Sources in the Literature Review

Reference type	Total	< 5 yr	> 5 yr
Peer-reviewed articles	106	94	12
Dissertations	1	1	0
Published books	0	0	0
Totals	107	95	12
Percentage of total	100%	89%	11%

The research sources comprised peer-reviewed articles, journals, one dissertation, books, and government websites. I used the following keywords and phrases to search for relevant literature: *employee retention and retention strategies*, *employee turnover and strategies*, *employee in retail industry*, *job satisfaction*, *employee motivation*, *employee motivation strategy*, and *leadership style theory*. Included in this chapter are details about Herzberg's two-factor theory (as cited in Herzberg et al., 1959), the retail sector, employee retention strategies, job dissatisfaction, leadership, organizational ethics, turnover, rewards and employees, training and education, and employee engagement.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

In this section, I discuss Herzberg's two-factor theory (as cited in Herzberg et al., 1959) and the ways that previous researchers have applied it. For example, Grandison (2017) explained the different hygiene factors; Habib, Awan, and Sahibzada (2017) investigated various performance management activities, and employees' motivation and hygiene factors; Maidani (1991) examined the ways that job satisfaction applied to two working populations; and Quratulain and Khan (2015) investigated the influence of organizational experiences on public service employees' motivation and analyzed the

effects of person-job fit and work pressure. Quratulain and Khan determined that although hygiene factors prevented workplace dissatisfaction, they did not motivate public sector employees, either. As applied to this study, I presumed that managers' performance activities, employee engagement, and motivation might improve entry-level retail employees' job satisfaction and influence their decisions to either leave or stay on the job.

Herzberg's hygiene motivation theory (as cited in Herzberg et al., 1959), also known as the two-factor theory or the hygiene-motivation theory, was the conceptual framework of this study. It was developed by Herzberg and his associates in 1959. Herzberg et al. focused on the workplace satisfaction or dissatisfaction of 203 engineers and accountants. Herzberg et al. suggested that two factors, namely, motivation and hygiene, led to either employee satisfaction (i.e., employee retention) or dissatisfaction (i.e., employee turnover) in the workplace.

Motivational factors refer to job conditions that function mainly to build strong motivation and job satisfaction. Motivational factors comprise the six job variables of achievement, recognition, advancement, the work itself, possibility of growth and responsibility (Adair, 2009). Hygienic factors refer to job conditions. Hygienic factors related to job dissatisfaction are work conditions, salary, personal growth, company policies, relationships with peers, management, job security, relationships with subordinates, and job status (Grandison, 2017). Herzberg et al. (1959) asserted that even though both factors might motivate employees, they do so for different reasons. According to Herzberg et al., long-term job satisfaction is associated with motivational

factors, whereas hygienic factors are associated with short-term desires. Therefore, retail business leaders must work with employees by implementing strategies to improve employees' long-term job satisfaction that might reduce entry-level employees' short-term desires and turnover rate.

Applying Herzberg's theory (as cited in Herzberg et al., 1959) as the conceptual framework of this study allowed me to identify strategies that some small retail business leaders have used effectively to reduce employee turnover rates. From a business perspective, Herzberg et al.'s theory has become a reliable concept to study employee motivation, and Herzberg's research has led to the development of other business theories. When comparing Herzberg et al.'s theory to Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs and McGregor's (1956) Theory X and Theory Y, it was evident that the researchers each came to very similar conclusions. In addition, Herzberg et al.'s theory is similar to McClelland's (1958) human motivation theory, and the Hawthorne Experiments (Mayo, 1949) because each theory was developed to motivate employees.

Researchers have used Herzberg et al.'s (1959) theory to examine employees' job satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Dayarathna & Nanayakkara, 2017; Habib et al., 2017; Maidani, 1991; Quratulain & Khan, 2015; Rahman, Akhter, & Khan, 2017; Slimane, 2017). Habib et al. (2017) examined the relationship of various performance management activities to employees' motivational and hygienic factors (i.e., employee-related outcomes) in private banks in Pakistan. Habib et al. suggested that there was a positive relationship from the employees' perspectives between job satisfaction (i.e., motivational

and hygienic factors) and various elements of performance management systems, such as performance planning, feedback, coaching, performance review, and rewards.

Habib et al. (2017) stated that goal setting could have a significantly positive impact on employees' work motivation. Habib et al. concluded that the managers of private banks in Pakistan needed to establish and implement comprehensive performance management systems that would include goal setting, feedback and coaching, performance review and appraisal, and performance-based rewards to increase employees' motivation and retention. Similarly, Quratulain and Khan (2015) concluded that managers could communicate various policies and decisions to help to motivate employees to assess the importance of their work duties. By implementing effective goal setting and effective communication to entry-level employees, retail business leaders can positively impact entry-level employees' work motivation and improve retention rates.

Maidani (1991) took a slightly different approach and used Herzberg et al.'s (1959) theory to examine the ways that job satisfaction could be applied to two working populations. Maidani compared the job satisfaction of employees in the private and public sectors using Herzberg et al.'s classification scheme (i.e., using employees' intrinsic and extrinsic factors). Results indicated that employees' reasons for working in either the public or the private sector were influenced by either intrinsic or motivational factors. Maidani concluded that employees working in the public sector were highly influenced by extrinsic values such as job security, stability, working conditions, salary, and prestige linked to government jobs; employees working in the private sector were influenced by intrinsic, or hygienic, factors. Similarly, employee satisfaction in either

industry was not attributable to hygienic factors like achievement, advancement, the work itself, responsibilities, and recognition. Retail business leaders need to understand employees' motivational values and the reasons for working either in the public or the private sector.

An improved workplace environment could lead to an increase in employees' perceptions of compliance between employees and organizational values (Quratulain & Khan, 2015). To maintain job satisfaction among employees, employers or managers must recruit and select individuals based on the applicants' public service motivation (PSM) and reinforce individual values by incorporating the organizational goals and values into ongoing employee training. Employee job satisfaction in either sector was not related to hygienic factors. Maidani (1991) suggested that employee turnover could be reduced if management in both the public and the private sectors effectively administered intrinsic factors for motivation and job satisfaction.

Quratulain and Khan (2015) studied the effect of organizational experiences on employees' PSM. The participants in their study represented nine public service organizations in Pakistan. Four were public sector organizations, and five were nonprofit sector organizations providing short- and long-term project development, poverty relief, gender empowerment, and education initiatives. They examined the factors influencing the ways that PSM in public and nonprofit sectors affected employees.

Some researchers of Herzberg et al.'s (1959) theory (e.g., Perry & Porter, 1982; Quratulain & Khan, 2015; Shamir, 1991) have emphasized the roles of goal clarity, person-job fit, and performance measurement as essential areas motivating public service

employees. Quratulain and Khan (2015) suggested that employees in the public sector are motivated by institutional laws, rules, and expectations and that those in the nonprofit sector are motivated by HR management practices linked to their desire to serve society. Quratulain and Khan posited that employees' behavior is shaped by their work environment.

According to Quratulain and Khan (2015), the respondents in their study who were working in the public sector were motivated to stay in their jobs because of job security, stability, and the prestige associated with working for the government. The results included perceptions of pressure on employees linked directly to the conflicting and ambiguous goals that exist in public service organizations. Quratulain and Khan stated that the public sector could reduce misconceptions pertaining to work pressure by empowering employees, decentralizing, and increasing professional growth opportunities. Quratulain and Khan noted that participation by management could help to construct positive employee attitudes of person-job fit, PSM, and job satisfaction.

Herzberg et al.'s (1959) theory has been applied to different studies in the field of management. Naumann and Jackson (1999) drew on Herzberg's (1968) article and then adapted and applied his hygienic and satisfactory factors to customer satisfaction. Herzberg et al.'s work can be seen in common with that of Mayo (1949; known for the Hawthorne experiments), Maslow (developer of the hierarchy of needs), and McGregor (creator of Theory X and Theory Y) as a reaction to Taylor's (1911) scientific management theories. These theories focused on techniques that could be used to help to

maximize the productivity of manual workers and separate their physical from the mental work of management.

Herzberg et al. (1959) contended that workers want to be part of a team. Though modern psychologists do not profoundly recognize Herzberg's theory, managers have found the theory to be a useful guide to building healthy employee' relationships and improve employees' job satisfaction. The fundamental doctrines of the theory are easy to understand and can be applied to all types of organizations. Khanna (2017) applied Herzberg et al.'s theory to measure differences in the satisfaction levels of academicians toward their jobs based on the locations of their hometowns. Kotni and Karumuri (2018) used Herzberg's two-factor theory in the retail sector to identify the satisfiers and dissatisfiers of sales personnel.

Similarly, Stier and Herzberg-Druker (2017) applied Herzberg et al.'s (1959) theory to study gender inequality in professional and managerial jobs as well as in pay among highly educated workers in Israel. They found that educated women enriched their market position so that it was equal to that of men, reduced gender pay gaps, and gave them access to better paying professions. Furthermore, Herzberg et al.'s theory supported the position and influence of management in evaluating the risk factors associated with the work environment and ensuring that employees were sufficiently motivated to control industrial unrest relevant to its influence on performance, employee health, and safety (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). More specifically, the influence of the theory has become evident in reward systems by moving away from payment-by-results

systems toward the growing proportion of cafeteria benefit schemes that allow employees to choose the benefits that best suit them.

Job enrichment has been theorized more so than has actually been put into practice. Many projects have resulted in cosmetic changes only or have led to demands for increased worker control and have been subsequently terminated. Employees benefit from job enrichment when management give them more responsibilities and autonomy in their jobs (Bandyopadhyay & Srivastava, 2017). The concept is more about people enrichment, although it still owes much to Herzberg et al.'s (1959) original work. Herzberg et al.'s most significant contribution has been the acknowledgment that motivation comes from within the individuals and that it cannot be imposed by organizational leaders. When skilled employees lack motivation and morale is low, organizations are at risk of losing them to other organizations (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). Many of today's trends in career management, self-managed learning, and empowerment are based on Herzberg's insights.

Research on the Retail Sector

Babu and Masthanvali (2017) conducted a study on the turnover rates of employees in the retail sector, and Hossain et al. (2017) conducted research on employee retention rates. Retail business leaders face numerous challenges in the current competitive marketplace, and they need effective strategies to retain employees, improve productivity, and increase profitability. The adverse effect of high turnover rates of employees not only affects productivity but also customers (Babu & Masthanvali, 2017). For example, a small change in customer retention rates can make a significant difference

to profitability (Sharmeela-Banu, Gengeswari & Padmashantini, 2012). According to Sharmeela-Banu et al. (2012), improving customer retention rates by 5% can increase companies' profits between 25% and 29%. Hossain et al. suggested that a lack of training, poor working condition, workplace conflicts, ineffective leadership, and so on, are some of the factors influencing employees' turnover intentions.

When businesses do not have enough employees, customers may consider it a sign of poor customer service and may choose to take their business elsewhere (Soundarapandiyan & Ganesh, 2015). Hossain et al. (2017) reported that nearly 70% of businesses had difficulty replacing staff and that about 50% of them experienced regular problems retaining employees. The strategies that business leaders have used to retain lower level employees have been diverse. The strategies have depended on business goals and objectives as well as employment conditions (e.g., company policies, relationships of employees with peers and management, benefits, recognition, growth and advancement opportunities, etc.; Bibi et al., 2018).

Retaining entry-level employees has been a major problem in the retail sector, particularly among small businesses (Abolade, 2018). Poor retention rates can be the result of unacceptable working conditions, inflexible schedules, inadequate compensation packages, and so on (Hossain et al., 2017). The leaders of businesses in the small retail sector often find it difficult to retain younger entry-level employees, who may want higher salaries (Soundarapandiyan & Ganesh, 2015) and will seek employment elsewhere to earn more money (Tepayakul & Rinthaisong, 2018). Younge and Marx (2016) asserted that not retaining entry-level employees is the result of a lack of training. If employees do

not receive adequate training to be successful in the retail sector, they are likely to feel frustrated or may perform poorly and subsequently quit their jobs (Babu & Masthanvali, 2017; Bibi et al., 2018). New employees usually require a period of adjustment and are not likely to complete tasks as quickly as previous employees (Covella et al., 2017). Group projects that rely on new team members may need more time to be completed, a situation that can affect the productivity levels of more experienced employees (Kamrath & Brunner, 2014). The loss of momentum when employees leave also might affect the morale of other employees (Kamrath & Brunner, 2014). Hence, retail leaders need to reach out to employees to find ways to improve their levels of job satisfaction (Michael et al., 2016). Retail business leaders must try to retain employees for as long as possible (T. W. Kim, 2014). Therefore, I sought to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have used to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees.

Research on Retention Strategies

Employee retention plays a vital role in HR management, and business leaders should prioritize crafting and implementing strategies to retain employees (Lewis & Sequeira, 2016). Many leaders in the retail sector are facing challenges in developing retention strategies to reduce the turnover rates of entry-level employees. One challenge is that competitors in the industrial sector have instituted efforts to attract talented and skilled employees from the retail sector (Lewis & Sequeira, 2016).

Researchers have identified several strategies for retaining employees, including developmental training, recruitment, reward programs and employee recognition, advancement opportunities, employee engagement, social activities and community

initiatives, supportive relationships between leadership and employees, company policies, management decision making, organizational culture, and so on (Castillo, 2017; Crabbe & Acquaah, 2016; Jarvis & Williams, 2017; Kurian & Dham, 2017; S. H. Lee & Ha-Brookshire, 2017; Pek-Greer, Wallace, & Al-Ansaari, 2016). Crabbe and Acquaah (2016) conducted a quantitative study with 136 participants from 20 small retail enterprises in Accra and Tema, Ghana. The sample comprised frontline employees who had direct contact with customers, and each business had 10 to 29 workers. The researchers found that the service recovery performance of frontline employees was positively influenced by offering employee rewards for excellence in customer service; offering customer service orientation; training employees for customer service excellence; and encouraging teamwork, empowerment, and organizational commitment.

Integrating HR management strategies systems into high-performance work practices (i.e., company policies and practices) could have a direct influence on the retention of entry-level employees (Pek-Greer et al., 2016). Pek-Greer et al. (2016) also asserted that employees identified financial rewards, competitive salaries, and financial incentives as being influential in their intentions to stay with or leave their current employers. S. H. Lee and Ha-Brookshire (2017) determined that organizations with high levels of organizational sustainability performance manifested low volatility and achieved higher rates of return than organizations with low levels of sustainability performance. S. H. Lee and Ha-Brookshire noted that high-level corporate sustainability provided more benefits to employees, attracted better human capital, and encouraged product and process innovations to remain competitive, given that additional

environmental and social constraints, along with other retention strategies, could reduce turnover rates.

The face-to-face interactions of management with frontline employees while receiving business information on how to act may result in employee job satisfaction that allows companies to retain employees and achieve short- and long-term success (Castillo, 2017). According to the results of S. H. Lee and Ha-Brookshire's (2017) study, employees' positive attitudes toward their jobs was one component in improving organizational sustainability and the ethical climate in the retail sector and decreasing employees' turnover intentions. The leaders of some businesses in the small retail sector lack the strategies to improve the retention rates of entry-level retail employees, so implementing effective strategies could help to improve this retention rate.

Research on Leadership

Workplace support and the commitment shown by leadership have had a vital role in establishing a healthy workplace environmental program (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2018). When organizational leaders are committed to establishing workplace health programs, they can communicate the purpose and the processes to all levels of employees (CDC, 2018). Leadership behaviors and communication strategies may influence employees' health. Cekada (2018) contended that effective workplace communication could result in the formation of relationships that encourage friendships and help employees to function as team members. Leadership support of performance appraisal (PA) is a useful communication tool that supports employees' creativity and career development (Hussein & Rishani, 2018). Retail business

leaders can improve workplace communication by crafting and implementing effective communication strategies that support healthy workplace programs, improve employee relationships, and support employees' skill/career development.

According to the CDC (2018), results of the WOLF study in Sweden indicated that managerial leadership behaviors and methods of communication, including the analysis of individual employees, clarification of goals and role expectations, provision of information and feedback, and promotion of employee participation and control, decreased the risk of employees experiencing ischemic heart disease. Employees who were satisfied with their PAs expressed happiness and positive reactions toward the businesses. Any effective and supportive PA system contributes to nonthreatening feedback and is considered fair, constructive, and relevant to employees (Hussein & Rishani, 2018).

Employers' support of workplace health programs has created a culture where health promotion programs demonstrate employers' concern about the well-being of their employees, enhance organizational competitiveness, engage employees, and present the businesses as attractive places to work (CDC, 2018). Cekada (2018) suggested that effective communication builds sustainable relationships and cohesiveness. Communication enhances morale and innovation, improves productivity, and results in the more rapid implementation of policies and changes (Cekada, 2018). Bhattacharya (2018) stated that leadership support with technology helps HR managers to focus on other issues that are of interest to employees, such as compensation and benefits,

performance management, talent identification, leadership development, and employee relations.

Self (2017) took a different approach to explore the impact of organizational embeddedness and coworker support in the restaurant setting on the turnover intentions of 44 full-service restaurant employees selected from seven states. Employees with high levels of coworker support had higher levels of organizational embeddedness and low intention to quit. Mekraz and Raghava (2016) posited that a transformational leadership style has an inverse relationship to turnover intention. Mekraz and Raghava contended that managers who adopt a transformational style of leadership can expect lower rates of employee turnover.

The effectiveness of PAs lies in their giving employees clear work roles that reduce differences between role expectations and role enactment (Hussein & Rishani, 2018). Hussein and Rishani (2018) stated that employees who are pleased with their PAs are likely to be motivated and eager to engage in positive and productive behaviors. According to Mekraz and Raghava (2016), motivation is the ability of transformational leaders to excite followers with energy, give employees a sense of direction, and boost employees' self-confidence. Massad (2017) suggested that there is a negative correlation between transformational leadership and employees' turnover intentions and that a slight change in transformational leadership style could lead to a decrease in employees' turnover intention rates.

Leadership style influences employees' reactions in the work environment and tends to motivate or demotivate employees that could determine retention rates (Khalid,

Pahi, & Ahmed, 2016). Khalid et al. (2016) suggested that leadership have an obligation
to inspire, guide, and direct subordinates; retain talented employees; and treat employees
with dignity and respect. Leaders must have the ability to maximize output, lead
employees with clear and coherent goals, use interpersonal skills to match internal and
external relationships, and improve communication and solidify relationships among
team members (Chen, Wu, Yang, & Hsin-Yi, 2008). An inappropriate leadership style
may affect employees' performance and increase the likelihood that they will seek jobs
elsewhere (Chen et al., 2008). Khalid et al. (2016) argued that leaders need to
comprehend what motivates employee success and increases productivity by building a
workplace environment that encourages retention and helps employees to attain their
goals. Leaders are responsible for building organizational cultures and workplace
climates that make employees want to stay in their jobs.

Alonderiene and Majauskaite (2016) noted that employees' retention rates could
be influenced by leadership style. A positive correlation between transformational
leadership style and job satisfaction has been found, whereas an autocratic leadership
style has been associated with individual retention and organizational performance
(Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016). Alatawi (2017) suggested that transformational
leadership is a style meant to ensure that workers do more than what is expected of them.
Leadership involvement lies in the organizational vision, staff development,
empowerment, innovative thinking, and leading by example. Contrary to transformational
leadership, transactional leadership empowers managers to make clear expectations and
focus on goal achievement to improve and enhance organizational and individual goals

(Schneider & Jones, 2017). According to Khalid et al. (2016), employees who received constant feedback and recognition from business leaders tend to stay with the organizations.

Transformational leadership has a significant positive connection to growth achievement, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016). Givens (2008) stated that organizational outcomes such as organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, effort, and in-role performance are influenced by transformational leaders. Schneider and Jones (2017) asserted that transformational leadership positively affects job satisfaction and the achievement of individual and corporate goals. Givens identified idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration as four elements of transformational leadership that not only serve as a foundation for leadership authority and integrity but also encourage a shared future vision.

Leadership style has a strong influence on retention and turnover rates. Khalid et al. (2016) stated that leaders could increase employee commitment by providing regular constructive feedback, motivating followers, solving problems, and building employees' commitment to stay with the organizations. Implementation of effective strategies such as work-life balance, compensation, employee engagement, reward and recognition, training, and leadership in the workplace may lead to retaining employees and reducing turnover rates. Khalid et al. stated that leadership style also can increase employees' organizational commitment. Consistent leadership practices that have a

positive effect on job satisfaction may boost employees' morale and improve retention rates.

Work-Life Balance

Business leaders can promote a work-life balance by helping employees to balance time dedicated to work and time allotted to life activities. Work-life balance initiatives promote employee commitment, improve productivity, reduce turnover rates, result in fewer employee-relation challenges, and reduce the potential for unethical business practices (Akinyele, Miebaka, & Feyisayo, 2016). Turnover intentions may be the result of job dissatisfaction arising from the lack of a work-life balance, less money, tedious work, inadequate supervision, and insufficient advancement opportunities (Dhanpat, Madou, Lugisani, Mabojane, & Phiri, 2018). Vandana (2017) acknowledged that organizations offering compensation packages and appreciation of the work performed, a challenging workplace environment, training and growth opportunities, a positive organizational climate, positive relations with colleagues, a healthy work-life balance, and good communications enhance employees' retention rates. Akinyele et al. (2016) noted that an adequate work-life balance lessens employees' stress and increases their job performance.

A healthy work-life balance supports a positive and productive workplace environment, gives employees the opportunity to perform their job responsibilities, and strengthens employees' loyalty and productivity (Akinyele et al., 2016). Dhanpat et al. (2018) emphasized that policies related to a work-life balance give employees the flexibility to take time off to deal with urgent family matters. Having a compressed work

schedule is one favorable work-life balance strategy. It reduces employees' commuting time and gives employers the chance to extend their daily operations, which might mean fewer overtime hours (Akinyele et al., 2016). Results of a quantitative study conducted in South Africa by Dhanpat et al. with 282 call center employees indicated that 63.9% of the respondents felt that their work schedules often conflicted with their personal lives and increased their turnover intentions.

Compensation

Compensation is not a motivating factor that contributes to job dissatisfaction; rather, compensation is a hygienic factor (Herzberg et al., 1959). Motivation and subsequent job satisfaction include recognition, achievement, responsibility, and the possibility of advancement (Adair, 2009). Hygienic factors relevant to job dissatisfaction include poor work conditions; low salary; lack of personal and professional growth opportunities; and negative company policies, management, job security, relationships with subordinates, and job status (Grandison, 2017). Syahreza, Lumbanraja, Dalimunthe, and Absah (2017) found that compensation packages were intended to enhance employees' retention rates and reduce turnover rates. Employees logically believe that companies care about their needs when they offer adequate compensation. According to Syahreza et al. (2017), compensation refers to the precise benefits that employees receive because of their sacrifices to the organizations and include all forms of financial return, services, and benefits received by workers as part of their employment packages.

Insufficient compensation could lead to higher turnover intentions by employees, whereas compensation that is excessive could result in employees spending their money

unwisely (Kwon, 2014). Adequate compensation can increase employees' job satisfaction and motivation when workers perceive it as fair. Pandey and Asthana (2017) concluded that compensation packages had a positive link to job satisfaction and contributed to more than 63% of employees' job satisfaction. Syahreza et al. (2017) conducted a study in the hospitality industry in Medan City, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Syahreza et al. collected survey data from 200 employees from five hotels to examine the effect of compensation on employees' job performance. Results indicated that compensation had a significant positive impact on performance, retention rates, and productivity.

Nwachukwu and Chladková (2017) emphasized that compensation is a function of HR management, meaning that HR personnel determine how much employees receive for performing assigned tasks. Organizations offer fair pay to ensure that employees achieve specific organizational goals and objectives (Bryant &Allen, 2013). Fair pay has been found to have a positive connection to employees' satisfaction with compensation and job retention (Peluso, Innocenti, & Pilati, 2017).

According to Pandey and Asthana (2017), compensation is not necessarily only a monetary incentive that can increase employees' productivity and creativity; rather, they asserted that nonmonetary incentives also could affect employees' retention rates. Sarkar (2018) posited that active compensation systems that seem reasonable to employees may indicate that the organizations value employees' contributions, promote their commitment to the organizations, increase trust in the organizations, and reduce turnover intention rates. Pandey and Asthana suggested that the factors critical to job satisfaction are working conditions, organizational policies and strategies, opportunities for

promotion, levels of job stress, and compensation packages. Nwachukwu and Chladková (2017) added that all forms of compensation and benefits result in a more positive and productive workplace environment.

Research on Job Dissatisfaction

Employees become dissatisfied with their jobs when they experience negative attitudes toward their work. Based on Herzberg et al.'s (1959) theory, hygienic factors can lead to turnover when employees are dissatisfied. Maidani (1991) posited that the extrinsic hygienic factors that cause job dissatisfaction include company policies and administration, technical supervision, working conditions, salary, and interpersonal supervision. X. Lee and Yang (2017) reported that employees' emotional reactions to these factors can have a significant positive impact on organizational justice and a negative influence on turnover intentions.

Luz, de Paula, and de Oliveira (2018) investigated the relationship of organizational commitment to job satisfaction and turnover. They found that job dissatisfaction was the primary reason for 59% of all salary increases and 66% of promotions. An institutional survey was conducted between March and April 2014 with a sample of 360 nurses with 6 or more months of working experience in three Ethiopian public hospitals (Semachew, Belachew, Tesfaye, & Adinew, 2017). Results indicated that more than 59.8% of the survey respondents were very dissatisfied with their salaries and that only 4.7% of respondents were very satisfied with compensation for weekend and holiday work. Zito et al. (2018) supported Semachew et al.'s (2017) findings and suggested that dissatisfied employees tend to engage in hostile behaviors (e.g., sabotage,

damage, theft, or a voluntary waste of resources) and that disgruntled employees are more likely to have high absenteeism and high turnover intention rates.

According to researchers, the persistent intentions of employees to leave organizations depend on job satisfaction and job performance (Abdul Kadar et al., 2016; Shafique, Kalyar, & Bashir, 2018). A study of the turnover intentions of 417 nurses from six large private hospitals in Turkey was conducted by Abdul Kadar et al. (2016) to identify the characteristics influencing job satisfaction and intention to quit. Results indicated that 61% of the nurses intended to leave because of job stress; depression; and lack of organizational commitment regarding role ambiguity, recognition, supervisor support, and coworker cooperation. Abdul Kadar et al. concluded that the nurses' job satisfaction and intentions to quit correlated with their educational levels. Abdul Kadar et al. concluded that the nurses with master's degrees were more dissatisfied with their jobs and had higher levels of intention to quit their present jobs than nurses who had diplomas and bachelor's degrees. Retail business leaders can implement appropriate motivation program to increase employees' job satisfaction and decrease the intentions of entry-level employees to quit, thus improving retail service quality. Entry-level employees can contribute to businesses' decision-making development programs to increase their sense of belongingness.

Shafique et al. (2018) examined the influence of ethical leadership on employees' job satisfaction, job performance, and turnover intention rates from data collected from 196 tourist companies in Pakistan. They found that ethical leadership had a positive effect on employees' job satisfaction and job performance and an adverse effect on employees'

turnover intentions. Shafique et al. asserted that ethical leadership behaviors by managers in the workplace could increase employees' job satisfaction and performance and reduce turnover intention rates.

Contan (2017) remarked that a pleasant workplace environment includes understanding and cooperation. It also is a place where responsibilities, duties, and tasks are stated, and where ideas, work experiences, and knowledge are shared, with the result being good job performance. Job dissatisfaction decreases employees' motivation and increases turnover intentions, behaviors consistent with Herzberg et al.'s theory of motivation (Abdul Kadar et al., 2016; X. Lee & Yang, 2017; Luz et al., 2018; Semachew et al., 2017; Shafique et al., 2018; Zito et al., 218). Unhappy employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs are less committed to the organizations and tend to manifest such hostile behaviors as high absenteeism, low performance, and increased turnover intentions because they lack motivation. According to Y. Kim and Cho (2016), as motivation, job satisfaction, and loyalty to work decrease, the intention to quit increases.

Research on Organizations and Ethics

Organizational leadership has a role in enforcing workplace ethics in reducing turnover rates and protecting the interests of stakeholders. Employees' perceptions of workplace ethics influence their turnover intentions (Lin & Liu, 2017). Organizational leaders who practice business ethics can contribute to organizational growth, improve public relations and employee productivity, increase company investment, and improve employees' retention rates.

Corporate governance refers to the rules, policies, and processes used by firms to regulate business operations and to ensure accountability for their business actions (Manna, Tarak, & Gupta, 2016). According to Manna et al. (2016), corporate governance covers a wide range of corporate standards and policies that balance the interests of all stakeholders: shareholders, customers, management, employees, suppliers, government agencies, and community members.

A 2013 report from KPMG indicated that 93% of the 250 largest U.S. companies and 71% of the 100 largest companies in industrialized countries have published information about their policies regarding corporate social responsibilities (as cited in Crifo, Escrig-Olmedo, & Mottis, 2019). Corporate governance was envisioned as developing ownership and corporate governance structures for companies to ensure that managers were behaving ethically and making decisions that would benefit shareholders and promote business fairness, transparency, and accountability (Manna et al., 2016). Gerstein, Hertz, and Hershey (2016) posited that organizations must have the right kind of leadership and the right kind of employees to promote business accountability. Crifo et al. (2019) stated that social responsibilities mean that firms go beyond the required laws and incorporate social, environmental, ethical, human rights, and consumer concerns into their business operations as part of their primary business strategy.

Ideal leaders have clear visions and know how to communicate, set an ethical tone, care about all stakeholders, maximize client satisfaction, encourage teamwork, understand the importance of diversity, and build strong and positive reputations for their organizations (Manna et al., 2016). Implementation of corporate governance promotes or

enforces workplace ethics that may lead to organizational sustainability, reduce turnover rates of employees, and protect the owners' interests. Manna et al. mentioned that in the contractual relationship between managers and business owners, managers act as the agents of the owners and are authorized to make decisions in the best interests of the owners; however, managers seek to meet their own interests ahead of any benefits to the owners. Any lack of ethical behavior can adversely impact business performance and increases employees' turnover intentions.

As reported by Gerstein et al. (2016) a direct relationship of corporate ethics and profit to employees' turnover behaviors has been found. Gerstein et al. stated that to be sustainable, firms need to have leaders who behave ethically or conduct business ethically as well as employees who are dependable. Abzaril, Kabiripour, and Saeidi (2015) posited that unethical behavior by management could decrease employees' job satisfaction and performance, and result in increased turnover intentions. In addition, unethical behavior may benefit employees who are in violation of organizational norms or objectives (Pierce & Snyder, 2015). For example, restaurant employees may give free food or drinks to customers to increase tips, or retail employees may accept bribes or social advantages from shoplifters and choose not to monitor or prosecute them. Woods (2015) suggested that priorities in communication in the workplace must be addressed to retain productive employees. Gerstein et al. (2016) contended that unethical behavior by management can lead to accounting scandals, collapse or failure of companies, and loss of employment.

According to Yeoh (2016), law enforcement agencies should punish wrongdoing in an effort to restore trust in financial systems and deter employees from committing corporate crimes. Thorne (2010) examined the relationship between ethical conflict and its undesirable organizational outcomes in the frame of person-job fit. Results of Thorne's study showed that variables such as stress, lack of organizational commitment, absenteeism, and turnover intention were interrelated and that ethical conflict could be beneficial in predicting employees' turnover intentions. Thorne also suggested that abandoned corporate ethics may be detrimental to organizations and the work environment. Yeoh acknowledged that the failure of corporate governance in the financial services sector has affected the U.S. economy adversely, resulting in the loss of more than $20 trillion in wealth in the capital market, $700 billion in bailout funds, 4 million U.S. homes, 20 million jobs worldwide, and a 20% reduction in productivity in global output.

Business leaders must set the tone in the workplace by establishing honesty and integrity as the very first principles of internal controls (Gerstein et al., 2016). Similarly, leaders at the top of the corporate hierarchy who are concerned about integrity and ethics will find that this goal will filter down to all employees and reduce turnover intentions (Gerstein et al., 2016). Some employees are unsatisfied with their jobs because of some leadership behaviors and unacceptable workplace ethics, both of which may influence turnover intentions and job satisfaction.

Management's unethical behaviors may lead to decreased job satisfaction and performance by employees and increased rates of turnover intention. Ethical conflict can

predict turnover intentions. Qasim, Jabeen, Jadoon, and Irum (2015) stated that

organizational structures and procedures regarding decision making, accountability,

control, and codes of conduct are established through legislation, policies, by-laws, and

informal cultural norms and practices. Effective governance in organizations may be

achieved through peak performance and accountability to the people whom they serve.

Yee Mun and Crossman (2015) identified orientation, mentoring, and expert programs as

strategies to decrease the turnover rates of new nurses and that without the support of

more experienced colleagues, new nurses can become demotivated and will consider

leaving the profession. According to Velez and Strom (2012), the high turnover rates

among nurses may have a direct effect on several areas of hospitals by influencing the

financial bottom line, employee morale, and productivity.

Research on Employee Turnover

Employee turnover continues to be a challenge for business leaders and

management scholars because of the adverse effects linked to financial loss, reduced

competitiveness, and departures of experienced workers (Tam & Le, 2018). Managers

must understand the importance of turnover on organizational productivity and

profitability. Yee Mun and Crossman (2015) mentioned that in 2011, health care

organizations had to spend $856 million in recruitment and other related costs to repair

the damage of poor transition, retention, and turnover rates.

Business leaders must understand the reasons for employee turnover to control the

rates of turnover and retain good employees (Tam & Le, 2018). Recent studies on

employee turnover have analyzed predictors like training and turnover, the mediating role

of commitment (Ismail, 2016); HR management practices on employee turnover intentions (Santhanam, Kamalanabhan, Dyaram, & Ziegler, 2017); PA satisfaction, career development, and creative behavior (Hussein & Rishani, 2018); attitude and employees' turnover propensity (Guha & Chakrabarti, 2016); rewards and recognition and turnover intention (Langove & Isha, 2017); training satisfaction, work engagement; turnover intention (Mumtaz, Salleh, & Mohamed Noor, 2016); and employee satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and turnover on organizational effectiveness (Koy, 2001).

Tam and Le (2018) recommended that business leaders direct their attention to emphasize the effects of employees' turnover intentions because uncontrolled turnover intentions can have unexpected consequences. Identifying the many variables affecting employees' turnover intentions has become problematic for many leaders of small retail businesses. Several researchers have commented that controlling employees' turnover rates is a complex problem that requires additional research (Buzeti, Klun, & Stare, 2016; Tso-Jen & Chi-Min, 2017). Buzeti et al. (2016) examined all economic activities and estimated the costs of employee turnover in Slovenian companies. The researchers compare the cost of hiring new employees by focusing on the estimated costs of employees' turnover rates and the costs of hiring new employees. The cost of replacing and introducing new employees in the workplace was higher. According to Buzeti et al., in 2011, the estimated total costs of employee turnover in Slovenia ranged from €2.2 million to €3.4 million ($1.58 million to 2.45 million) per year. Buzeti et al. found that employers gave a higher rating to financial measures (i.e., higher wages, working

conditions), whereas employees preferred nonfinancial measures (i.e., praise, greater cohesion, trust in management) as ways to reduce employee's turnover rates.

Other researchers have stated that business leaders are having difficulty retaining high-performance employees because these workers are always looking for better employment prospects (Guha & Chakrabarti, 2016; Kundu & Gahlawat, 2016). Guha and Chakrabarti (2016) explored the effects of employees' differential natural attitudes toward life and work on turnover intention in the IT sector with 214 IT employees. They concluded that employees' turnover reasons were based on the employees' attitudes toward life and work. Guha and Chakrabarti mentioned that turnover propensity was higher among young employees because of the attraction of earning higher salaries with other organizations.

Employee turnover can affect the sustainability, growth, and profitability of organizations (Woods, 2015). Woods (2015) cited the Randstad annual survey report, "The World of Work" (Brett-Leish, 2007) that in 2007, more than half of employees thought about looking for new job opportunities. Pattni (2007) stated that 59% of the attorneys who were surveyed believed that they had fewer opportunities for career progression with their current firms and that more than half of the employees thought that it was time to start looking elsewhere for employment opportunities. According to Azic (2017), management need to decrease the turnover rates of employees by offering programs that will inspire employees to remain and by promoting a desirable organizational culture. Azic also stated that business leaders must establish better

relations with employees using various motivational techniques that make employees feel understood, valued, and cared about.

Research on Employee Rewards

Employers can choose many kinds of programs to appreciate, recognize, and reward employees' efforts. These strategies will increase employee morale, enhance job their satisfaction, promote constructive relationships, and encourage employees to work hard to support organizational goals (Hills, 2016). Business leaders can improve productivity and reduce turnover rates by rewarding and recognizing employees (Wang, Noe, & Wang, 2014). In their study of the relationship between rewards and recognition, employees' well-being and turnover intention, Langove and Isha (2017) noted that employees' well-being, which mediated the relationship between rewards and recognition, reduced turnover intentions. According to Hills (2016), the best strategies for rewarding teamwork are recognition of effective employees and reward programs that focus on individual and team performance.

Iqbal, Shabbir, Zameer, Khan, and Sandhu (2017) analyzed survey data from 372 employees from six multinational companies in Pakistan to explore employees' levels of engagement. Iqbal et al. suggested that rewards, recognition, and engagement had a significant positive relationship on retaining employees. Hills (2016) specified that organizational reward programs must identify five possible goals: attract talented employees, motivate employees to perform optimally, foster personal growth and development, increase employees' job satisfaction, and retain skilled employees. Langove and Isha (2017) mentioned that rewards and recognition are motivational

mechanisms that maximize employees' psychological well-being and decrease turnover intentions.

Publicly recognizing employees' accomplishments may enhance their job satisfaction. Gratitude also can be an active and effective motivator, and Ali and Ahmad (2017) documented that intrinsic motivators such as pay increases and opportunities for promotion and an extrinsic motivator such as recognition can lead to higher retention rates. In addition, employees' motivation increases when they receive unexpected recognition, praise, and pay raises from employers (Weerasooriya & De Alwis, 2017). Ali and Ahmad asked 358 employees working in various commercial banks in Karachi to complete a questionnaire. Results showed that pay, promotion opportunities, and recognition impacted employees' job satisfaction.

Organizations can improve employee recognition programs by continuing to support extant programs and implementing new strategy reward programs based on member evaluations (Weerasooriya & De Alwis, 2017). Employees are motivated when their needs are met not only in monetary and compensative benefits but also in recognition from employers (Weerasooriya & De Alwis, 2017). Leaders of businesses in the small retail sector can improve employees' retention rates and reduce turnover rates by implementing effective strategies such as rewarding and recognizing employees' achievements.

Research on Training and Education

Training employees is an essential strategy of HR management. Ismail (2016) defined training as the "systematic acquisition and development of the knowledge, skills,

and attitudes required by employees to effectively perform a task, job or to improve in the job environment" (p. 3). Training is intended to help employees to learn specific skills and knowledge that will enhance their job performance (Pilevari, Shahriari, & Kamalian, 2015). Cyrek (2017) stated that employees in the small retail sector frequently lack the training and development to perform their jobs effectively.

Training improves employees' attitudes and behaviors, organizational performance, and skills and job satisfaction; helps to retain staff; and improves communication and employee relationships (Ismail, 2016). Organizations can retain more employees by using four strategies (i.e., effective communication, diverse workforce, retention of skilled employees, and employees' development and training programs; Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Enda, 2015). Ismail (2016) conducted a study with 124 participants to test the mediating effect of organizational commitment in the relationship between training and turnover intentions. Ismail found that training improved employees' job satisfaction and attitudes toward employers, diminished turnover intentions, and encouraged employees to stay in their current jobs.

Cyrek (2017) conducted a study on the ways that training strategies could improve the retention rates of employees in small retail enterprises in Podkarpackie Province, Poland, because fewer enterprises, between 19.7% and 22.5%, were offering training. Cyrek's results indicated that companies did not implement training because of the inadequate qualifications of potential trainers, the high cost of training, and the lack of workers' time.

According to Pilevari et al. (2015), governments can arrange and provide financial resources to introduce training innovations into public sector activities. Human capital is created by governments by establishing infrastructure such as schools, universities, and initiatives in research and development to improve public knowledge, and by attracting talented employees through innovation and training (Pilevari et al., 2015). Training provides innovation outputs such as knowledge; creativity; and a balance among investment, educational policy, and professional jobs, where the educational systems train human capital for market demand (Pilevari et al., 2015).

Organizations that offer training that increases employees' commitment can help to reduce turnover rates (Pilevari et al., 2015). Managers must establish a communication process that is skillful and transparent (employee diversity, inclusion, integration, specific skills, certifications, and educational levels) and provides additional resources for employee training and development (Cloutier et al., 2015). Wei (2015) posited that when emotional connections are formed between individuals and the organizations employing them, turnover intentions decrease. Cloutier et al. (2015) stated that trained employees can have significant economic influence because training and development are motivational tools that optimize employees' potential, increase their organizational commitment, and expose employees' strengths and weaknesses. Wei asserted that human capital could predict turnover intentions and that person-job fit has a positive relationship between human capital and turnover intentions.

Research on Employee Engagement

Employee engagement reflects a healthy workplace atmosphere that retains more employees and reduces turnover rates. Seymour and Geldenhuys (2018) stated that employee engagement is imperative in the team setting and should be recognized and supported by supervisors and management. Pawar (2018) applied a descriptive research design to a study of 100 McDonald's employees in Pune, India, to investigate employees' engagement in the retail setting. Pawar identified training as the key factor in engaging employees and enhancing their skills to perform their jobs with excellence. According to Pawar, employees who were highly engaged were interested in communicating well, introducing new ideas, and receiving feedback to improve job performance.

Management must enhance and support internal communication to improve employees' communication behaviors and reduce turnover intentions (Kang & Sung, 2017). Effective communication between employees and leaders results in a friendly working relationship among team members that is a decisive factor in engaging employees (Pawar, 2018). Jena, Bhattacharyya, and Pradhan (2017), who analyzed the relationship between employee engagement and organizational commitment, found that engaged employees shared a positive relationship with their employers and other organizational members.

Employee engagement acts as a facilitating variable in the relationship between six working conditions (i.e., individual attitudes, intentions, behaviors, skills, growth, and productivity) and such outcomes as burnout, withdrawal, lower job performance, job dissatisfaction, and commitment (Pawar, 2018). Kang and Sung (2017) stated that

managers could improve employees' engagement by implementing the three-stage model of communication strategies (i.e., employees' internal communication management antecedents, employee engagement, and supportive outcomes of effective employee communication programs). Busari, Mughal, Khan, Rasool, and Kiyani (2017) suggested that institutions could build learning centers around crucial components of organizational activities, determine individual journeys, set personalized goals, and provide feedback to management in the process of developing policies for management learning institutions. Jena et al. (2017) asserted that validations in social exchange theory, mutual respect, and appreciation between employers and employees tend to encourage employees' commitment to companies.

Team engagement allows employees to express their real identities without fear of negative consequences; employees gain a sense of mental safety and support from managers, coworkers, and the organizations (Seymour & Geldenhuys, 2018). Team effectiveness, team learning, dialogue, and vigorous open communication should be goals of managers to maximize team potential (Seymour & Geldenhuys, 2018). According to Seymour and Geldenhuys (2018), team dialogues can have a positive influence on improving employees' levels of engagement, particularly in regard to reducing turnover rates and increasing rational commitment and communication. Team dialogues are long-term interventions to enhance employees' engagement (Seymour & Geldenhuys, 2018). Antony (2018) noted that senior management's commitment is likely to build teams whose members are dedicated to their organizations. Seymour and Geldenhuys suggested that successful team dialogues can influence employee engagement, allow groups to

improve and move beyond individuals' understanding, and empower individuals to create and achieve new ideas.

Communication is an essential dimension in building leader effectiveness, and leadership communication is a crucial element of employee engagement at all levels of management (Antony, 2018). According to S. Kim, Tam, Jeong-Nam, and Rhee (2017), supervisory justice influences the quality of organization-employee relationships and underscores the role of the internal quality of communication in managing supervisor-subordinate relationships and employee retention or turnover. Motlou, Singh, and Karodia (2016) reported that 56% of the employees whom they surveyed disagreed that management communicated effectively with employees. Antony (2018) posited that employees are managed more successfully in organizations whose managers give communication priority and that they feel proud to be part of such successful and well-managed organizations. According to Kang and Sung (2017), disengaged employees are more likely to display cynicism and make disparaging comments about their employers to outsiders.

Managing employees' emotions at work can improve trust, loyalty, and commitment; improve productivity, team building, and employees' attachment to their organizations; and reduce turnover intentions (Antony, 2018). Employee engagement promotes teams building and supports the morale of team members, resulting in increased team cohesiveness, team belongingness, and trust within groups and organizations (Antony, 2018). Motlou et al. (2016) stated that employee engagement through effective

communication with business leaders who want to get their points across to workers provides unity and improves employees' job satisfaction and retention rates.

Building a healthy workplace atmosphere requires group dynamics that support a culture of positive employee engagement that could increase effectiveness, improve performance and business profit, and improve retention rates (Antony, 2018). The leaders of businesses in the small retail sector can use employee engagement strategies to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees by implementing effective leadership-subordinate communication and team engagement strategies.

Summary and Transition

In Section 1, I introduced the business problem and provided a framework for the research. Section 1 included information relevant to the foundation of the study; the background of the problem, problem and purpose statements, and nature of the study; RQ and interview questions; conceptual framework; operational definitions; assumptions, limitations, and delimitations; and significance of the study. The literature review provided a comprehensive analysis of current research relevant to retention strategies and theories (e.g., the Hawthorne Experiments, the hierarchy of needs, Theory X, and Theory Y) to support or disparage the development of employees' retention practices, along with themes (e.g., compensation, work-life-balance, employee rewards, compensation, job satisfaction, etc.) identified in the literature review to gain an in-depth understanding of the research topic. Section 2 provides research on Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory, retail industry, retention strategies, job dissatisfaction, leadership, organizational ethics, turnover, rewards and employees, training and education, and employee

engagement. Section 3 details the research findings and their application to professional

practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action and further research,

reflections, and a conclusion.

Section 2: The Project

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, single-case study was to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have implemented to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees. The sample comprised six managers selected from a retail business in Accra, Ghana, who have developed and implemented strategies to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees. The implications of this study for positive social change include the potential to improve employees' income levels and business growth, both of which may contribute to tax revenues to benefit hospitals, schools, and infrastructure, and the creation of jobs.

Role of the Researcher

I collected the data for this single-case study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). My role as the researcher, in addition to being the data collection instrument, included designing the study; selecting the participants; and collecting, organizing, and analyzing the data. Collins and Cooper (as cited in Combs, 2017) noted that the purpose of qualitative research is to gather accurate data and report on them. I followed the three basic ethical requirements of the Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1974, 1979) pertaining to the ethics of research involving human participants: principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. I used the Belmont Report (National Commission, 1974, 1979) as an ethical guideline to respect the participants and reduce the risk of harm by having them read, sign, and return the consent form prior to conducting the interviews or the focus group.

Madeira (2015) advised that the consent form assures study participants that the researchers are affiliated with credible institutions, are ethical, and comply with practice norms in an effort to improve research efficiency. Combs (2017) agreed with Check, Wolf, Dame, and Beskow's (2014) assertion that researchers use consent forms to give the participants the opportunity to make knowledgeable decisions about joining studies or declining to participate.

Yin (2018) recommended that qualitative researchers who conduct case studies take responsibility for the collection, analysis, and reporting of the data to reduce or eliminate any biases that could affect the results. Greenbank (2003) suggested that qualitative researchers describe relevant aspects of self, including biases and assumptions, expectations, and experiences, to explain their ability to conduct research. Research errors and any possible biases that may have affected data collection and analysis were minimized. I did not allow any personal experiences or beliefs to influence the results of the study. To guarantee consistency when conducting the interviews, I followed an interview protocol (see Appendix A). Forrest (2017) suggested that using an interview protocol is important to align the interview questions with the RQs and allow participants to give clear and complete responses.

Research Participants

The sample comprised six small retail business leaders in Accra, Ghana. To be in the study, the participants must have used strategies to engage entry-level employees and help to reduce turnover rates. The participants were required to be willing to join the study voluntarily; to have a minimum of 3 years of supervisory experience in the retail

industry in Accra, Ghana; to have used strategies to reduce the turnover rates of entry-level employees; and to be recommended by their HR director. Yin (2018) stated that the best sources of data in case study research are participants who can answer the RQs based on their experiences with the phenomena under investigation. Saunders et al. (2016) noted that conducting interviews is an excellent way to obtain details about the participants' experiences and that audio or digital recordings can facilitate the data analysis, ensure the accuracy of the collected data, affirm captured information, and develop reflective ideas.

As a qualitative researcher, I established a trusting relationship with the participants. Saunders et al. (2016) commented that building trust with the participants is one way of conducting successful studies. By building trust with the participants, researchers hope that their responses to the interview questions will be more detailed and will give them (i.e., the researchers) the opportunity to ask more sensitive probing questions (Saunders et al., 2016).

I asked the HR director for the e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of prospective participants. I developed a relationship with the participants during the initial contact by introducing myself and describing the purpose of the study. I assured the participants that I would protect their confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study by providing them with alphanumeric identifiers (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6). Respecting and maintaining the participants' privacy and confidentiality are important ethical principles of research (Alahmad, Jumah, & Dierickx, 2015), and ethics refers to the moral code of conduct that establishes attitudes and behaviors (Kanonuhwa, Rungani, &

Chimucheka, 2018). The participants received an invitation, including the consent form, to participate through e-mail. Syrdal and Briggs (2018) also mentioned the importance of maintaining the privacy of the participants and assuring them that no identifying would be revealed in any published research.

Once the participants decided to participate, I made myself available to them to answer any questions that they might have had about the study. I accommodated their work schedules to conduct the interviews in natural settings of their choice. I had no working relationships with any of the participants.

Research Method

I followed a qualitative approach to collect the data. Yin (2018) stated that qualitative researchers seek to obtain detailed information about the participants' experiences of the phenomena under investigation. A qualitative approach is used to conduct naturalistic inquiries that seek to understand problems in their natural environments (Saunders et al., 2016). Qualitative researchers often focus on the *why* and *how* of phenomena (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The three research methods that I considered for this study were qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Researchers use qualitative methods to study groups and cultures, conduct in-depth interviews, and review documents for themes (Yin, 2018). Deep et al. (2017) stated that the use of the qualitative method is based on descriptive phenomenology, but not on data analysis, which focuses on a structured phenomenological approach and applies to interview questions based on capturing the phenomenon, contextualization of the experience, and clarification.

I did not consider using a quantitative approach because it focuses on the collection and analysis of numeric data to test hypotheses and analyze variables (Saunders et al., 2016). I did not consider the use of a mixed methods approach because I did not measure variables or use numeric data that could have been analyzed statistically. According to Holcomb and Hickman (2015), mixed methods research integrates qualitative and quantitative data within a single study. A qualitative method was appropriate in allowing me to obtain in-depth information from the participants about the phenomenon.

Research Design

I considered three types of qualitative research: phenomenology, ethnography, and case study. Researchers have used the case study method to gain insight into business practices and to understand the phenomena established within individual organizations (Yin, 2014). The case study design allows researchers to conduct in-depth inquiries that focus on applicable elements of the cases within the scope of the respective environments (Abd-Rahman & Mohr Shariff, 2003). According to Saunders et al. (2016), the phenomenological approach focuses on study participants' lived experiences of the phenomena under investigation. I did not select a phenomenological approach because I had only a small sample of six participants who could not satisfy the requirements of the phenomenological approach. Cooper et al. (2009) stated that ethnography is a research method designed to describe and analyze cultural practices and beliefs. I did not study a culture or an ethnic group, cultural beliefs, or communities, so ethnography was not an appropriate design for the study.

The case study approach reflects the exploration of a problem to understand several decisions, as well as the reasons for and implementation of these decisions (Yin, 2014). Cooper et al. (2009) used a case study method to gather information about new product development activities in engineer-to-order organizations and to determine how the organizations carried out their development activities. Case studies involve in-depth explorations of individuals, organizations, or other types of social units (Stake, 2005).

This research design is useful when researchers are trying to discover in-depth information about situations. Case studies are useful when researchers are interested in discovering experiences in unique contexts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I used a single-case study approach using interviews and an FGD to understand the strategies that some small retail business leaders have used to retain entry-level employees.

Population and Sampling

The goal of this single-case study was to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders in Accra, Ghana, have implemented to reduce the high turnover rates of entry-level employees. The sample comprised six managers and a three-member focus group. Members of the focus group came from the six interviewees. I used purposeful sampling to select participants who had firsthand knowledge of the phenomenon (McInnes, Peters, Bonney, & Halcomb, 2017). In this case study, the participants had experience using strategies to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees.

Qualitative researchers use purposeful sampling to select information-rich cases associated with the phenomenon being studied (Riley et al., 2018). I selected the

participants by asking them standard questions, such as how long they had been working for their employer and if they had implemented strategies to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees.

Ethical Research

Ethical research has been defined as the rules of conduct and the moral principles guiding research from beginning through to completion and the publication of results that also can protect the interests of the public, study participants, and researchers (Pandya-Wood, Barron, & Elliott, 2017). I conducted the study after receiving approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB approval #10-08-19-0658145). Interested participants were asked to provide their e-mails and contact information to schedule the interviews. I also asked all participants to read this consent form, which was sent to them via e-mail, and sign it electronically by replying, "I consent to participate in the study," before being interviewed. All e-mail communication was encrypted.

I assigned alphanumeric identifiers (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6) to the six participants to protect their identities. I informed them that their participation in this research was voluntary. Participants were informed that they would not be penalized if they chose to withdraw from the study at any time. I also informed the participants that any information that they shared would remain confidential and would be disclosed only with their permission or as required by law. They were notified that all study information would be kept under lock and key for 5 years, as per IRB requirements, in a cabinet on a password-protected flash drive. After the 5-year limit has passed, all documentation related to the study will be destroyed by the most appropriate means available.

I was respectful and professional in communicating and interacting with all participants. I advised the participants that they were free to contact Walden university's IRB if they had any concerns or questions about their rights. All six participants received a copy of their own signed consent form.

Data Collection

I was the data collection instrument for this single-case study. Qualitative researchers constantly observe the participants, develop the interview questions, and review and interpret all of the collected data in case studies (Yin, 2018). Researchers access the phenomena from interpretive, critical, or postmodern attitudes, and they use an inductive approach as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis (Dithebe & Mukhuba, 2018). Farooq and de Villiers (2017) remarked that conducting face-to-face interviews with participants in their natural settings facilitates the collection of dependent or contextual data. As the primary data collection instrument, I recorded the semistructured interviews and set up the FGD. I used an interview and a focus group protocol to guide the study. The three questions in the focus group protocol were taken from the questions in the interview guide (see Appendices B & C).

I used the audio recording device during the interviews and the FGD. I also examined secondary data from organizational documents. According to Saunders et al. (2016), making audio recordings during the interviews helps researchers to capture all of the data accurately. Bernard (2013) posited that recorded interviews capture the full context and detail of the participants' experiences. Lastly, member checking was performed to ensure research reliability and validity. All participants received copies of

their own transcribed responses for data verification, accuracy, and error confirmation

and repair. Member checking took place at the employer's location.

Interview

I interviewed six participants. Interested participants were asked to provide their

e-mail addresses and phone contact information to schedule the interviews. All e-mail

communication was encrypted. After the interviews were scheduled, I contacted the

participants to inform them of what to expect during the interviews. Each interview lasted

for 30 minutes, and I interviewed the participants in quiet locations of their choice. I

ensured that the locations were free of distractions that could have prevented them from

answering the interview questions as honestly and openly as possible. I conducted the

interviews and the FGD on December 3, 2019, and December 10, 2019, respectively, at

the partner company's location during working hours.

I used the interview guide to facilitate discussions during the semistructured

interviews. I asked open-ended interview questions. The interviews were recorded, and

the participants were notified of this procedure ahead of time. Participants also were

informed that they had the right to stop the recording during the interviews if they did not

feel comfortable with it.

Focus Group

Three of the interviewed participants also were involved in the FGD, which lasted

for 1 hour and occurred in a quiet location of the participants' choice. I ensured that the

location was private and free of distractions. I used the focus group guide to facilitate the

discussion. I informed the participants ahead of time that I would be recording the focus

group session. I also advised them that they had the right to request that I stop recording the FGD if they did not feel comfortable.

Data Organization

All data were organized to aid data use and security. I used alphanumeric identifiers (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6) to protect the identities of the participants. Ogigau-Neamţiu (2017) postulated that data masking provides data security and hides the identities of the participants. I was the only person who had access to the collected data and who evaluated their content. I transcribed the recorded interview responses as Microsoft Word documents, and I used NVivo v.11 to code the data and organize the emergent themes. The interview data will remain in a secure location on a password-protected computer for 5 years, after which time I will comply with Walden University's IRB requirements by erasing all electronic data and shredding all paper documents. Any data that are unprotected by researchers may generate vulnerabilities in individual data privacy, and data breached can unmask study participants' private information (M. Adams, 2017).

Data Analysis

In qualitative studies, triangulation is a data analysis protocol that requires using two or more sources to determine the consistency or validity of the findings (Yin, 2014). Researchers can use triangulation as a strategy that contributes to construct validity and to obtain knowledge through new perspectives (Abdalla, Oliveira, Azevedo, & Gonzalez, 2018). Yin (2014) identified four types of triangulation: methodological, investigator, theoretical, and data source. Case study researchers use methodological triangulation

throughout the data analysis process to validate their data. According to Abdalla et al. (2018), methodological triangulation involves a combination of methods such as interviews, observations, and focus groups to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The use of multiple resources helps researchers to gain insight into research problems and improve their interpretations of the collected data.

Researchers also can use triangulation to ensure that the collected data are rich and detailed (Saunders et al., 2016). According to Forrest (2017), triangulation allows qualitative researchers to compare the finding from multiple data sources such as organizational documents and transcribed interview data that have independent contexts. During the data analysis process, I used methodological triangulation to validate the data.

When conducting a qualitative data analysis, Yin (2014) identified the five steps to processing the data: compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. During the analysis, the data are gathered and grouped, and themes are developed from the analysis. After completing the interviews and member checking, I reviewed the data and remove redundant and unnecessary information that had no value in the study.

Thematic data analysis can be used to identify themes and obtain meaning from the data set (Roberts, Dowell, & Jing-Bao, 2019). Qualitative researchers use semistructured interviews to collect data that answer the RQs. Fusch and Ness (2015) stated that researchers can ensure data saturation by asking questions that address the central RQs to facilitate the collection of relevant information. Bellamy, Ostini, Martini, and Kairuz (2016) noted that qualitative researchers often use thematic data analysis to

pinpoint, examine, and record themes. The thematic analysis depends on coding to develop themes that are focused by the data content (Bellamy et al., 2016). I listened to the audio recordings of the participants' interview responses, transcribed them, completed member checking, and interpreted their responses.

Researchers use CAQDAS software to reduce errors during the data analysis (Rowley, 2012). I imported the data into NVivo v.11 to organize and process them, code them into groups, and identify themes. According to Zamawe (2015), qualitative researchers use NVivo v.11 for the thematic coding of categories. Researchers use NVivo v.11 to process nonnumerical data obtained from interviews, surveys, and literature reviews. Using NVivo v.11 gives researchers the capability to review, merge, and refine the data (Guo, Porschitz, & Alves, 2013). Merging individuals' interview data is considered an appropriate data collection technique (Harif & Hoe, 2018). Harif and Hoe (2018) stated that this interview technique is used to enhance research information, collect and analyze the data, and interpret large quantities of data. I concentrated on critical themes by comparing the key themes in the literature review and aligning them with the conceptual framework of the study. By using similar themes that I found during the data analysis, I reported the findings. The conceptual framework that I used was Herzberg et al.'s (1959) hygiene-motivation, or two-factor, theory. The conceptual framework linked the literature, methodology, and results of the study (Borrego, Foster, & Froyd, 2014). Forrest (2017) stipulated that member checking, coupled with vigorous analytic protocols, aids research validity and reliability. I followed the outlined processes to increase the validity and reliability of this study.

Reliability and Validity

Research validity and reliability safeguard the correctness and accuracy of studies (Combs, 2017). Yin (2018) acknowledged that the validity and reliability in qualitative research is used to measure research accuracy and is more subjective to credibility and dependability of quantitative research. I confirmed the research data reliability and validity to ensure that the results would be beneficial, valuable, and acceptable.

Reliability

The validity of qualitative research involves trustworthiness of the data. For the data to be considered reliable, qualitative researchers must address data credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Roberts et al., 2019). I asked all six participants the same interview questions to ensure the reliability of the study. Reliability is repeated to yield consistent results in similar studies or conclusions reached by other researchers (Saunders et al., 2016). I correctly documented the interviews and used the FGD to enhance the credibility of the data. To enhance dependability, I provided information showing how the findings were summarized by explaining how the data were collected. Rahnama and Mardani-Hamooleh (2017) suggested that dependability is the ability of other researchers to replicate the research findings or agree unanimously with the results. To enhance research confirmability, I provided detailed information about the data collection and interpretation processes. Confirmability refers to the ways that researchers agree on the meaning, relevance, and accuracy of the data presented that outlines all relevant steps taken during the research and is made available to members of the research team for review (Wirihana et al., 2018). I provided an accurate explanation

of the data collection process to ensure that future researchers will be able to duplicate the study.

Validity

Validity relies on the experience and trustworthiness of the researchers conducting the investigations (Combs, 2017). According to Deskins (2017), researchers must analyze the data collected from the participants to safeguard the validity of their studies. Beato (2017) noted that qualitative researchers could improve the credibility of their studies by using member checking to validate the accuracy of their interpretations of the transcribed interview responses. I established the validity of my results by employing member checking and e-mailing the transcriptions to the participants of their individual interview responses to confirm their accuracy. The participants were encouraged to call or e-mail me if they had any concerns about the accuracy of the data transcriptions.

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Summary and Transition

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To identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have used to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees, I explained my reasons for wanting to conduct a qualitative, single-case study inquiry. I explained my role as the researcher; described the participants, the target population, and sampling protocol; explained the data collection and analysis procedures; and discussed research validity. Section 3 provides information about the findings, their application to professional practice, and the implications for social change. The next section also includes recommendations for action and further research on strategies to retain employees, personal reflections, and conclusions.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative, single-case study was to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have used to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees. I used Herzberg's hygiene-motivation, or two-factor, theory as the conceptual framework (as cited in Herzberg et al., 1959). I sought to identify the strategies to reduce the turnover rate of entry-level employees by interviewing six business leaders and leading a three-member FGD. When asked how to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees, the participants mentioned numerous factors, including training, trust, mentoring, motivation, and incentives. The implications of this study for positive social change include the potential to improve employees' income levels and business growth, both of which can contribute to tax revenues to benefit hospitals, schools, and infrastructure, and provide jobs. In Section 3, I discuss the findings, including the application to professional practice, and how the findings might lead to social change. Section 3 also includes recommendations for action and future research, reflections, and a conclusion.

Presentation of the Findings

The study was guided by one RQ: What strategies have some small retail business leaders used to retain entry-level employees? Data were collected through semistructured interviews with six retail managers and a three-member FGD in a retail company in Accra, Ghana. The semistructured interviews and the FGD took place in locations selected by the partner company that were free from distractions that could have

prevented the participants from answering the interview questions honestly or engaging in the FGD. These two methods of data supported each other in terms of deriving common themes. The focus group data helped to validate the themes emerging from the analysis of the interview transcriptions (Creswell, 2014).

All participants signed the required consent form and received a signed copy of it for their personal records before commencing the interviews and the FGD. Each interview lasted between 30 and 45 minutes; the FGD finished in just under 60 minutes. I organized the data to ensure their security, and I used alphanumeric identifiers (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6) to protect the identities of the participants. I recorded and transcribed the participants' interview responses and FGD as Microsoft Word documents. I used NVivo v.11 to identify, organize, process, and code the themes into groups. Qualitative researchers use NVivo v.11 to code themes into categories (Zamawe, 2015); process nonnumerical data such as interviews surveys and literature reviews; and review, merge, and refine the data (Guo et al., 2013).

I sent copies of their individual transcriptions to the participants for member checking. I will retain the interview data in a secure location or on a password-protected computer for 5 years before destroying them, as per Walden University's IRB requirements, by erasing all electronic data and shredding paper documents. During the data analysis, I focused on the common themes that emerged and were relevant to the RQ and the conceptual framework (see Table 2). The following themes emerged from the data analysis: training, trust, mentoring, motivation, and incentives.

Table 2

Frequency of Themes Identifying Strategies to Retain Entry-Level Employees

Theme	n	n_1	% interviews and focus group
Training	27	12	100%
Trust	16	9	100%
Mentoring	12	5	100%
Motivation	6	5	100%
Incentives	9	7	100%

Note. n = interview frequency; *n_1* = focus group frequency

Theme 1: Training

Training was the first theme that appeared from a detailed analysis of the participants' responses and the FGD of strategies to retain entry-level employees. A critical resource to employers is human capital, and employers use training to upgrade employees' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to generate competitive advantage in a competitive marketplace (Nguyen & Shao, 2019). All six participants explained that training played a vital role in retaining entry-level employees, preparing new employees for the job, ensuring continuity of the work, increasing employees' job satisfaction, and improving the retention rates of entry-level employees. Participant, P1 noted that "training is critical so that at least the trainee will know what to do, how to go about his or her duties with little or no supervision."

Contributing to the importance of training, P2, who expressed dissatisfaction about the ways that some companies focus on supporting and retaining senior executives and managers, also recalled the following scenario:

In our setup here, we receive goods from the port into our warehouse, you need to know what it entails, and you are part of the team to understand what actually is

going on, and your active participation in training will do that. When I get new entries, we do train on the standards operation procedures [SOP]. I also engage new employees in on-the-job training. Sometimes, they have to feel not just a theory but a feel to gain confidence.

Acknowledging the importance of training to employee engagement, some participants (i.e., P3, P5, and P6) mentioned the different types of training, including product knowledge, salesmanship, ethics compliance, and software training, offered to new entry-level employees, and P5, emphasized that "it's important that they feel empowered; we train our entry-level employees on product knowledge; salesmanship, and ethics compliance, P6."

Similarly, P4 explained that the goal of on-the-job training is to get employees to understand their job roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This assertion resonated with Younge and Marx's (2016) conclusion that training strengthened employees' sense of value in the workplace, supported their development, and improved their engagement. P4's statement also aligned with Quratulain and Khan's (2015) contention that employers could maintain employees' job satisfaction by supporting their values and incorporating the organizational goals and values into their training. The finding in this study corresponded with Herzberg's (as cited in Herzberg et al., 1959) theory, which categorized training as a motivational factor and strategy that some retail business leaders have used to improve employee retention rates and build strong workplace relationships that lead to employee job satisfaction.

An equally important segment of education that all of the participants mentioned was the need to use mentorship and coaching as strategies to retain entry-level employees. They noted that mentorship is a relationship that pairs more knowledgeable or experienced employees with inexperienced employees to provide training and guidance. They also considered mentorship and coaching ways to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees and reduce turnover rates. These strategies reflected Herzberg's (1959) two-factor framework that organizations with higher quality mentoring relationships may influence job satisfaction and career success (also see Lunsford, Baker, & Meghan, 2018). Similarly, Nguyen and Shao (2019) confirmed that on-the-job training technique was associated with lower employee turnover intentions.

During the FGD, participants agreed on the importance of on-the-job training, a position articulated by Nguyen and Shao (2019) as "on-the-job training gave employees the opportunity to acquire specific knowledge and practice skills at the same time, which often resulted in enhancing employees' professional capabilities and their job satisfaction" (p. 69). The participants' responses supported the finding that management of the partner organization improved employee retention by using training, mentoring, and coaching strategies.

Theme 2: Trust

Another important attribute for retaining entry-level employee that emerged from the data analysis was trust, which according to the participants, often generated a positive workplace environment. In particular, P2, who also participated in the FGDs, intimidated that the workplace relationship is crucial in making employees feel connected to the

business and having the support of associates, subordinates, and leaders. P2 noted that

business leaders must develop trust and respect with team members and explained that

the process required being effective communicators who were consistently honest and

fair. He underscored the importance of experience in helping business leaders to better

meet their responsibilities.

P4's statement summed up the consensus of the participants that leaders in the

small retail industry can improve the job satisfaction and retention of employees by using

constructive criticism and communication to build trust with subordinates:

I think showing appreciation and trust for the employees can help immensely to

retain entry-level employees. This has to do with making the entry-level

employees or general staff believe that the organization thinks about them in all

aspects of their lives. Leaders need to listen to their employees. Employees need

some sort of attention, but they were totally neglected by their leaders. People

have personal issues that cannot be shared, but one way or the other, you as a

manager, you have to open up to employees.

The participants in the FGD also stressed the importance of trust as an effective

strategy to retain entry-level associates. The participants specifically implored business

executives to use effective communication to establish trust in the workplace among

leaders and their subordinates.

P2 remarked, "There is the need for a freedom of speech for everyone to express

herself/himself without fear, which is the relationship and it's the most effective strategy

to keep employees." Other participants commented on communication between

management and the subordinates should be cordial, P1; and P3 added that one has to feel

comfortable working with either the junior or the senior staff.

FG3 also added, "When people have a sense of belonging, and the sense of

feeling, then it makes people wanting to be with you as a manager, and ultimately, the

organization."

The participants also noted that to improve the retention rates of entry-level

employees, business leaders had to use effective communication processes to measure

trust in the workplace between business leaders and subordinates. The participants

suggested that the lack of a free flow of communication between management and

employees could lead to a social gap between and among coworkers, which invariably

could be a demotivating factor that could negatively affect the workplace or employees'

health, a point asserted by Abugre (2017). According to Haar, Schmitz, Fabio, and

Daellenbach (2019), satisfaction in the workplace has been linked positively to such

organizational measures as economic performance, productivity, and decreased turnover

rates, all of which affect employees' work, relationships, and well-being. Retail business

leaders required these same measures to create a productive workplace, provide

constructive criticism and clear communication, and build trust with subordinates.

Positive co-worker relationships could promote empowerment by building employees'

skills, enhancing employees' self-efficacy, and highlighting employees' social networks

and that negative co-worker relationships results in high levels of job dissatisfaction,

disengagement of cooperation, and high labor turnover rates (Abugre, 2017). This finding

is consistent with Herzberg's hygiene motivation theory, which highlights the importance

of recognition, advancement, the and the possibility of growth and responsibility as important variables in organizational success (Adair, 2009).

Theme 3: Mentoring

Mentoring employees to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees was the third theme that emerged from the data analysis. The participants explained that mentoring is an employee training program that pairs more experienced employees with less experienced employees to offer training and provide guidance. According to some participants (P1, P2, P3, and P5), mentoring is a long-standing organizational principle and belief.

All of the participants viewed mentoring was an effective strategy to retain entry-level employees. However, all participants also had adopted individual styles of mentoring. P1, for example, stated that he used individual coaching and personal one-on-one talks as his preferred mentoring techniques.

P5 explained,

I monitor the people I work with over a period, especially the new employees. I sit down with them to find out their challenges. Coaching must be mostly one-on-one talks in some instances you can also advise an employee that based on his or her strengths, he could do better in other areas, particularly when company is big enough.

P6 suggested,

Everybody has his positive side, strength, and weakness, and during the interview, you pick up all those things. From the onset, you may pick somebody close to

what you needed, as well as a wrong candidate who could hardly do the job; In a way, I think you still need to be nice with him and find out what is eating him up maybe; he is facing some social or personal problems. There must be something wrong, especially if he has done well before. If from the beginning, everything keeps coming down, then at the point in time, you should know that he doesn't belong here and let him/her go.

The remarks made by P6 not only supported the individualistic nature of the mentoring processes and strategies but also reemphasized how the partner organization had made individualism, the focus on each employee as an individual with strengths and talents, over collectivism, or the focus on the company as a whole rather than on the members of that company. From the responses, the business leaders who had an individualistic outlook worked with individual team members and allowed employees to express their personalities.

From the analysis, it was clear that mentorship interventions were confounded by diverse social and economic factors that shaped the business leaders' mentoring-seeking behaviors in unexpected or underappreciated ways. These caveats to business leaders mentoring-related behaviors were common in the participants' individual responses, often expressed as anecdote to given commentary to guided questions and presented significant barriers to providing a comprehensive organizational mentoring procedures and strategies. Results indicated that organizational leaders with an individualistic outlook emphasize direct communication with individuals. Business leaders who support an open door policy make it more comfortable for entry-level employees to approach them with

concerns, problems, or questions. It was evident from the responses that even though individual employees were expected to follow their employers' orders, they were not penalized for disagreeing with the leaders' decisions. Above all, the results showed that members of the organization also tended to communicate more directly with others whom they are working with, rather than dropping hints or acting to save face with the leaders of the organization.

The findings are consistent with those of prior studies (e.g., Kuruku & Stephen, 2018) that mentoring plays a significant role in developing the relationship between management and subordinates. Kuruku and Stephen (2018) suggested that mentoring correlates positively and significantly with individuals' psychosocial support (e.g., education support, spiritual support, group support, etc.). The results also were linked to Herzberg's (1959) hygiene factor theory because as already discussed, mentoring programs improved employees' commitment to the organization and created room for higher performance and productivity, resulting in more job satisfaction and improved retention rates.

Theme 4: Motivation

Employee motivation is vital to having a positive working environment that will improve employee retention rates. The participants agreed that management was the main force increasing employees' job satisfaction through motivation to attain organizational goals. All of the participants agreed that it is the responsibility of business leaders to support a culturally diverse workplace. Business leaders are expected to direct the work of their subordinates and prepare for success by having a clear vision of the

organization and making plans for future success. As part of their motivational strategies, business leaders must help subordinates to succeed by developing ongoing training opportunities and reviewing subordinates' work. The participants agreed that because appreciation is a powerful motivator, business leaders must strive to serve as role models. Their personal behaviors and attitudes set the tone for the organization. The participants also concurred that motivation is a powerful tool in reinforcing behaviors to attain organizational goals and would lead to employee satisfaction in the workplace.

P2 summarized the effects of motivation on entry-level employees regarding their job satisfaction and improving their retention rates:

Motivation is another strategy I used to retain entry-level employees; I spoke about the mentorship, and it's a good strategy. One of the strategies I have used is to create a positive workplace environment. You need to create an environment where entry-level employees will feel comfortable to voice in their opinions. What I also do is that I give employees the opportunity to grow in, and later assign task to them, let them perform, then you can assess them. Based on their performance, you will be able to know where they went wrong and where they went right, then you polish up, or you can add up or for specific training in a specific area.

P5 added, "If there is no acknowledgment of contribution, the effort will contribute to employee turnover." P3 stated, "The support that an employee receives from the organization and coworkers make one feel the sense of belongingness. The effective communication is an effective way of retaining employees."

During the FGD, the above reflection was commonly expressed by the FG3 participant thus:

> If a manager resigns and there is a vacancy, anyone can comfortably apply. As an organization, we also have sister companies, [so] if one wants to move from here to a sister company, the HRs in the respective organization facilitate the process, granted there is a vacancy to permit movement.

From the FGD, the participants were convinced that motivating entry-level employees by offering mentoring and strategic training could increase their job satisfaction and improve their retention rates. The results mirrored Bernanthos's (2018) assertion that job satisfaction is a reflection of employees' feelings and attitudes toward work that are directly and indirectly influenced by leadership motivation. The results also aligned with Herzberg et al.'s (1959) conclusion that employee motivation leads to satisfaction in the workplace.

Theme 5: Incentives

The results provided evidence of the reasons for employee retention. All of the participants indicated that entry-level employees tended to leave their first jobs fairly early because of the lack of incentives and other fringe benefits. Participants agreed that instituting employee recognition programs would be one way to express appreciation publicly. Having incentive programs, such as offering rewards, also would encourage employees to meet specific workplace goals. Participants stated that business leaders should try to determine what motivates employees and what resources are available to reward employees. In addition, business leaders must decide what behaviors or

accomplishments are to be recognized, determine the specific rewards for specific

behavior and results, and communicate the recognition and incentive program

information to all employees. Participants also suggested that planning for recognition

and incentive programs must be guided by predetermined time frames as well as

unambiguous rules. Business leaders should provide incentives and compensation that

offer long-term job satisfaction to entry-level retail employees.

P6 remarked,

 Sometimes it is not only salary that matters, but other benefits also do contribute

to increasing the retention rate of early entry employees. Employees should be

able to have better medical, including health insurance for their dependents and

families. All these small packages tend to motivate employees and to retain them.

P4 suggested, "Some free incentives the company is giving to staff include lunch,

healthcare, transport allowance, and other remuneration." FG1 supported P4's statement,

adding that "staff here are able to have free medical care without paying anything from

their pocket."

Similarly, P3 mentioned the benefits of enhancing the opportunities for personnel

to work for other subsidiaries. This finding reaffirmed extant knowledge within the

business community motivate staff and help keep employees in the organization for them

to offer productive services (Grandison, 2017). Grandison (2017) stated that Herzberg's

hygiene factors that correlated with job dissatisfaction were work conditions such as

salary; opportunities for personal growth; company policies; job security; relationships

with peers, management, and subordinates; and job status. Herzberg et al. (1959) asserted

that the long-term job satisfaction of employees was linked to motivational factors and the hygienic factors were connected to short-term desires. Based on the analysis of the data, the retail business leaders at the partner organization improved job satisfaction and increased retention by using incentives to retain entry-level employees.

Least Effective Strategy: Poor Communication

All of the participants considered effective communication from all levels of management as crucial to improving employees' productivity and engagement. However, some of them (e.g., P1, P2, P3, P4) cautioned that poor communication from management to employees at the middle and lower levels was a major barrier to the implementation of strategies to retain entry-level employees.

P1 stated,

The strategy I consider the least effect is making people feel like they should know it all before being employed, or the inability to provide resources to the new employee to function properly. The lack of being proactive towards preparations for entry-level is what I usually do not like. Before somebody is employed, his/her role must be clearly defined, and all the resources that the person will need to function effectively and efficiently must be put in place before the person starts work. If the requisite resources are not put in place before the entry-level employee starts training, he/she would be frustrated and in the process, may leave the company.

P2's response highlighted the concerns expressed by other participants, including those in the FGD:

Management using promises and monetary value to entice entry-level employee will not work. Sometimes, management tries to use the financial rewards to motivate, but in the end, if such incentives are not sustainable, then it becomes a very big disincentive. There have been instances where certain promised and agreed incentives (like quarterly bonus) never materialized much to the displeasure of the subordinates. That is a huge disincentive, so, when you want to get them to work and you bring monetary enticement, it wouldn't fly, it will never fly, and I think it is one of the least workable strategies. Using promises from management as a tool to motivate employees to work hard, honestly, in this organization is a bad strategy. I realized that it is not good to use that as a tool to drive people to work.

It was in this institutional context that Kang and Sung (2017) posited that employees who receive positive communication about their job performance are likely to be more motivated to maintain trusting relationships with the organization, resulting in a high level of employee engagement.

Summary of the Findings

The analysis focused on one RQ: What strategies have small retail business leaders used to retain their entry-level employees? Most of the interview participants and participants in the FGDs collaborated or justified Herzberg's (1959) theory. Broadly, the participants considered retaining entry-level employees as extremely vital for business continuity and success. Five themes emerged from the data analysis: need for training, trust, mentoring, motivations, and incentives. Retail business leaders need to pay more

attention to Herzberg's hygiene factors to improve employees' long-term job satisfaction and reduce entry-level employees' short-term desires and willingness to leave their jobs. Based on thorough data analysis of participants, retail business leaders at the partner organization improved job satisfaction and increased retention by using training, trust, mentoring, motivation and incentive strategies to retain entry-level employees.

Application to Professional Practice

The purpose of this qualitative, single-case study was to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders have used to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees. The sample was comprised of six managers from a retail organization in Accra, Ghana. Participation in this study was voluntary, and participants provided insight into strategies that they used to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees in the retail sector. The strategies shared by the participants might contribute to social change by serving as the basis that other leaders could use to improve employees' retention rates. The findings could add to current retail business strategies to enhance business practices that would result in improving entry-level retention rates.

Business leaders who implement entry-level employee retention strategies have lower rates of employee turnover (Covella et al., 2017). Offering competitive compensation, providing employee wellness programs, and building a workplace environment that promote employees' job satisfaction are effective strategies that leaders could use to improve retention rates. Hossain et al. (2017) asserted that approximately 50% of businesses experienced regular problems with employee retention and that almost 70% had difficulty replacing skilled employees. Retail leaders could save money and

time as well as expand their businesses by understanding the benefits linked to using effective strategies to retain entry-level employees that would improve productivity, facilitate business growth, and increase profitability.

My objective in conducting this study was to provide leaders in the small retail industry with knowledge about the importance of using strategies that are effective to improve employees' retention rates. Research has indicated that one in four entry-level employees leaves the employer within the first 6 months of employment (Michael et al., 2016). Small retail business leaders may explore the positive relationship between hiring decision makers and job performance to decrease employee turnover rates and increase profits (Hugo, 2016). By focusing on the relevance of constructive and effective strategies, business leaders could use the strategies of training, trust, mentoring, motivation, and incentives to improve retention rates. Improving entry-level employees' retention rates may lead to an increase in productivity, business growth, and increase profitability.

Implications for Social Change

The goal of this study was to identify the strategies that some retail business leaders have implemented to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees and increase organizational profitability. The significance of this qualitative, single-case study to social change is that by offering employees competitive compensation packages, skills training, and a workplace environment that promotes job satisfaction, retail leaders can improve employees' retention rates, productivity, and profitability (Furmanska-Maruszak, & Sudolska, 2016).

Similarly, small retail leaders may use the findings to evaluate or measure the effectiveness of current strategies to improve employee retention rates and increase profitability. Managers may implement the finding's strategies to stimulate expansion of businesses that may lead to the internal growth opportunities for current employees and external employment opportunities that may improve the economic outlook of the local community. A more positive work environment that promotes employee development increases the worth and dignity of individuals in the workplace.

Retail managers have opportunities to bring positive social change to the communities that they serve by improving employees' retention rates. Community members and employees could view businesses as being successful based on positive social change within the serving or operating communities. Hugo (2016) stated that the positive relationship between employee satisfaction and job performance is a way to reduce turnover rates and increase profitability. Successful businesses are able to retain high-skill employees, a factor that influences the efficiency and sustainability of the companies (Tso-Jen & Chi-Min, 2017). Communities can benefit from profitable companies through affirmative social change investment programs such as sponsorships, charitable donations, and financial investment in the community (Adams et al., 2016). Improving employee retention rates is relevant to positive social change in such areas as improved workplace conditions, employees' pay increase, lower turnover rates, increased employee morale, and improved employee relationships. Developing and retaining employees is critical to the organizational success that empowers retail leaders to be agents of positive social change to enhance productivity, organizational growth, and

improved profitability, all of which allow organizations to have a positive influence in the communities in which they operate.

Recommendations for Action

The information shared by the participants during the interviews and the FGD might supply retail business leaders with new insight that they could use to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees. Improving employees' retention rates in the retail sector is critical to maintaining productivity and increasing profitability. Retail business leaders can improve the retention rates of entry-level employees by engaging in effective communication, supporting a work-life balance, offering competitive pay, and incentives. Implementing effective strategies may help businesses to retain skilled employees.

The failure of business leaders to implement effective and sustainable strategies to retain employees might have an adverse effect on overall business operations. The impact of turnover not only extends to customers but also affects business productivity (Babu & Masthanvali, 2017). The knowledge shared by the participants in the current study may benefit businesses that have high turnover rates. Improving the retention rates of employees in the retail section may result in organizational growth, increased profitability, and the retention of skilled employees and top-performing employees who are difficult to replace.

The findings of this study will be disseminated through digital means or conferences. Leaders from the partner organization and all participants will receive a two-page summary of the findings to distribute among colleagues and other business

leaders. This study will also be available through the ProQuest/UMI dissertation database for future scholars and other organizations. I also intend to pursue opportunities to share the findings of this study with business-related fora, organizational training, and leadership conferences.

<div align="center">**Recommendations for Further Research**</div>

The purpose of this study was to identify the strategies that some small retail business leaders in Accra, Ghana, have used to retain entry-level employees and improve profitability. The findings will add to the current research on employee retention, employee turnover, employee motivation, and job dissatisfaction; however, there are various reasons for employees to leave their jobs. Retaining entry-level employees is a complicated business issue, so future qualitative researchers might consider trying to identify additional strategies that retail business leaders have used to improve employee retention rates. Dialoguing with business leaders to obtain their perceptions and understanding of effective strategies might provide additional relevant knowledge on this topic.

Other recommendations for qualitative research include exploring the effectiveness of strategies in different geographical regions and extending the research into other service industries such as large retail companies. By analyzing the retention rates of employees in various retail sectors and other geographic locations, business leaders may be better prepared to use this new knowledge to improve employee retention rates, improve productivity, expand business growth, and increase profitability. Future researchers also could consider examining the ways that retaining employees could

improve retail services and profitability. Recommendations for further qualitative research also include exploring effective strategies in broader geographical locations and different type of retail industry or other service industries.

Various variables influence employees' retention rates, so qualitative researchers might consider examining the relationship between multiple variables and employees' retention rates. Future qualitative researchers also should consider examining the relationship between retention rates and variables such as compensation, job dissatisfaction, business leadership and ethics, turnover intentions, reward programs, opportunities for education and training, communication, work-life balance, and employee engagement programs. Research focusing on retention rates might provide business leaders with knowledge to improve employees' retention rates, promote productivity and business growth, and increase profitability.

Reflection

While completing this dissertation, my knowledge and understanding of doctoral-level research grew. I was overwhelmed by the quantity of data and the amount of time that the various stages of the process required. However, I was reminded to be consistent, manage my time, and remain focused on my goal of completing the study. Obtaining a doctoral degree does not mean that I know every aspect about the subject that I investigated. What it does mean, however, is that I was able to identify a problem, obtain an in-depth understanding of a logical method to research the issue, analyze various approaches, and apply a solution based on academic and practical firmness and accuracy. The development of this doctoral study was demanding in that it obliged me to be more

prudent and adopt the most workable approaches to address the issue. Business leaders should look at leadership styles and implement effective and inexpensive retention strategies that other business leaders have used to reduce the turnover rates of entry-level retail employees.

Conclusion

Improving the retention rates of entry-level employees in the small retail sector is crucial to maintaining productivity, increasing business growth and profits, and reducing turnover intentions. The findings from the FGD and the interviews suggest that the participants believed that training, trust, mentoring, motivation, and incentives were effective strategies that would help to retain entry-level employees. However, retail business leaders continue to struggle to keep employees. Combs (2017) reported that some business leaders in the small retail sector lack the strategies to improve the retention rates of employees. Similarly, Afif et al. (2015) concluded that employees' turnover rates can cost businesses approximately $2.7 billion annually in direct (e.g., exit interviews, recruitment and training of new employees, and compensation) and indirect expenses (e.g., loss of valuable organizational knowledge and decreased employee motivation). Some business leaders in the small retail sector lack the strategies to improve the retention rates of entry-level employees. More research is needed to identify other strategies that will be effective in improving the retention rates of entry-level employees in the small retail sector.

Face-to-face semistructured interviews were conducted with six small retail business leaders in Accra, Ghana. A focus group comprising three of the interviewees

also provided data for the study. I triangulated the data by using audio recordings of the participants' responses to the interview questions, member checking, and the three-member FGD. Results of this single-case, descriptive study affirmed that the five strategies of training, trust, mentoring, motivation, and incentives were effective in improving the retention rates of entry-level employees. Tam and Le (2018) linked financial loss, reduced competitiveness, and decreased profitability to high turnover rates.

The implications of this study for positive social change include improvements in employees' incomes and business expansion, both of which may contribute to additional tax revenue that will benefit hospitals, schools, infrastructure projects, and job creation. Retaining entry-level employees is crucial to business success. I recommend that retail business leaders, researchers, and business owners use the findings and recommendations to gain insight into and develop effective retention strategies to improve their own retention rates of employees and business practices.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Participant's Numeric Identifier: _____

Date of Interview: _____

1. I will introduce myself to the participant(s).

2. Will give each participant a copy of the consent form

3. Will go over contents, answer questions, and concerns of the participant(s).

4. Will ask permission to turn on the audio-recording device. Turn on the audio-recording device.

5. Will introduce participant(s) with an alias (P1, P2, etc.) and coded identification; note the date and time.

6. Begin the interview question with P1; follow through on the final question.

7. Will follow up with additional questions and collect company documents.

8. Will end interview sequence; discuss member checking with the participant(s).

9. Will recap contact numbers for follow up questions and concerns from participants.

10. Will thank the participant(s) for their part in the study.

End of the interview protocol.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. What type of training do you offer to retain entry-level employees and reduce employee turnover?

2. What strategies have you used to retain entry-level employees?

3. What are the most effective strategies that you have used to retain entry-level employees?

4. What strategies do you consider the least effective in retaining entry-level employees?

5. How do you measure the effectiveness of your strategy to retain entry-level employees?

6. What obstacles do you face when attempting to implement your retention strategies?

7. Do you have any additional information to share about your strategies to retain entry-level employees?

Appendix C: Focus Group Protocol

Participant's Numeric Identifier: _____

Date of Session: _____

Focus Group Questions

1. What are the most effective strategies you have used in retaining entry-level employees?

2. What strategies do you consider the least effective in retaining entry-level employees?

3. How do you measure the retention strategy effectiveness for entry-level employees?