2020

Employee Retention Strategies in U.S. College and Universities

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Walden University
2020

Abstract

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MSA, Central Michigan University, 1991

BA, Saint Leo University, 1985

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Employee turnover in U.S. colleges and universities negatively affects productivity, resources, employee morale, and job satisfaction. The failure of U.S. colleges and universities' leaders to retain a viable and productive workforce negatively affects students' educational success and learning opportunities. Grounded in the motivation-hygiene theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies college and university leaders used to retain employees. Data were collected through semistructured interviews with 5 university leaders in 5 higher-education institutions in the Midwest region of the United States, and a review of publicly available organizational documents and university websites. Data were analyzed using Yin's 5-phase data analysis process, which revealed 3 major emergent themes: employees' compensation and benefits strategy, organizational employee commitment strategy, and employee feedback systems to improve working conditions strategy. A key recommendation is that university leaders increase salaries, benefits, and professional development opportunities to improve employee retention rates. The implications for positive social change include the potential for leaders of U.S. universities and colleges to improve the retention of instructors and support personnel, which may lead to enhanced learning experiences, outcomes, and graduation rates for students.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to my lovely and encouraging wife, Gayle R.

Simmons. Her unwavering and unfaltering support have propelled me to stay motivated

and inspired throughout my journey. I like to thank Dr. Elfred Anthony Pinkard, the 22nd

president of Wilberforce University, for his supportive and caring nature that helped me

to remain committed to my vision to complete my study. Also, I dedicate my doctoral

study in memory of Mary Ann Wood Simmons, my late spouse, who has moved on from

labor to reward and joined the cloud of witnesses on the other side. And finally, I

dedicate my study in memory of the Reverend Daniel L. Simmons, a very close friend

who was counted among the "Emanuel Nine" of Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal

Church, in Charleston, South Carolina; his life was shortened by the tragedy of hate but

extended from the grave by the outburst of eternal love.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Employee turnover can result in a shortage of skilled workers, a loss of productivity, and an increase in work disruptions that have a negative effect on economic growth (Selesho & Naile, 2014). Within the higher education environment, high employee turnover negatively affects students' education success and learning opportunities (Garibay, 2015). Although organizational leaders cannot totally eradicate employee turnover, they can implement employee retention strategies to reduce employee turnover (Garibay, 2015; Sandhya & Kumar, 2014). In this qualitative case study, I explored employee retention strategies university leaders use to reduce employee turnover in U.S. colleges and universities.

Background of the Problem

Employee retention is crucial to an organization's ability to achieve its strategic objectives and financial stability. Yet, it is a significant challenge for organizations that operate in a competitive business environment (Sandhya & Kumar, 2014). The loss of talented employees causes companies to experience significant negative financial consequences (Sandhya & Kumar, 2014). Organizational leaders waste valuable resources when they spend excessive time, money, and energy recruiting replacement employees, especially when the newly hired workers do not fit the required skill set of that organization (Craig, 2015). Figueroa (2015) indicated that other hidden costs associated with employee turnover negatively affect an organization, such as reduction in productivity, skill drain, and poor morale for the remaining employees.

Retention of employees in also a problem for higher education institutions. The high turnover rate of academic staff can have a considerable impact on students and remaining staff members when vacant positions exist because of a lack of available qualified personnel (Selesho & Naile, 2014). Employee retention strategies are an integral part of a successful organization's vision, values, and policies (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Pemberton-Jones, 2015). Creative strategies that go beyond pay and benefits will have a positive impact on attracting and retaining committed employees (Sandhya & Kumar, 2014). Alshammari, Al Qaied, Al-Mawali, and Matalqa (2016) concluded that when employees find an organization to fit with their values, personalities, skills, and job satisfaction, their intentions to remain viable employees of the organization increases. To retain valuable employees, employers should implement strategies to include factors that promote organizational attractiveness (Alshammari et al., 2016). Alshammari et al. suggested that because of mixed results associated with employee retention strategies, additional research on employee retention strategies in higher education could reduce employee turnover.

Problem Statement

Employee turnover in U.S. colleges and universities negatively affects productivity, resources, employee morale, and job satisfaction (Alshammari et al., 2016). In 2018, the turnover rate of education sector employees was 10%, while the total separation rate was 18.5% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). The general business problem was that employee turnover in U.S. colleges and universities lowers financial performance because of increased costs associated with employee replacement,

recruitment, and training. The specific business problem was that some college and university leaders lack strategies to retain employees.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some college and university leaders use to retain employees. The targeted population was leaders of five colleges or universities in the Midwest region of the United States who implemented strategies to retain employees. The implications for positive social change from this study include the potential for leaders of U.S. colleges and universities to improve the learning experiences, outcomes, and graduation rates of students because of retaining high-performing employees. Leaders of colleges and universities create an environment for improved student learning, outcomes, and graduation rates through retaining instructors and support personnel (Cloutier et al., 2015). College and university leaders contribute to society through graduating students who possess a greater potential to improve their livelihood, their communities, and society (Marginson, 2016).

Nature of the Study

The three research methods are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (McKim, 2017). I selected the qualitative research method and used open discourse and a holistic approach to gather information from participants to explore employee retention strategies in U.S. colleges and universities. Researchers who use the qualitative research method use open discourse to take a holistic view of the topic to discover what is occurring or has occurred (Park & Park, 2016). Researchers use the quantitative research method to perform hypothesis testing to achieve the research goals in controlled and contrived

studies to predict and control phenomena (Park & Park, 2016). The quantitative research method approach was not an appropriate method for this research study because I did not plan to test hypotheses or examine the relationships or differences among variables associated with employee retention. Researchers who use the mixed-methods approach include elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to address the research problem (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). The mixed research method approach was not an appropriate method for this research study because I did not test hypotheses associated with solving employee retention problems.

I considered three research designs: case study, phenomenology, and ethnography. I selected the case study design. Researchers using a case study design investigate single or multiple phenomena within a bounded system and real-world setting and gather and analyze several sources of data (Yin, 2018). A multiple case study design was appropriate for my research study because I explored employee retention strategies at five higher education locations. Researchers who use a phenomenological design focus on the meaning of the lived experience of participants, seeking to understand individuals and their interactions with other people and their environment (Larkin, Shaw, & Flowers, 2019). The phenomenological design was not a suitable design for this study because I did not explore the meaning of participants' lived experiences. Researchers who use an ethnographic design focus on the behaviors, beliefs, or language of a culture-sharing group in a social context (Tickle, 2017). The ethnographic design was not an appropriate design for this study because I did not focus on participants in a social or cultural context.

Research Question

What strategies do college and university leaders use to retain employees?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use to retain employees?

2. How, if at all, do you tailor your retention strategies to different employee classifications, such as faculty, administrators, and trade professionals?

3. What strategies do you use to improve employee satisfaction?

4. What strategies do you use to minimize employee turnover?

5. What strategies were effective in retaining employees?

6. How do you gauge the effectiveness of your strategies to retain employees?

7. What additional information would you like to share about strategies you use to retain employees?

Conceptual Framework

I used the motivation-hygiene theory as the conceptual framework for this study. Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) originated the motivation-hygiene theory, which is also known as Herzberg's two-factor theory. Herzberg et al. developed the motivation-hygiene theory in response to the question, What does the worker want from his job? Motivation-hygiene theorists suggested that different work factors influence whether employees will be satisfied or dissatisfied with their job and those factors will affect their decision to stay or leave (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959). Motivation factors such as achievement, recognition, work, and responsibility lead to employee satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). Hygiene factors consisting of company policies,

supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions, salary, status, and security lead to employee dissatisfaction and possible employee turnover (Herzberg et al., 1959). The motivation-hygiene theory was as an effective lens for this study because motivation and hygiene factors might affect employee retention and leaders might incorporate both types of factors in the strategies they used to retain employees.

Operational Definitions

Employee job satisfaction: Employee job satisfaction is a measure of employees' contentedness with their jobs and facilities (Zhang, 2020).

Employee talent strategy: Employee talent strategy refers to the activities and processes involved in the systematic identification of a talent pool of high-potential and high-performing candidates to contribute to the organization's sustainability and competitive advantage (Narayanan, 2016).

Employee voluntary separation: Employee voluntary separation occurs when an employee decides to voluntarily leave the organization (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018a).

Hygiene factors: Hygiene factors are influences extrinsic to the job and include company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security (Herzberg, 1968).

Motivator factors: Motivator factors are influences intrinsic to the job, such as achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement (Herzberg, 1968).

Organizational attractiveness: Organizational attractiveness consists of factors that influence employees' view for the reasons they want to work for an organization. These factors consist of whether the employees view their organization as a good company to work for and whether they view it as appealing to their personal characteristics and contributing to their self-esteem and to their personal feeling of pride and achievement (Alshammari et al., 2016).

Retention method: Retention method is the process through which organizations try to keep employees (Alshammari et al., 2016).

Retention strategies: Retention strategies are organizational plans, policies, and approaches designed to achieve organizational grow with greater efficiency and innovation to accomplish long-lasting strategic business objectives (Sandhya & Kumar, 2014).

Talent management: Talent management is the process of defining and evaluating employee talents and determining which talents are most important to the organizational structure (Craig, 2015).

Turnover intention: Turnover intention is the manifestation of the subjective probability that an individual will change his or her job within a certain time (Sandhya & Kumar, 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are beliefs about the design, implementation, and evaluation of an issue or problem that a researcher makes without the ability to validate the factual basis

(Mertens, 2016). I assumed that the participants would share their strategies for retaining employees honestly and accurately. I also assumed that the documents I reviewed were an accurate and true representation of organizations' employee retention plan and rates. The documents were from the education institutions' websites and elsewhere in the public domain. After completing the study, I found these assumptions to be correct.

Limitations

Limitations are barriers and weaknesses within a study that stem from biases, beliefs, and lack of knowledge (Singh, 2015). One limitation of this study was the small sample size drawn from five colleges and universities. The geographic region, the Midwest region of the United States, was a limitation as well. The eligibility requirement that participants must be leaders who used effective strategies to retain employees was another limitation. Another limitation was that I did not explore the perspectives of mid- or lower-level employees, which might have yielded additional information regarding effective employee retention strategies. The narrow scope of this study means that its findings may have limited transferability.

Delimitations

Delimitations are characteristics and criteria used to determine the boundaries and scope of the study (Beck, 2014). My decision to restrict the study to colleges and universities located in the Midwest region of the United States limited the scope of this study. The small sample size consisting of five university leaders was another delimitation. I explored the strategies university leaders used to retain employees; therefore, I did not address other factors than might affect employee retention. In

addition, all the participants were upper-level institutional leaders. University leaders may delegate the authority to establish strategies for retention of employees to lower-level personnel; thus, obtaining the perspectives only of upper-level leaders delimits the study findings.

Significance of the Study

Leaders of U.S. colleges and universities improve productivity, financial stability, employee morale, and student outcomes through the implementation of effective employee retention strategies (Alshammari et al., 2016). The retention of employees remains a critical element of stability, growth, revenue, and positive student outcomes in colleges and universities because of lower employee replacement and training costs and improved instructor continuity in the classroom (Cloutier et al., 2015). Ahmad, Khan, and Haque (2020) stated that employers must adopt a two-prong approach consisting of hiring intelligent people and finding a way to retain those people in their organization. The findings of this study may be helpful to college and university leaders in developing approaches and strategies for retaining valuable employees. Using the findings, college and university leaders may be able to reduce employee turnover, thereby improving productivity, financial stability, employee morale, and student outcomes while reducing employee replacement costs. As such, the significance of this study is its potential contributions to business practice and implications for social change.

Contribution to Business Practice

University leaders benefit from gaining insight into effective strategies to reduce employee turnover rates and employee turnover costs (Guilding, Lamminmaki, &

McManus, 2014). Organizational leaders achieve success by gaining a competitive advantage, and one of the most valuable resources that can help their cause is the human resources they employ (Narayanan, Rajithakumar, & Menon, 2019). University and college leaders might benefit from this study's insights into effective strategies, such as compensation and benefits, organizational commitment, and employee feedback systems, used by other university leaders to maintain employee turnover levels below the U.S. national average. Contributions to business practices include the potential to improve employee productivity and reduce unnecessary personnel costs in colleges and universities. The retention of employees in colleges and universities is critical to educational institutions' stability and growth (Cloutier et al., 2015).

Implications for Social Change

University and college leaders might use the findings of this study to contribute to positive social change by implementing effective employee retention strategies. Leaders of institutions of higher learning face serious challenges as to whether they are preparing students who can effect positive social change and fulfill social and community responsibilities (Hayter & Cahoy, 2018). By retaining experienced instructors and support personnel, leaders of universities and colleges create an environment for improved student learning opportunities, outcomes, and graduation rates (Garibay, 2015). Maintaining instructor continuity in the classroom is a means for leaders of universities and colleges to improve students' learning experience (Cloutier et al., 2015). Leaders of colleges and universities contribute to society through improved student learning and outcomes because graduating students possess a greater potential to improve their

livelihood, their community, and society (Marginson, 2016). Educational leaders provide

necessary training in skills and occupations and thus produce the needed competent

personnel for maintaining not only different specialized jobs, but also employees with the

skills to effect positive social change (Aja, 2020). College graduates have more

employment opportunities, earn higher wages, and contribute more time and resources to

community and civic organizations than people who do not hold a college degree

(Stephens, Brannon, Markus, & Nelson, 2015). As such, the implications for positive

social change from this study include the potential for leaders of U.S. universities and

colleges to improve the learning experiences, outcomes, and graduation rates of students

through the retention of instructors and support personnel.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies

university leaders used to improve employee retention. The strategies I used to conduct

the literature review included searching electronic databases from Walden University

Library for peer-reviewed journal articles, government publications, reports, and

scholarly books. I accessed electronic databases, such as Business Source Complete,

Google Scholar, ProQuest Central, ABI/INFORM Collection, Emerald Insight, SAGE

Journals, Education Source, ERIC, Taylor and Francis Online, and ScienceDirect. The

specific keywords I used in performing my search of the literature were *employee*

retention strategies, *retention strategies in educational environments*, *turnover*,

involuntary turnover, *voluntary turnover*, *job satisfaction*, *job dissatisfaction*, *motivation*,

motivation-hygiene theory, *hierarchy of need theory*, *expectancy theory*, *human*

motivation theory, *work environment*, *turnover intention*, *leadership on turnover intention*, *organizational commitment*, *organizational culture*, *employee compensation*, *job stress*, *work engagement*, *job performance*, *rewards and recognition*, *work-life balance*, *staff turnover*, *faculty turnover*, *organizational perception*, *employee turnover costs*, *employee engagement*, *employee benefits*, and *employee commitment*. The sources used in this study are (a) 177 peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles, (b) three dissertations, (c) two conference proceedings, (d) three government sources, and (e) six seminal books. Of the 191 sources used, 92.7% were peer-reviewed sources. Furthermore, 127 of the sources have publication dates from August 2015--May 2020, 24 sources have publication dates from January 2015--July 2015, and 24 sources have publication dates of 2014 or prior. Seventy-four sources are unique to the literature review.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

I used Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory as the conceptual framework for this qualitative study, referred to throughout this literature review as Herzberg's two-factor theory. Herzberg et al. based the motivation-hygiene theory of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction on their research on employees' attitude about their jobs. Herzberg et al. interviewed a total of 203 participants, all of whom had managerial or professional roles as accountants and engineers. Herzberg (1974) suggested that different work factors impact job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Factors that make people satisfied at work relate to the contents of the job whereas factors that make people unhappy at work relate to poor treatment on the job (Herzberg, 1974). Herzberg et al.

analyzed 14 factors and classified the factors into two categories: job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. They identified the job satisfaction factors as motivators and the job dissatisfaction factors as hygiene. The job satisfaction factors consisted of achievement, recognition for achievement, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. The job dissatisfaction factors consisted of company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions, salary, status, and security. Herzberg et al. concluded that the absence of motivators in a job does not lead to dissatisfaction, but the presence of motivators does create satisfaction, Also, hygiene factors can prevent dissatisfaction but do not contribute to satisfaction.

Although scholars have criticized Herzberg's two-factor theory, the theory is still widely renowned as a practical approach for motivating employees (Tuch & Hornbaek, 2015). For example, Masum, Azad, and Beh (2015) identified eight similar but different factors associated with job satisfaction among academics. The eight factors Masum et al. identified were compensation package, career growth, supervisory support, working conditions, team cohesion, job security, training and development, and organizational culture and policy.

Motivation. Herzberg et al. (1959) premised that motivation factors refer to job content. As such, these factors are intrinsic to the job itself. These motivators propel employees to perform a good job. Dartey-Baah and Amoako (2011) suggested that leaders use Herzberg's two-factor theory as a motivator for employees to do a good job by allowing employees greater responsibility for planning and controlling their work. The concept is that employees will strive to do their best when they have some level of input

in the work that they do. Herzberg (1968) suggested that employees need motivators that give them positive satisfaction to perform at their best. However, Hackman and Oldham (1976) criticized Herzberg's model as methodologically incorrect by assuming that all employees will react in an identical manner to the same motivator.

Manjunatha and Manohar (2015) indicated that motivation represents an unsatisfied need that creates a state of tension or disequilibrium, causing the individual to move in a goal-directed pattern to restore the state of equilibrium. In their research to determine whether selected motivational factors such as increase in salary, incentives and rewards, timely promotions, and appreciation letters made employees in educational institutions in Bangalore feel satisfied, Manjunatha and Manohar concluded that the incentives had a positive impact on individual performance. However, incentives and rewards and appreciation letters made the employees feel the happiest. The results of the study supported Herzberg's two-factor theory.

Tuch and Hornbaek (2015) conducted a study of user experience to investigate Herzberg et al.'s (1959) results of hygiene factors contributing to dissatisfaction. Tuch and Hornbaek adopted Herzberg et al.'s methodology to analyze 303 events, in which users felt good (156) or bad (147) about their smartphone use. Tuch and Hornbaek used the original questions in Herzberg et al.'s interview guide. Tuch and Hornbaek concluded that Herzberg et al. suggested that users' positive attitude toward an interactive product stem from other factors than those leading to negative attitudes. Sandhe and Joshi (2017), in a study of 75 teaching staff in private universities in Vadodara, India, concluded that negative factors such work and environment, recognition, and pay and benefits did have

an adverse impact on employees' attitude. In Tuch and Hornbaek's study, motivators did

enable positive user experiences, but the absence of positive experiences did not lead to

negative experiences. Tuch and Hornbaek supported Herzberg et al.'s conclusion that the

absence of motivators in a job does not lead to dissatisfaction. In contrast, Sandhe and

Joshi suggested that negative factors do lead to employee dissatisfaction.

Hygiene. In the introduction to the edition of *The Motivation to Work*, Herzberg

et al. (1959) questioned the use of the term *hygiene* to identify environmental factors.

Although some organizations, such as AT&T and Texas Instruments, elected to use the

term *maintenance* instead of *hygiene*, other companies had implemented positive changes

affecting hygiene conditions (Herzberg et al., 1959). Most employees refer to hygiene

factors as job discomforts, primarily because they have little ability to change the

conditions. Samuel and Chipunza (2013) concluded in their research on the attrition and

retention of senior academics at institutions of higher learning in South Africa that

individual salary and other financial fringe benefits were the only variable that did not

positively influence academic staff to move from their previous employment. That is,

salary and financial fringe benefits did not have a positive impact on employee retention.

Hays (1999) conveyed that if managers reward performance with only money, they

would be losing the substance of retention because employees want more than money as

a motivator. Samuel and Chipunza as well as Hays supported Herzberg's two-factor

theory. Herzberg et al. referred to hygiene as *dissatisfiers*, a term that usually refers to the

context of employees' environment instead of job performance issues. Although Samuel

and Chipunza found the two-factor theory relevant to their research on employees in the

education sector, other researchers have pointed out problems with the theory's utility. Bellott and Tutor (1990), for instance, indicated that the problems with Herzberg et al.'s work are that the research occurred in 1959—too long ago to be pertinent—and did not cover teachers. Teachers are educated but receive low salaries; therefore, salary is a strong motivating factor. Therefore, Bellott and Tutor did not agree with Herzberg et al.'s assessment that salary is a dissatisfier. In the case of teachers, salary is a motivator (Bellott & Tutor, 1990).

Tuch and Hornbaek (2015) suggested that factors behind negative attitudes would only affect a user's experience if they go below an acceptable level. For example, users might not appreciate the flawless functioning of their smartphone but as soon as the phone does not work, they would consider the experience as a negative (Tuch & Hornbaek, 2015). In this instance, hygiene is essential to avoid a negative experience but does not create positive experiences (Tuch & Hornbaek, 2015). Tuch and Hornbaek agreed with Herzberg's conclusion that hygiene factors can prevent dissatisfaction but do not contribute to satisfaction. Mehboob, Bhutto, Azhar, and Butt (2009) suggested that job hygiene factors were more influential for leaders attempting to predict job satisfaction than job motivators. Therefore, Mehboob et al. contradicted Herzberg's conception that only content factors tend to result in a positive attitude towards the job.

Criticisms of the two-factor theory. House and Wigdor (1967) identified three criticisms of Herzberg's two-factor theory. The criticisms were that Herzberg et al. (1959) did not methodologically bind the study, the research was faulty, and the study's results were inconsistent with past evidence concerning satisfaction and motivation

(House & Wigdor, 1967). Other scholars have criticized the theory based on its cultural context and contradictions in what constitute motivation and hygiene factors (Mehboob et al., 2009). Vijayakumar and Saxena (2015) suggested that one of the difficulties of Herzberg et al.'s two-factor theory is that organizations must deal with one set of factors for increasing job satisfaction and an entirely different set of factors for reducing job dissatisfaction. Therefore, the theory is impractical because distinguishing between hygiene and motivator factors is not so simple and straightforward as they are highly related (Vijayakumar & Saxena, 2015). Vijayakumar and Saxena concluded that Herzberg et al.'s two-factor approach is insufficient for leaders to explain the job satisfaction and workplace motivation because monetary factors do play a significant role in job satisfaction.

  Methodologically bound. Vroom (1964) criticized Herzberg et al. (1959) because Herzberg et al. did not test the stories of the interviewees' recount of satisfying and dissatisfying job events. Vroom argued that storytelling methods might have little impact on the actual consequence of managerial practice. Vroom (1966) further indicated that people tend to take credit for things that go well on the job but will blame their failures on the job environment. Vroom (1964) also censured Herzberg et al. because he believed that their study was too dependent on the content and context of the work roles of workers instead on their actual work (see also Osabiya, 2015). However, one of Herzberg et al.'s purposes was to gather facts from the users of an existing system to gain knowledge on how to improve the system. Specifically, Herzberg wanted to ascertain

what made employees feel good about their jobs and what made them feel bad (Osabiya, 2015).

Faulty research. House and Wigdor (1967) suggested that Herzberg's two-factor theory consisted of procedural deficiencies. The procedural deficiencies were Herzberg et al.'s (1959) use of categories to measure job satisfiers and hygiene factors. House and Wigdor suggested that the rater has a responsibility to interpret the data instead of using the coding as the basis for completely determining the data outcome. For example, a review of the dimension of supervision should include categories such as supervisor competent, supervisor incompetent, and supervisor showed favoritism. In this situation, the rater must interpret the supervisor's behavior.

Inconsistency with previous evidence. Du, Lai, and Lo (2010), in their analysis of job satisfaction of academic staff in nine universities of China, found that Chinese university professors exhibit a basic level of job satisfaction with a high level of dissatisfaction with salary. In several studies, hygiene factors related more significantly to job satisfaction as opposed to job motivators, which contradicts Herzberg et al.'s (1959) assertion that motivation factors result in a positive attitude towards one's job (Padilla-Velez, 1993). Wong and Heng (2009) found in their study of Herzberg's two-factor theory that policy and salary were a major source of job satisfaction among Malaysian academics, while working conditions and interpersonal relationship were major contributors to job dissatisfaction.

Culture context. Matei and Abrudan (2016), in their study of Herzberg's two-factor theory, disclosed that in Romania, the cultural context has a significant influence

on motivation and hygiene factors. Specifically, Herzberg's two-factor theory relates to an environment where power distance is small. However, in other countries, such as Romania, which has a large power distance, supervision should not be a hygiene factor because it is dependent on stronger individuals as a fundamental need (Matei & Abrudan, 2016). Matei and Abrudan indicated that cultural values influence how an individual perceives and interprets a situation and will have an influence on behavior and respectively on individual motivation. Geren (2011) suggested that some cultures promote individualist behavior and others, collectivist behavior; therefore, a person should not apply the same motivational factors to the different cultures and expect the same results. Greckhamer (2011) noted that male-dominated cultures focus on material possessions and additional revenues, while feminine cultures place emphasis on working conditions, job satisfaction, and employee participation.

Supporting and Contrasting Theories

      Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow (1943), in the hierarchy of needs theory, identified five basic needs or goals that humans strive to satisfy for motivation. These needs are physiological, safety, love (affiliation), self-esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). Maslow placed these needs in a hierarchical structure to indicate that there is a priority order to achieving satisfaction. However, Maslow also suggested that the reversal of the hierarchical order could also occur if an individual loses the desire to achieve the higher goal and becomes satisfied with a lower goal. For example, if an individual perceives that his or her salary is more important than self-esteem, then the safety need will exceed the self-esteem need. Herzberg et al. (1959)

identified salary as a hygiene factor; therefore, in such cases, salary becomes a motivator.

Maslow contended that the average person is most often partially satisfied and partially

unsatisfied in all of one's wants. Maslow's assertion supported Herzberg's two-factor

theory in that employees never achieve complete satisfaction; rather, they experience

both motivation and hygiene factors, but this fact does not mean they are dissatisfied with

their jobs.

Although Herzberg et al. (1959) identified motivation factors as satisfiers and

hygiene factors as dissatisfiers, Herzberg et al. supported Maslow's (1943) basic need

theory that most people are often partially satisfied and partially unsatisfied. Maslow

advised that the moment that a person satisfies any need, that the need no longer acts as a

motivator for that person. Table 1 includes a comparison of Maslow's hierarchy of needs

to Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory.

Table 1

Comparison of Maslow's Hierarchy Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Maslow's hierarchy of needs	Herzberg's two-factor theory
Physiological	Working conditions
Security	Salary
	Recognition
	Company policy and administration
Affiliation	Interpersonal relations-supervision
	Supervision-technical
Esteem	Work itself
	Responsibility
Self-actualization	Achievement
	Advancement

As Table 1 illustrates, Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene

theory have similar impacts on employee performance.

Vroom's expectancy theory. Vroom (1964) modeled the expectancy theory of motivation based on the concepts of valence, expectancy, and force. Vroom suggested that valence referred to the idea that at any given time, a person has preferences of desired outcomes in their experiences. For the concept of expectancy, Vroom advised that the specific outcomes experienced by an individual are dependent not only on the choices that the person makes but also on the events that are beyond their control. Finally, Vroom's concept of force takes into consideration the behavior of an individual based on the choices they have that could maximize their desired outcomes. Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation fosters a belief that an individual's effort will lead to a given performance (expectancy) and that performance will lead to attainment (force or instrumentality) for a desirable or undesirable reward (valance) for the individual (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Haque, Haque, and Islam (2014), in an assessment of Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation, concluded that when employees perceive there is a good relationship between performance and outcomes, the employees consider the result as a means of satisfying needs. Kanfer, Frese, and Johnson (2017) indicated that the expectancy theory is a cognitive theory by which individuals rationally weigh the personal benefits and costs of different options before selecting a goal or desired outcome that they can expect to maximize pleasure and minimize pain.

Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory of motivation and Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory differ on the factors that cause job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Specifically, Vroom indicated that some employees are satisfied, and others experience dissatisfaction regardless of the nature of their work roles. Employee

work role most conducive to job satisfaction appears to be one that provides high pay, substantial promotional opportunities, considerate and participative supervision, a chance to interact with one's peers, varied duties, and a high degree of control over work methods and work pace (Vroom, 1964). However, individuals differ significantly in their motives, values, and abilities and these differences probably have a significant bearing on their level of motivation (Vroom, 1964). Herzberg considered factors such as achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement as satisfiers and company policy, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions as dissatisfiers. Herzberg et al. (1959) found that what makes employees happy is what they do, or the way supervisors allowed them to use their skills and what makes employees unhappy depends on the way supervisors treat their employees.

One possible reason for the difference between Vroom (1964) and Herzberg et al. (1959) could be that employees focused more on the rewards they might receive under Vroom's expectancy theory. Whereas, employees motivated by the Herzberg's two-factor theory could be concerned with opportunities to demonstrate their abilities to perform their jobs (satisfiers) or conditions that discouraged or hindered them from performing their jobs (dissatisfiers). Another difference between Vroom and Herzberg et al. could be their assessment of the pay factor. Vroom suggested that salary is a crucial factor for employees and if the employees do not receive an adequate salary, they will disengage or began to look for other employment (Mapolisa, 2015). Herzberg et al. viewed salary as both a dissatisfier and satisfier but more of a job dissatisfier than a satisfier. Employee salary issue revolves around unfairness rather than the amount (Mapolisa, 2015).

Vroom's expectancy theory on motivations takes into consideration that that employees are individuals and have different needs as their motivators. Herzberg two-factor theory does not cater to individual differences and fails to realize that different employees have different needs as their motivators (Mapolisa, 2015). Vroom criticized Herzberg's two-factor theory as being too dependent on the content and context of the work roles instead of the idea that employees prefer specific outcomes from their behavior (Osabiya, 2015). However, as the researcher, I concur with Osabiya (2015) that Herzberg's two-factor theory focused on job-related satisfaction and dissatisfactions as a need-based model with the intent to provide managers with a framework to meet the complex needs of employees. Vroom was one of the major critics of Herzberg's two-factor theory.

McClelland's needs motivation theory. McClelland (1988) argued that people respond to four acquired needs that motivate them to act. The needs are the desire for achievement, power, affiliation, and avoidance regardless to age or culture. However, each person determines which need is the most dominant and use the need as the basis for his or her behavior. Once a person chose the prevailing need, the need influences a person's direction in life and degree of performance required to satisfy that need. McClelland's work was instrumental in understanding employee performance in organizations (Baumann, Hamin, Tung, & Hoadley, 2016).

McClelland's (1988) human motivation theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory have similar desired outcomes. Specifically, researchers and business leaders use McClelland's motivation theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory to recognize how managers influence employees. Although achievement motivation varies between

individuals, employees could use both approaches as motivators that lead to a positive impact on their attitude toward their job. In addition, Herzberg et al.'s (1959) satisfiers of recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement could be comparable to McClelland's need for power and affiliation. Herzberg et al.'s dissatisfiers of company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions could tie in with McClelland's avoidance need. McClelland's avoidance need refers to the fear of failure, rejection, and power that would relate to Herzberg's dissatisfiers. Dissatisfiers are negative experiences. In general, employees try to avoid negative experiences especially with their supervisors and fellow workers.

 Baumann et al. (2016) commented that McClelland's (1988) work might have limited utilization because most of the research involved Western countries whose social and cultural norms differ significantly from the norms in Asian countries. The significant differences were employees' competitive attitude, willingness to serve, and the speed or pace of work in Asian countries versus Western countries (Baumann et al., 2016). In their study, Baumann et al. collected 4,000 questionnaires from eight countries: Korea, China. Germany, Indonesia, India, Japan, United States, and the United Kingdom to explain the performance of individual workers using McClelland's needs for achievement and power in Asian cultures. Baumann et al. concluded that Asian countries with emerging markets (Indonesia and India) were at full performance, Asian countries such as (China, Japan, and Korea) were at 90% of performance, and Western nations with highly developed markets (United States, United Kingdom, and Germany) were only at 20-30 % of performance. However, Western countries' managers could use the results to understand

employee issues better to improve employee performance. Herzberg et al. (1959) provided managers with a framework to address the reasons why employees may not perform at their full potential.

Employee turnover. Employee turnover, whether involuntary or voluntary causes disruption to the workplace and has a negative impact on employee morale and productivity (Figueroa, 2015). Involuntary turnover occurs when organizational leaders discharge or terminate an employee's relationship with the organization (Parker & Gerbasi, 2016). Involuntary turnover can occur for reasons beyond the employee's control such as the business closes or an organization chooses to downsize or outsource work (Parker & Gerbasi, 2016). In most instances, involuntary turnover occurs because the employee is not a good fit for the organization or is a poor performer. Voluntary turnover occurs when the employee decides to leave the organization. The employee may leave for different reasons, such as career advancement, family concerns, or job dissatisfaction (Rothausen, Henderson, Arnold, & Malshe, 2017). Organizations will experience employee turnover. However, turnover can be very costly to organizations because of the hidden employee turnover costs to the organizations (Naiemah, Aris, Sakdan, & Razli, 2017). Employee turnover costs could include costs for employee separation, recruiting and attracting personnel, personnel selection, hiring, and lost productivity (Guilding et al., 2014). Turnover cost is a hidden cost to an organization because managers do not include in the budget for involuntary or voluntary costs of employee turnover. Marsden (2016) suggested that each employee that leaves cost the organization 1-1.2 times his or her annual salary. Marsden used the example of an

employee earning $50,000 and concluded that the organization could spend $50,000 to

$60,000 to replace the individual. With such a substantial financial impact on an

organization, Marsden suggested that organization leaders should take a vital interest in

why their most valuable assets want to leave the organization.

Employee turnover in higher education. High turnover among administrators

and faculty has become a cultural norm within higher education institutions (Figueroa,

2015). Jo (2008) concluded that for higher educations, turnover rates have been

disruptive and costly and that educational institutions could spend $68 million because of

employee turnover. The $68 million costs do not include the hidden costs of reduction of

productivity, skill drain, and poor morale for the remaining employees. Takawira,

Coetzee, and Schreuder (2014) noted that turnover also had a significant impact on the

physical, mental, and emotional state of the employees.

Employee turnover in higher education also included university presidents.

University presidents are vulnerable to involuntary as well as voluntary turnover. Eckel

and Kezar (2016) surmised that because university presidents play pivotal roles in

fundraising, budget management, strategic planning, and working with the local

community, state, and governing boards that they are under extreme pressure. Harris and

Ellis (2018) studied the presidential terms of 1,029 university presidents of which there

were 775 presidential turnovers from 1988 to 2016. Sixty-nine of the 775 presidents were

involuntary separated and dismissed from the institution for reasons such as financial

controversy, loss of board confidence, poor judgment, athletics controversy, loss of

faculty confidence, loss of system confidence, or poor fit (Harris & Ellis, 2018). Harris

and Ellis (2018) concluded in his research that factors contributing to university presidents' involuntary turnover were the political conflict between governing board and university president, internal pressures from the professoriate and subunits within the organization, external pressures from community stakeholders, and fiscal stress.

Retaining the best employees and minimizing turnover should be the goals of most organizations (Nawaz & Pangil, 2016). The employee turnover phenomenon is an ongoing challenge and a primary concern of employers (Abubakar, Chauhan, & Kura, 2015). Employee turnover in higher education could negatively affect staff, faculty, and institution operations (Figueroa, 2015). Abubakar et al. noted that 7.7% of the full-time faculty members from various universities and colleges had left for other institutions. More than 20,000 professionals, including medical personnel and teaching staff from various universities and colleges, leave the African continent annually to look for employment in other countries (Abubakar et al., 2015). Nawaz and Pangil (2016) findings supported the hypothesis that a negative relationship existed between salary and turnover intention. Nawaz and Pangil supported Herzberg et al.'s (1959) position that wages lead to job dissatisfaction. Jung and Shin (2015) stated that knowing how to attract competent administrative staff, how to motivate them, and how to evaluate and reward them is critical to an organization's survival. Jung and Shin assessed the impact that the work environment and the nature of work had on the administrative staff members' job satisfaction and concluded that these two factors had a significant influence on the staff's performance. Staff members who had global skills and good problem-solving skills were less satisfied than staff members who did not possess these skills. Herzberg et al. viewed

work environment as a job satisfier but considered nature of work as a job dissatisfier. One of the possible reasons for the difference could be that Jung and Shin's participants were clerical, and the participants in Herzberg et al.'s study were professionals.

Job satisfaction. Wong and Heng (2009) concluded that a direct relationship exists between job satisfaction and employees' intention to remain in higher education. A 5% increase in employee retention could lead to a 10% reduction in cost and could further result in as much as 65% increase in productivity (Wong & Heng, 2009). Iqbal, Ehsan, Rizwan, and Noreen (2014) defined job satisfaction as an individual's cognitive, evaluative, and affective reasons towards his or her job. An employee's satisfaction with his or her career will influence whether the employee remains with an organization or quit. Iqbal et al. concluded that the results of their study confirmed that a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention existed. Iqbal et al. supported Herzberg et al. (1959) results in that employees are more apt to quit when they experience dissatisfaction with their job.

In their study, Ali and Zia-ur-Rehman (2014) evaluated 135 of 150 questionnaires related to job design on employee performance and job satisfaction. The researchers concluded that job satisfaction has a positive effect on employee performance. However, job design, such as skill variety, task identity, task significance, job autonomy, and feedback can have either a positive or a negative impact on employee performance, which affects an employee's degree of satisfaction (Ali & Zia-ur-Rehman, 2014; Zhang, 2020). Ali and Zia-ur-Rehman stated that their research indicated that job design played a significant role in employee job satisfaction and performance. The critical factor of the

job design was job autonomy, which refers to the degree and liberty the employee could plan his or her tasks, take decisions according to the situation to achieve their work objectives (Ali & Zia-ur-Rehman, 2014). Siengthai and Pila-Ngarm (2016) revealed that job redesign would also improve job satisfaction of employee performance. Siengthai and Pila-Ngarm cautioned that organization leaders must solicit employees input in the job redesign effort because without employees' involvement, employees' performance may suffer in the first stage of change. Employees who participated in their job design or redesign felt compel to improving their job satisfaction and performance. Although Herzberg et al. (1959) did not include job design or redesign as one of the factors that shaped the two-factor theory, work itself and responsibility could have a similar outcome on an employee's turnover intention.

Zhang (2020) linked employee job satisfaction to their happiness, productivity, and success at work. Employees derive a deep meaning from their work and the sense of gratification that sustain their morale and further increase their level of satisfaction with the job (Harris, Hinds, Manansingh, Rubino, & Morote, 2016). Harris et al. (2016) surveyed 59 respondents from three higher education institutions to determine if servant leadership attributed to employee job satisfaction and intention to remain with the institutions.

Servant leadership is an approach focusing on leadership where the leader is attentive to the concerns of their followers, empathize with them, and nurture them (Northouse, 2016). Harris et al. (2016) revealed that a strong correlation between servant leadership and job satisfaction existed that influenced whether an employee remains with

the organization or quit. Herzberg et al. (1959) suggested that if an employee associated supervision technical as the supervisor being competent and fair, that the supervisory relation would be a positive experience. Such an experience would be like servant leadership and lead to job satisfaction. If the supervisor was unwilling to help the employee or considered as nagging the employee, the employee would possibly leave the organization because of job dissatisfaction.

Bateh and Heyliger (2014) examined the impact that the three leadership styles had on job satisfaction of faculty members in a state university system. Bateh and Heyliger concluded in their study the following: (a) faculty members who identified transformational leadership as authoritative experienced an increase in job satisfaction, (b) faculty members who identified transactional leadership as dominant also experienced an increase in job satisfaction, and (c) faculty members who recognized passive or avoidant leadership as dominant experience a decrease in job satisfaction. I contend that the results of the study suggested that the style of guidance or supervision has a direct impact on employee job satisfaction. Herzberg et al. (1959) considered supervision as a hygiene factor that had an adverse effect on job satisfaction, which indicated the supervisor and employee did not have a favorable relationship. However, leaders with proactive leadership style leadership could increase employee job satisfaction.

Basak and Govender (2015), in a review of existing literature to identify core factors affecting university academics' job satisfaction, suggested a theoretical framework that could contribute to faculty job satisfaction, an increase in employee performance, and overall institution effectiveness and productivity. University leaders

should strive to create a work environment that fosters job satisfaction to help retain employees. Employees are more likely to remain with an organization if they are satisfied with their job and the organization. The nine factors that Basak and Govender suggested affect university academics job satisfaction were salary and compensation, work itself, administration and management, facilities, working conditions, promotional opportunities, individual's personal characteristics, supervision, and others. Basak and Govender included in the others factor category issues such as job security, commitments, workload, organization vision, result feedback and motivation, and work burden. Matei and Abrudan (2016) in agreement with Basak and Govender concluded that employees' job satisfaction will result in an increase in employee performance and productivity. However, for employees to work at full potential, employers must satisfy additional factors such as financial aspects, correlation between effort and rumination, organization of work, work itself, working hours, and working conditions.

Although Basak and Govender (2015) job satisfaction framework consisted of a combination of Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivator and hygiene factors, the framework supports Herzberg et al. conclusion that the absence of motivators in a job does not leads to dissatisfactions and hygiene factors can prevent dissatisfaction. Matei and Abrudan (2016) differed with Herzberg et al. that the factor relations with peer was a motivator instead of a hygiene factor. University leaders should consider the combined framework of Herzberg et al.'s dual factors, Basak and Govender, and Matei and Abrudan's job satisfaction factors to reduce employee turnover.

Employee Incentive to Work

Herzberg et al. (1959) proposed the question "what does the worker want from his job?" To answer that question, Herzberg et al. asked the participants of the study, what they like or dislike about their jobs. Herzberg et al. suggested that different work factors determined whether employees are satisfied or dissatisfied with their job. Herzberg et al. identified these work factors as motivators or hygiene factors.

Employees that are satisfied with their job will likely remain with the organization. Employees who experience dissatisfaction with their job will either adjust their attitudes toward their position or seek employment elsewhere (Grissom, Viano, & Selin, 2015). Employees have certain expectations when they agree to work for an organization (Kaur & Sharma, 2019). Although employers establish incentives to motivate and increase their employees' performance, workers also have their idea of the incentives that will allow them to remain with the organization (Olubusayo, Stephen, & Maxwell, 2014). Organizations can consider a variety of ways to reward the employees for their performance, but the organization should also find the best incentives to retain the employees since different incentives could motivate different individuals (Olubusayo et al., 2014). Incentives can be financial or nonfinancial (Olubusayo et al., 2014). Financial incentives could consist of performance bonuses, pay increases, and employee stock. Nonfinancial incentives could comprise of awards, written recognition, plaques, and additional days off from work.

To remain with an organization, employees expect both financial and nonfinancial incentives. Herzberg et al. (1959) suggested that motivating factors are fundamental to

the employees' performance. Olubusayo et al. (2014) surveyed 150 workers in Ogun State government to assess whether the workers considered monetary or nonmonetary incentives as motivators to increase their performance and remain with the organization. Olubusayo et al. concluded that financial incentives, such as salaries, bonuses, and allowances motivated employees to improve their performance and stay with the organization; other incentives tend to have little motivational value if the monetary incentives are adequate. Olubusayo et al.'s results conflict with Herzberg et al. because Herzberg et al. concluded that salary was a hygiene factor instead of a motivating factor to influence employee performance. However, institutional leaders and supervisors must determine what incentives motivate employees to perform at their highest level that will result in employee retention.

Compensation and benefits. Voluntary turnover can be costly and disruptive. The costs of employee turnover can be higher than 100% of the annual salary for the vacated position (Bryant & Allen, 2013). The disruptive damage to the organization could be higher than the monetary cost. Disruptive costs could include employee morale problems, loss of organizational knowledge, productivity, and customer service (Bryant & Allen, 2013; Hawass, 2017). Employees' number one complaint associated with pay is pay inequity. Grissom et al. (2015) disclosed in their research that salary is one of the major reasons for teachers' turnover. Bhattacharyya (2015) suggested that organizations that ensure their compensation and benefits program emphasizes pay equity have less employee turnover than organizations that do not practice pay equity. Employees expect adequate compensation for the service they provide to an organization. Employees

become disgruntled when they find out that their peers who are doing the same work receive higher salary without a valid explanation. Bhattacharyya suggested that organizations should base employee compensation on the level of responsibility and prevailing market levels in the industry. Kristal, Cohen and Navot (2020) noted that many employees focus on the benefits associated with employment as opposed to solely focusing on the weekly or monthly pay. Managers must communicate to employees that their earnings are subject to their performance (Bhattacharyya, 2015).

Gupta and Shaw (2014) stated that compensation matters to people. Gupta and Shaw proposed that when employees believe that they will receive additional money based on their performance, the employees' performance would increase only for obtaining the desired money instead of meeting the organizations' objectives. University leaders must be aware that when employees work for additional compensation only, that financial incentives can lead to counterproductive work behaviors. Figueroa (2015) concluded in his study of factors affecting staff turnover in higher educations that staff members complained about low compensation and faculty members complained about disparities in income between genders. Spain and Groysberg (2016) reported that former employees reported on their exit interviews that the top reason for involuntarily leaving the organization was that they accepted a job paying a higher salary. Givens-Skeaton and Ford (2018), in agreement with Johns and Gorrick (2016), noted that human resources managers must uncover the real causes of voluntary turnover during exit interviews to improve their employee retention rate.

Selesho and Naile (2014) conveyed in their research of 80 academic staff that stagnant academic salaries were one of the significant reasons academic staff personnel abandons their profession. Luna-Arocas and Tang (2015) demonstrated in their study that salary satisfaction depends on professors' income, their love of money, and pay equity comparison standards. Specifically, Luna-Arocas and Tang, in a review of 311 professors in the United States and Spain, suggested that American professors with high income had a strong love of money, set their pay equity standards that they deserve significantly higher than their salary, and had low pay comparison satisfaction. Spanish professors did not relate love of money to their pay comparison standards (Luna-Arocas & Tang, 2015). To some employees, money is a motivator because money leads to movement, promotion, and other opportunities to receive higher pay (Luna-Arocas & Tang, 2015). Herzberg (1968) argued that money is a hygiene factor instead of a motivator. Employee compensation influences the retention of university faculty and staff personnel. University leaders must offer adequate faculty and staff members' fair pay and other benefits to attract and retain qualified professionals to their institutions.

Executive compensation in public higher education. Executives' pay in higher education has become an issue for many institutions. One-third of presidents at public universities earn more than $500,000 a year (Cheng, 2014). Pearce (2016) reported that the president at Michigan State University received a salary of $520,000 and academic executives' compensation ranged from $194,000 to $346,000. Pearce disclosed that the salary of 9 of the 10 public universities vice president for research included in his study ranged from $252,488 to $390,165. An institution must be willing to pay its president and

academic executives' competitive salary and other benefits to attract and retain quality leadership. Mabaso and Diamini (2018) noted that universities' leaders should carry out salary revisions to develop a reward management structure that is externally competitive and internally fair. Cheng (2014) suggested that university board of trustees should evaluate their presidents and executives based on eight indicators. The eight indicators are institutional advancement, enrollment, admission standards, student graduation, faculty salary and welfare, fund-raising, administrative efficiency, and operating surplus (Cheng, 2014). Cheng reported in his study of 99 research universities that presidents' compensation had no influence on their performance associated with the eight performance indicators. McNaughtan (2017) argued that replacing college presidents is both complex and expensive. McNaughtan suggested that to minimize presidential turnover, university trustees should focus on the relationships that presidents have with various campus constituencies such as trustees, executive teams, students, and faculty. Although college presidents often cited the college mission as a guiding factor in decision making, Hornak and Mitchell (2016) reported that college presidents operate based on their own decision-making style and personal values which could conflict with the college mission. However, Pearce concluded that half of the ten largest U.S. public universities showed an indication of inappropriate executive compensation of over $3 million a year, based on the impact that the vice president of research had on the institution. Pearce argued that universities could consolidate executive positions to reduce executive compensation.

Faculty salary and welfare have always been crucial issues for faculty members' retention. Olawale and Olanrewaju (2016) suggested that employee turnover intentions have a direct correlation to the amount of employees' salary. If employees believe that they are not compensated well, employees will develop a state of emotional dissatisfaction and will initiate action to leave the organization (Olawale & Olanrewaju, 2016; Ting, Wai Chuen, & Ahmad, 2020). Cheng (2014) indicated that there is a significant disconnect between the university president and faculty pay. For example, Cheng noted that a $1,000 increase in the average assistant professors' salary lead to 2.5-3.5% increase in the presidents' executive compensation. Cheng's analysis of presidents' pays disclosed that the average university presidents' compensation was $432,524, which translated into an average $10,813-$15,138 increase in response to a $1,000 raise in the average salary of assistant professor salary. Curtis and Thornton (2014) reported that while the number of full-time administrators increased by 369% full-time tenure and tenure track faculty increased by only 23%. At the same time administrators' salaries increased on average by more than double the rate of those of faculty (Curtis & Thornton, 2014). Reducing the number of academic executive positions will provide funds to increase faculty and staff compensation to retain valuable employees. Herzberg et al. (1959) identified salary as one of the first-level factors that participants in their study responded to as a source of good or bad feelings about the job. Although participants identified salary as both a job satisfier and dissatisfier, the participants considered salary more as a job dissatisfier than a job satisfier (Herzberg et al., 1959). Participants identified salary as a job satisfier when they received an increase in pay as a form of

recognition for a job well done (Herzberg et al., 1959). Cheng agreed with Curtis and Thornton that faculty and staff compensation increase employee job satisfaction.

Achievement. Herzberg et al. (1959) noted that employees considered achievement as the most reported factor that influenced what they wanted from their jobs. Employees reported achievement 41% of the time. Achievement referred to the successful completion of a job (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg et al. also identified a similar factor to achievement as work itself. Work itself referred to employees doing the job or task and whether the employees felt good or bad about the work. Employees ranked work itself as the third factor with at 26% (Herzberg et al., 1959). Basak and Govender (2015) evaluation of factors affecting job satisfaction disclosed that work itself" was a crucial factor affecting faculty and staff job satisfaction. Basak and Govender defined work itself as feelings of independence, achievement, victory, self-esteem, control, and other similar feelings employees experienced from the work they performed. Employees want to feel good about completing a job or solving a problem. Trivellas and Santouridis (2016) confirmed from their study of 66 faculties and 68 staff members that achievement in providing quality of teaching or quality of administration motivated employees to remain with the institution.

Job security. Job security refers to employees' evaluation of their current work conditions and perception of their future in their current job and organization (Ahmad & Jameel, 2018). Employees who believe they have a reasonable degree of job security will work harder to increase organizational productivity (Imran, Majeed, & Ayub, 2015). Kim (2019) noted that employees who perceive that their job is secure experience high levels

of job satisfaction and organizational belonging. Employee job security also increases job satisfaction. Imran et al. analyzed 254 respondent's questionnaires to determine whether a relationship existed between job security, organizational productivity, and job satisfaction, revealing that a positive relationship existed between the three variables. Specifically, leaders that offer employees job security will experience happier employees and increase organizational productivity (Imran et al., 2015). Ahmad and Jameel (2018) conducted a study of 189 staff members at two private universities to determine if job security had an impact on job satisfaction. Ahmad and Jameel initially suggested that job security could affect staff members work behavior by driving out motivation resulting in decreased effort that workers put into their work. Ahmad and Jameel argued that job insecurity may motivate staff members and give them an incentive to work thereby increasing their work effort. However, Ahmad and Jameel concluded in their study that job security had a positive and significant relationship to job satisfaction. Ahmad and Jameel and Imran et al. both concluded that job security was a significant factor in job satisfaction. However, Herzberg et al. (1959) determined in their study that the participants did not consider job security as an important factor leading to job satisfaction. Herzberg (1968) suggested that interesting work, challenge, and increasing responsibilities are factors that motivate employees.

In higher education institutions, the unique nature of universities results in academics being the repository of the most specialized and skilled intellectuals, which created an increase in demand and competition for highly qualified faculty and staff members (Roos & Guenther, 2019; Selesho & Naile, 2014). Institutions of higher

learning leaders classify faculty positions as professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer, instructor, and adjunct (Brenman & Magness, 2018). Professors, associate professors, assistant professor, and lecturer are full-time employees who could occupy either tenure or tenure-track positions. Tenure and tenure-track employees receive higher salaries, benefits, high status, access to funding for research, promotion opportunities and job security (Brenman & Magness, 2018). However, lecturers, instructors, and adjuncts are part-time employees without fringe benefits (Brenman & Magness, 2018; Kramer, Gloeckner, & Jacoby, 2014). Brenman and Magness (2018) noted that faculty members who receive employment contracts consider job security as a key factor to job satisfaction and remaining with the institution.

Kramer et al. (2014) analyzed 405 community college respondents who answered a part-time faculty satisfaction survey and revealed that 89% of the respondents reported they would choose an academic career despite their concerns about salaries, benefits, and job security. Curtis, Mahabir and Vitullo (2016) analyzed 1,730 part-time community college faculty members responses as to whether their part-time employment status affected their job satisfaction and concluded that despite of a lack of job security, lack of medical insurance, and low salaries they were satisfied with their employment because they enjoyed teaching. Kramer et al. and Curtis et al. agreed with Herzberg et al. (1959) conclusion that job security was not a principal factor leading to employee job satisfaction. Kramer et al. and Curtis et al. both agreed that part-time faculty members did not consider job security as an important factor for job satisfaction until after they obtained full-time positions with benefits and promotion opportunities.

In contrast, Masum et al. (2015) disclosed in their study of 346 full-time faculty who occupied positions as lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors at ten private universities in Bangladesh concerning job satisfaction, that job security was important to the faculty and resulted in faculty turnover between 12% and 18%. Masum et al. indicated that one of the factors foremost to faculty members' desire for job security was because the unemployment rate in Bangladesh was 38%. Although Masum et al. differed from Herzberg et al.'s (1959) conclusion, job security is vital to full-time faculty because of tenure possibilities, high salaries, and other fringe benefits that universities offer to their faculty.

Promotion opportunities. Although Herzberg et al. (1959) did not include promotion opportunities as a separate job factor, promotion opportunities could refer to the possibility of growth and advancement factors. Addai, Kyeremeh, Abdulai, and Sarfo (2018) noted that promotion is vital to teachers because teachers along with other employees want an opportunity to progress in their profession. Promotion opportunities could also have a significant impact on employees' job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Smolinska and Dzyubynska (2020) concluded that teachers seek professional development opportunities to improve their skills to improve their promotion prospects. Addai et al. evaluated four factors to determine the impact that the factors had on 114 teachers' turnover intention. The four factors Addai et al. reviewed were pay, work, promotion, and supervision. Addai et al. disclosed that although pay had the most significant impact on the teacher's turnover attention, promotion opportunities did not influence their turnover intentions because their pay did not increase much with a

promotion. In contrast, Adusei, Sarfo, Manukure, and Cudjoe (2016) disclosed in their review of 18 teachers in Ghana turnover intentions that promotion did have a crucial impact on their plans to remain with the organization because the promotion was an upgrade in ranks and liked with pay.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment to its employees is crucial to achieving the organization's objectives. Organizational commitment refers to the level of obligation that an organization caters to its employees (Chen et al., 2015; Nawaz & Pangil, 2016). The commitment factors included career goal progress, professional development, promotion speed, remuneration growth, salary, performance appraisal, and training and development (Burton, 2020; Nawaz & Pangil, 2016). Zaraket, Garios, and Malek (2018) identified the following as organizational commitment factors: employee empowerment, job autonomy, employee motivation, training, and compensation. Nawaz and Pangil (2016) noted that organizational commitment factors are more in line with Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivational factors that lead to job satisfaction. Although Zaraket et al. noted that organizational commitment factors had a high influence on job satisfaction and turnover intention. Lim, Loo, and Lee (2017) stated that organizational commitment is the strength of the employee's psychological attachment and identification to the organization. Alamsyah and Ginting (2018) commented that organizational commitment improves when leaders understand the wants and needs of their workforce. Iqbal et al. (2014) stated that organizational commitment is the antecedent of turnover intention.

Mathieu, Fabi, Lacoursiere and Raymond (2016) indicated that the supervisory behavior would have a significant impact on job satisfaction and employee turnover.

Mathieu et al. revealed in their study of 763 employees from different types of organizations that supervisory behavior had a direct effect on job satisfaction. Mathieu et al. identified supervisory conduct or supervision as having an immediate impact on job satisfaction, whereas, Herzberg et al. (1959) related supervision as job dissatisfaction. However, employees who identify themselves with the organization will have a higher level of organizational commitment and lower level of turnover intention if they accept the organizational commitment factors (Lim et al., 2017).

Employee Retention Challenges in Colleges and Universities

Retention of valued employees is crucial to a company's bottom line and accomplishing the organization's strategic objectives (Cloutier et al., 2015). Higher education leaders' systematic effort to implement successful retention strategies to encourage employees to remain with the institution provide the organization with a competitive advantage to meet the organization's objective, increase productivity, and foster a work environment that benefits both the institution and employees (Sandhya & Kumar, 2014). Retention of employees in higher education institutions is a problem; the high turnover rate of academic staff poses a significant challenge for university leaders (Ntoyakhe & Ngibe, 2020; Selesho & Naile, 2014). Employee retention is a significant challenge for the organizations that operate in a competitive business environment because of the loss of talented employees and negative financial consequences (Sandhya & Kumar, 2014). Employee turnover can have a considerable impact on students and

remaining staff members when vacant positions exist because of a lack of available

qualified personnel (Selesho & Naile, 2014; Trunina & Khovrak, 2019). Sandhya and

Kumar suggested that one of the major problems with retaining talented employees is that

the higher the employees' education, the higher the employees' tendency to have more

opportunities to find employment elsewhere. Institutional leaders offering whole

employment packages attract and retain better-qualified personnel. For academics, new

employees expect recruitment package to include, pay and fringe benefits, job security,

career progression, family-friendly practices, congeniality of colleagues and a good

working environment (Davidson, Ewert, & Chang, 2016; Samuel & Chipunza, 2013).

The more attractive the recruitment package, the more likely the institution will attract

applicants and retain employees (Samuel & Chipunza, 2013).

Sandhya and Kumar (2014) advised that high employee turnover could result in

serious implications on students, remaining staff members, the quality, consistency, and

stability of academic operations. For example, students may decide to transfer to other

institutions, talented faculty may elect to seek employment elsewhere due to unfavorable

working conditions, and the institution can experience negative financial consequences

due to a decrease in student revenues. High employee turnover is a problem in colleges

and universities because employee turnover causes a disruption to the workplace,

negative impacts employee retention, and institution productivity (Figueroa, 2015).

Figueroa also surmised that university leaders have allowed the high turnover

phenomenon among administrators and faculty to become a cultural norm with their

business practices. University leaders must dispel such culture norm and employ sound

business practices to protect their institutions' sacred resources. Therefore, the leaders should establish policies that foster quality work-life programs, motivate staff, create a best place to work environment, and become an employer of choice to retain quality employees (Sandhya & Kumar, 2014).

Replacing qualified employees can be very costly to institution when employees quit for the wrong reasons. High employee turnover depletes institution resources, recruiting, and time when replacing open positions (Cloutier et al., 2015). Cloutier et al. (2015) concluded that organizations could incur half to 200% of the former employee's salary in recruiting a new employee. Jo (2008) identified turnover as a silent thief that robs institutions of their bottom line of as much as $68 million. Although university leaders cannot eliminate employee turnover expenses, they can implement policies, procedures, and practices to minimize unnecessary involuntary turnover. University leaders could better utilize institutional resources to improve employee productivity, student learning opportunities, and physical structures of its campus by minimizing involuntary employee turnover.

Employee Retention Challenges in Business Organizations

Hom, Lee, Shaw, and Hausknecht (2017) studied employee turnover theory and concluded that although turnover research is dynamic and ever changing, employers should use validated selection procedures to screen out job applicants who might quit early during their employment. Specifically, employers should pay special attention to on-boarding practices of which research shows that most turnover occurs among new hires who face difficulty adjusting to the job (Hom et al., 2017). Hom et al. (2017)

indicated that employee turnover affects the financial performance and the ability of an organization to meet its mission objectives. Deloitte Consulting L. L. P. (2014) surveyed 2,500 business leaders and concluded that employee retention was one of the top challenges facing businesses. Deloitte Consulting L. L. P. reported that one of the significant findings was that voluntary turnover is a global problem that is rapidly becoming a crucial barrier to organizations achieving their strategic objectives.

Allen, Bryant, and Vardaman (2010) concluded that hiring and replacement expenses could be from 90% to 200% of annual salary. Collins, Mckinnies, Matthews and Collins (2015) specified that employee turnover costs American industry billions of dollars annually. The organizational costs associated with voluntary and involuntary employee turnover include both unplanned direct and indirect expenses (Collins et al., 2015). The hospital industry is one industry that experiences a high employee rate. For example, Collins et al. indicated that in 2012, 87% of hospitals leaders reported that their employee turnover rate was equal to or lower than the national average of 20%. However, 11% of the hospitals experienced employee turnover rate of 24% to 42%.

Park, Gass, and Boyle (2016) indicated that the cost of replacing a registered nurse is about $10,000 to $64,000. Park et al. analyzed 2,958 units in 497 acute care hospitals affiliated with the National Database of Nursing Quality indicators in the United States to assess nurse turnover rates between magnet and nonmagnet hospitals. Park et al. reported that magnet hospital experienced an employee turnover rate of 31.89% and 29.37% for nonmagnet hospitals. The nurses revealed that the primary reason they quit was the work environment which included staffing, workload conditions and work

scheduling (Park et al., 2016). However, Park et al. identified a total of 24 reasons that lead to nurses' dissatisfaction with their job.

Harhara, Singh, and Hussain (2015) noted that one of the major challenges facing organizations in the United Arab Emirates is the high employee turnover rates. The United Arab Emirates is a key player in the oil and gas industry with an estimated 10% of global oil reserves and 4% of global natural gas reserves (Harhara et al., 2015). Majority of the employee who work in the oil and gas industry live in temporary housing and campsites located in remote areas and not near cities and towns (Harhara et al., 2015). Therefore, organizational leaders in the oil and gas industry must make significant commitments to their employees if the leaders expect to retain the services of the employees. Harhara et al. concluded that to reduce employee turnover managers should consider individual factors such age, education, experience, and organizational factors such as organizational commitment and support, leadership behavior, available employee training, and employ fair organizational justice.

Harrison and Gordon (2014) indicated that employee turnover rates are higher in the retail grocery industry than in other industries. For example, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018b) reported that the annual turnover rate for retail trade for 2017 was 53%. Harrison and Gordon suggested that the reason for the high turnover was because senior leaders design retention strategies on misconception on what causes employee turnover. Harrison and Gordon revealed that the misconceptions of turnover were low pay, dissatisfied with the company, managers do little to retain employees, and same strategery that work for one employee will work another employee (Harrison & Gordon,

2014). However, Herzberg et al. (1959) disclosed in their study that different factors impact employees' job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. For example, one employee could be satisfied with his or her salary, but another employee could consider his or her salary as a reason to leave the organization. Harrison and Gordon interviewed 151 frontline grocery workers in Western New York to determine the relationship between work environment, burnout, and turnover intentions. Harrison and Gordon concluded that there was a positive relationship between employees' intention to leave the organization and the work environment and burnout but that the mitigating factor that influence his or her reason to leave the organization was whether he or she had a sense of control over the workload. Herzberg et al. would associate the employee intention to quit with working conditions and the work itself.

Overall, institutional leaders and business leaders experience the same challenges to reduce employee turnover. Although employees may consider different factors in deciding whether to remain with the organization or quit, employers must prepare for employee turnover by budgeting for unexpected cost, creating applicant supply files of potential candidates for critical positions, fostering work-life balance, and provide opportunities for employee growth and job embeddedness. Herzberg et al. (1959) focused on employees' motivation to work but not on the negative impact that dissatisfied employees had on their performance and the organization's productivity or the cost of employee turnover to an organization. Institutional leaders should stress to employees the negative impact that dissatisfied employee could have on their growth potential, organization's productivity, and financial setback.

Transition

In Section 1, I addressed the foundation and background of the study related to the problem, purpose, nature of the study, research and interview questions, conceptual framework, operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and significance of the study to help university leaders improve employee retention strategies in U.S. colleges and universities. I discussed Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation-hygiene as the conceptual framework for this study. I also reviewed academic and professional literature related to employee retention strategies.

In Section 2, I discussed the purpose statement, my role as the researcher, the criteria and method for selecting participants, research methodology and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments and techniques, data organization technique, and data analysis. I described the techniques to ensure dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability as well as attaining data saturation.

In Section 3, I presented the findings of the study, the emergent themes from the data collected, and recommendations to assist university leaders in improving employee retention strategies. I provided recommendations for further research and implications for social change.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 includes a detailed discussion relating to employee retention strategies as well as the role of the researcher. I describe the participants, the selection process, and the population and sampling method. I also explain and justify the research method and design and the data organization and collection techniques. In addition, I discuss how ethical considerations fit into the data collection process and how I ensured credibility, confirmability, dependability, and data saturation.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some college and university leaders use to retain employees. The targeted population was leaders of five colleges or universities in the Midwest region of the United States who implemented strategies to retain employees. The implications for positive social change from this study include the potential for leaders of U.S. colleges and universities to improve the learning experiences, outcomes, and graduation rates of students because of retaining high-performing employees. Leaders of colleges and universities create an environment for improved student learning, outcomes, and graduation rates through retaining instructors and support personnel (Cloutier et al., 2015). College and university leaders contribute to society through graduating students who possess a greater potential to improve their livelihood, their communities, and society (Marginson, 2016).

Role of the Researcher

I was the primary data collection instrument for this study, which, as Yin (2018) noted, is a primary role of qualitative researchers. I collected the data using

semistructured interviews and a review of documents, such as institutional end-of-month employee strengths' assessment for the past 5 years. Researchers should have sufficient knowledge with the study domain and understand the issues that are relevant to a study (Yin, 2018). I served as a faculty member in higher education from 2012 to 2019, a period that includes 3 years spent as an academic dean with the responsibility of hiring new faculty and staff employees. In selecting the study participants, researchers must ensure they are not personally or professionally close to the participants (Johnson & Rasulova, 2017). I had no existing or prior personal or professionally affiliation with the participants or organizations selected to recruit participants. Anderson (2017) suggested that researchers identify appropriate research site(s) and organizational locations to conduct their research. I conducted my research in Ohio. I have lived in Ohio from 1987 to 1992 and again since 2004 and am acquainted with the locations of higher education institutions in the state.

Researchers must abide by the ethics and the *Belmont Report* protocol (Miracle, 2016). I adhered to the *Belmont Report* protocol concerning the issues of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Specifically, while interacting with each participant, I communicated information pertaining to the study and emphasized the value all participants' perspectives. I mitigated any harm to the participants by protecting their information and confidentiality by using code names. I strove to treat each participant with respect and to conduct the interviews in a professional manner by not prejudging any of the participants' responses.

A researcher's beliefs, biases, preferences, personal experiences, and ideological positions can have a significant impact on the results of a research study (Berger, 2015). The researcher should separate personal perceptions, beliefs, experiences, and values that might influence research results (Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2018). To mitigate these issues, I maintained a journal record of all activities related to data collection and analysis and accepted information as presented by the participants. I utilized the journal as a means of recording personal biases related to participants' responses**.** I reviewed the journal on a regular basis to ensure that my views did not influence my interpretation of the participants' perspectives. Researchers who use an interview protocol in qualitative inquiry use the protocol to assist them with guided conversations instead of structured queries (Yin, 2018). Following an interview protocol helps researchers to follow their line of inquiry and to ask questions in an unbiased manner (Yin, 2018). I conducted the interviews in person and used an interview protocol (see Appendix A) to ensure that my line of inquiry was consistent with all participants. I recorded the interviews and transcribed the interview responses for further interpretation, coding, and member checking with the participants.

Participants

In designing the study, I also took care to select appropriate participants. Individuals selected to participate in a study should have experienced or participated in the phenomenon (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). As such, establishing selection criteria for participants is crucial to achieving the goals of a study (Saxena, 2017). The eligibility criteria for participants were that the participants must be a leader in higher

education and have successfully implemented strategies to reduce employee turnover within the past 5 years. A leader in higher education can be a college president, vice president, provost, or senior-level administrator (Davis & Maldonado, 2015). I identified eligible participants by obtaining a list of all college and university presidents from the Ohio Board of Education. To determine the availability of participants and contact procedures, the researcher can contact the institution gatekeeper at the research site (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I contacted the participants and followed-up with an e-mail and telephone call to assess the availability of potential participants and the person or persons responsible for establishing employee retention polices and strategies and gaining access to the institution. Preparing a preliminary questionnaire addressing the selection criteria helps a researcher to identify the appropriate participants of the study (Saxena, 2017). I prepared a preliminary questionnaire requesting information, such as the institution's employee turnover rate for the past 5 years and whether the institutional leader was willing to participate in the research study.

Once I received the responses, I compared the institution's turnover rate to the Bureau of Labor Statistics job and labor turnover report for educational institutions. I selected participants whose 5-year average institutional turnover rate was lower than the 5-year average reported to Bureau of Labor Statistics between 2014 and 2018. After identifying prospective participants, I provided them with information about the study and their rights to participate in it; as Mueller and Lovell (2015) noted, following these steps improves the working relationship and communication between the participants and researcher. Specifically, I provided each participant with a detailed information sheet

disclosing the purpose of the research and informed them that I would maintain the confidentiality of study data. In addition, I provided the participants with a consent form and informed them that their participation was strictly voluntarily and that they had the right to withdraw at any stage of the study. Furthermore, I provided each participant an advance copy of the interview questions. After I conducted the interview, I transcribed the interviews, prepared a summary of the data, met again with the participants to allow them to review the summary and asked if I interpreted their responses correctly, and finally asked them if they had any additional information to add.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

I used the qualitative research method to explore employee retention strategies in U.S. colleges and universities. Researchers using a qualitative research method can employ a different approach in studying humans by exploring individual experiences than the quantitative research method (Cope, 2014). Park and Park (2016) suggested that researchers conducting qualitative research focus on applied discoveries based on research questions in a natural condition to explore human experiences.

When using the qualitative research method, researchers can interpret and code the data in a valid and reliable way that promotes the rigorousness of the study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). I selected the qualitative research method to validate the rigorousness of the study. The researcher who utilizes the qualitative research method collects data and seeks information from study participants about how their experiences affect a real-world event (Vass, Rigby, & Payne, 2017). As the researcher, I collected data and requested

information from the participants concerning their experiences associated with employee

retention strategies. Researchers conducting a qualitative method research study seek new

discernment into a phenomenon to helps solve a problem (Boddy, 2016). My purpose for

using the qualitative research method was to seek a better understanding of strategies that

can improve employee retention in colleges and universities.

Researchers conducting a quantitative research method study use hypothesis

testing to predict and control social phenomena, using numerical data to generate and

manipulate numbers using statistical analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Researchers

that employ the quantitative research method place emphasis on the use of statistical

methods rather than individual perceptions or experiences for establishing validity and

reliability of research findings (Noble & Smith, 2015). The researcher that uses the

quantitative research method refers to either a large sample research that relies on

statistical inference or mathematical modeling to prove or disprove a hypothesis

(Barnham, 2016). I was not seeking to rely on statistical methods or to prove or disprove

the validity of and reliability of findings related to employee retention strategies. Instead,

my focus was on individual perceptions and experiences in obtaining a comprehensive

understanding of strategies to retain employees.

Mixed-method research is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative

research methods (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). Researchers conducting a mixed

methods research study combine both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a

better understanding of a research issue, but the researcher must determine in advance

whether the research adds any value to the interpretations of the study as compared to a

qualitative or quantitative study (McKim, 2017). In conducting a mixed-method research

study, researchers use both open (qualitative) and closed (quantitative) end approaches to

gather data (Guetterman & Fetters, 2018). Guetterman and Fetters (2018) concluded that

with the qualitative (open-end) approach, researchers proceed with detailed guidelines as

to what the issues they want to investigate; whereas, with the quantitative (closed-end)

approach, researchers gather or use data with the expectation that they know in advance

how to characterize the data. My purpose was to use a semistructured approach with

interview questions to allow the study participants to share their experiences to obtain a

better understanding of strategies to retain employees. Therefore, the mixed-method

approach did not meet the study's objectives.

Research Design

I considered three research designs: case study, phenomenology, and

ethnography. I selected the case study design. Researchers use multiple sources of

evidence in the case study design to validate the phenomenon, which increases the

confidence and accuracy of the research (Yin, 2018). Also, by using the case study

protocol, researchers contribute positively toward the reliability of the study by using

relevant data collected through documents, archival records, interviews, direct

observations, and physical artifacts (Yin, 2018). I collected data to explore employee

retention strategies by reviewing documents, interviews, direct observations, and physical

artifacts.

Researchers can use the case study research design approach to gain a better

understanding of a phenomenon in a holistic context (Dahl, Larivière, & Corbière, 2017).

I selected the case study design with the intent to use open discourse and research from a holistic perspective to gather information on the research participants' influence on employee retention strategies. Researchers use the case study design approach to employ a single or multiple case study design (Yin, 2018). I used the multiple case study design. Multiple cases tend to lead to more robust outcomes than a single-case study research (Yin, 2016). Therefore, I used a multiple case study research approach method because I sought to explore employee retention strategies within a real-world contextual environment at five locations. The case study design was the appropriate research design for my study.

Researchers of phenomenological design focus on the meaning of lived experience of participants, seeking to understand individuals and their interaction with other and their environment (Larkin et al., 2019). With phenomenological design, the lived experience has a temporal structure that is difficult to grasp (Chan, Walker-Gleaves, & Walker-Gleaves, 2015). The researcher using a phenomenological design assumes human capacities to reflect their experiences of personal significance; however, this may not be possible for some participants causing a distortion of data and precludes meaningfulness analysis (Stovell, Wearden, Morrison, & Hutton, 2016). The phenomenological design was not suitable because I did not explore the meaning of participants lived experiences.

Researchers of ethnographic design focus on the behaviors, beliefs, or language of a culture-sharing group in a social context (Tickle, 2017). Ethnographic principles require the researcher to move out from the participant's knowledge of how things work to a

bigger picture that coordinates events across different sites, which a participant may or may not be aware of (Eisenhart, 2017). Ethnographers may not know who they need to talk to or about what until they enter the research site and start talking to people (Eisenhart, 2017). The ethnographic design was not appropriate because I did not focus on participants in a social or cultural context.

Researchers reach data saturation when they explored all aspects of the phenomenon (Saunders et al., 2018). Another aspect of data saturation is when the researcher obtains enough information to replicate the study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). A researcher can use interviews and methodological triangulation to reach data saturation in conducting the study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I used interviews, transcribed the interviews, prepared a summary of the data, met again with the participants to allow them to the review the summary and asked if I interpreted their responses correctly, and finally asked them if they had any additional new information to add. I continued to seek information until there was no new information, no new themes, no new coding, and the ability to duplicate the study in exploring all aspects of employee retention strategies.

Population and Sampling

Sampling Method

The objective of the study was to explore the strategies colleges and universities leaders use to retain employees. A purposeful sample consists of colleges and universities presidents or their designated representatives who have successfully implemented strategies to reduce employee turnover within the last 5 years. Researchers use purposeful sampling to identify and select participants to yield insights and in-depth understanding

related to the phenomenon (Benoot, Hannes, & Bilsen, 2016). Researchers that use purposeful sampling techniques make a deliberate choice to select participants based on the qualities the participants possess to understand and to enhance knowledge of the phenomenon (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). I used purposeful sampling because I needed to narrow my targeted population to meet the criteria to five participants.

Population

The population for the study consisted of leaders in higher education who successfully implemented strategies to reduce employee turnover within the last 5 years. I purposefully selected five leaders from five different colleges and universities in the Midwest region of the United States. A leader in higher education can be the college president, vice president, provost, or senior level administrator (Davis & Maldonado, 2015).

Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria for participants selected for the study require that the participants be (a) a leader in higher education responsible for making policy decisions, and (b) have successfully implemented strategies to reduce employee turnover rates at the institution within the last 5 years. Participants should have the experience in and knowledge of the phenomenon to ensure they can provide the greatest insight into the research question (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016). Participants that meet the study's eligibility criteria can provide new discernment into the phenomenon to help solve a problem (Boddy, 2016). To determine whether the participants met the eligibility criteria, I verified that they were a leader in higher education. I then asked the college

leaders if they were successful in reducing employee turnover at their institution within the last 5 years. If the answer was yes, I selected the leaders to participate in the study.

Sample Size

Researchers often determine their sample size by citing sample sizes from the evidence of previous research studies (Blaikie, 2018). Amena (2017), using a case study design, explored strategies to reduce employee turnover by banking managers by interviewing five managers. Kirk (2017) completed a case study research evaluating strategies for health care administrations leaders to reduce hospital employee turnovers with a sample size of five participants. Hulett (2016) explored strategies to retain healthcare professional with a sample size of five participants. Benoot et al. (2016) recommended that the researcher select no fewer than four cases or more than 15 cases. I conducted a case study and my research resembles the scope of the previous studies. Therefore, my selection of five participants was an appropriate sample size for my study.

Interview Setting

Yin (2018) suggested that when the researcher conducts interviews, the researcher should focus directly on case study topics. The researcher should (a) follow the case study protocol line of inquiry, and (b) ask questions in an unbiased manner (Yin, 2018). The researcher should not take more than an hour to conduct the interview (Yin, 2018). Castillo-Montoya (2016) recommended that the researcher should conduct the interview in a setting that creates comfort for the participants and where there is little noise. I requested that we conduct the interview in the college leader's office. Moser and Korstens (2017) noted that one of the strengths of qualitative interviewing is that it can

combine depth of understanding with purposeful sampling and meet the systematic research design. Gross (2015) suggested that a researcher should ask unbiased interview questions to allow participants to freely answer questions. I used the case study protocol line of questions, asked unbiased questions, and conducted my interviews at a neutral location to minimize disruptions. See Appendix A for the interview protocol.

Data Saturation

Researchers that develop more precise interview questions tend to reach data saturation much quicker than researchers who do not use specific questions (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017). Data saturation occurs when further collection of evidence provides little or no further insights, themes, perspectives, data, coding, or information about the phenomenon (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Researchers are more apt to reach data saturation based on the *who should participate* question instead of the *how many should participate* question (Tran, Porcher, Tran, & Ravaud, 2017). I developed open-ended questions to allow for discussions, but specific to the phenomenon associated with strategies to enhance employee retention. I selected participants who meet the eligibility criteria and who were knowledgeable of the employee retention strategies.

<div align="center">

Ethical Research

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Participants selected to participate in this research provided informed consent, indicating that they were aware of the expectations and their rights to withdraw from the study. Although a participant provided informed consent, the consent form does not limit the institution's liability (Zhang & Liu, 2018). Researchers should carefully design consent processes to the research study instead of using standard forms (Zhang & Liu,

2018). Martinez et al. (2015) suggested that the consent form is important because a participant may elect to withdraw from the study due to scheduling conflicts or no longer interested in the study. The consent form contained content regarding the purpose of the study, participants' responsibilities, rights, risks, and benefits of participating in the study, compensation, and confidentiality of their personal information. I discussed the content of the consent form with the participants and informed them that they can withdraw prior to, during, or after the interviews. I had the participants sign the form and kept a copy for the records.

Institutions must not be supportive of researchers offering incentives to participants that potentially result in distorted findings (Bouter, 2015). Cascio and Racine (2018) noted that researcher should resist the temptation to incentive participants. I did not offer the participants in this study any form of compensation; however, I will provide each participant an executive summary of the study after publication.

Researchers must abide by the ethics and the Belmont Report protocol (Miracle, 2016). I maintained ethical research standards by protecting participants' data, respecting their responses, and provided them the necessary information to make informed decisions. I completed the National Institutes of Health training "Protecting Human Research Participants" (see Appendix B for the certificate of completion).

Walden University requires researchers to obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to conducting research or collecting data. Researchers must explicitly inform participants that they will keep the participants information in strict confidence (Haines, 2017). I did not use personal names or institution names in the

written presentation. As the researcher, I stored the collected data in a secure location for 5 years to protect participants' confidentiality. After 5 years, I will destroy all consent forms, interviews recording, and other documentations. I stored the data on protected flash drives and audio files for interviews in a locked storage cabinet. I have sole access to the research data. I labeled each institution using U1, U2, U3, U4, and U5 and label each participant as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 to ensure confidentiality. I am the only person with access to the data and documents. The Walden IRB approval number is 12-04-19-0630057.

Data Collection Instruments

As the researcher, I was the primary data collection instrument. Researchers data collection instruments may include interviews, focus groups, direct observations, questionnaires, standard operating procedure documents, archival records, and physical artifacts (Marrie, Tyrrell, Majumdar, & Eurich, 2017; Schobel, Schickler, Pryss, Maier, & Reichert, 2014; Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) asserted that one of the most important source of case study evidence is the interview. Researchers use interviews to gain rich and detailed qualitative data from participants (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). The interviews should be semistructured interviews with open-ended questions to obtain the best data (O'Keeffe, Buytaert, Mijic, Brozovic, & Sinha, 2016; Yin, 2018). I conducted semistructured interviews by asking open-ended questions to allow the participants to share the strategies they have used to retain employees. I reviewed organizational documents from each college or university to crosscheck the interview data obtain from the participants.

Semistructured interviews are a means for researchers to glean previously unknown data from participants (O'Keeffe et al., 2016). Researchers should use multiple sources as data collection instruments to engage in methodological triangulation (Yazan, 2015; Yin, 2018). I used the interview protocol as a guide for all interviews in the study to obtain consistency throughout the interview process (Appendix A). Yin (2018) suggested that by using multiple sources as data collection instruments the researcher establishes a chain of evidence that links the questions asked, data collected, and case study conclusions. I utilized the multiple sources as data collection instruments to validate the study's conclusions.

Researchers conducting qualitative research must ensure the rigor of their findings by employing trustworthiness criteria, such as dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability (Henry, 2015; Johnson, Adkins, & Chauvin, 2020). Dependability refers to the stability of data over time; credibility refers to accurately identifying and describing those participating in the study; transferability relies on the reasoning that the findings are transferable to other settings; and conformability refers to the interpretations of the findings from the data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Henry (2015) argued that the rigor of qualitative research rests upon the researcher to make sure that the researcher meets the quality standards for a trustworthy research. Member checking is the process of validating ideas with research participants for their confirmation for establishing credibility, accuracy, and dependability of the data (Harvey, 2015). I transcribed and provided each participant a copy of their interview responses and request that they confirm the accuracy of the data to help with the accuracy, dependability, and credibility

of the data. I followed the interview protocol (see Appendix A) and used member

checking and other sources to triangulate the data.

Data Collection Technique

Conducting a semistructured interview is a rigorous process that a researcher uses

to add to the objectivity and trustworthiness of a qualitative research study (Kallio,

Pietila, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016). I collected data from participants using

semistructured interviews and reviewed company documents. Advantages of

semistructured interviews include versatility and flexibility for the researcher to focus on

the research topic and provide explanations, ask follow-up questions, and gain the

knowledge needed from the participants to answer the research question (Kallio et al.,

2016; Yin, 2018). Another advantage of using semistructured interviews is that the

presence of the interviewer gives structure to the interview and provides an opportunity

to observe the participants' nonverbal communications (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). A

disadvantage associated with conducting semistructured interviews is the participants

may be biased or communicate inaccurate information (Yin, 2018). Another downside is

that participants may refuse to respond to sensitive questions for fear of retaliation

(McIntosh & Morse, 2015). In my study, I shared the interview questions with the

participants before to the interview and asked them to sign a consent form. Advantages of

using company records are the allowance for data transparency, the ability of other

researchers to replicate the analyses and provide for easier detection of researcher

misconduct (Falle, Rauter, Engert, & Baumgartner, 2016). A disadvantage of relying on

company records is that the organization may not allow the researcher to access the

documents because of privacy concerns or refuse to provide the records to the researcher (Falle et al., 2016; Yin, 2018). I reviewed publicly-available documents contained on the institutions' websites, which included staff handbooks, faculty handbooks, human resources policies, U.S. Department of Education Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System data feedback reports, and the Ohio Department of Education website's employee-by-appointment status and work category reports.

Researchers use pilot studies to determine the feasibility of assessing the adequacy of the research objectives, conducting larger studies, justifying the rationale for a chosen sample size, testing of data collection techniques, and selecting the most suitable outcome measures (Kaur, Figueiredo, Bouchard, Moriello, & Mayo, 2017). However, because of the limited scope of my study, I did not need to conduct a pilot study.

Member checking is the process of returning the results of an interview to research participants for them to validate the accuracy of the data (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Researchers conduct member checking to mitigate researcher bias when analyzing and interpreting interview results (Johnson et al., 2020). Member checking occurs when the researcher presents data transcripts or data interpretations to all the participants for comments (Varpio, Ajjawi, Monrouxe, O'Brien, & Rees, 2017). Johnson et al. (2020) also suggested that member checking involves the testing of all the data to ensure that there is no internal conflict or inconsistencies by allowing the participants to either reject or make changes to the researcher's interpretation of the data. I developed an interpreted summary of the interview

transcripts. I scheduled a 30-to-45-minute face-to-face meeting with participants to validate the interpreted summary of their interview responses as well as correct any misunderstandings or misinterpretation. If the participants suggest the need for significant changes, I will make the changes and ask for their approval of the document.

Data Organization Technique

Researchers are responsible for collecting and organizing their research data using various techniques, such as interviews, databases, data coding, reflective journal, questionnaires, computer audio-recorded devices, qualitative software analysis programs, and research management software (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2016; Wray, 2016). I prepared a Microsoft (MS) Word document file for each of the participants that contained their signed forms, e-mail traffic documents, interview responses and transcribed notes, institutional source documents and reports, and other data that I obtained from the institutions' websites. I recorded the interviews on an audio voice recorder and maintain complete control over the information. To help reduce researcher bias, I maintained a reflective journal throughout the research project. Researchers use software programs to assist with their data analysis (Woods et al., 2016). Some researchers use ATLAS.ti, MAXqda, NVivo, or N6 for data analysis (Woods et al., 2016). I used NVivo 12 for coding and data analysis. Coding helps to guarantee rigor and validity of participants' interviews (Cypress, 2019). I labeled each participant as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 to ensure confidentiality. I transcribed the data and stored the data on a password-protected USB flash drive. I locked the USB flash drive in a safe at my home

when I am not using it. I will retain all files in a locked file for 5 years and afterwards destroy the hard copies and portable flash drive.

Data Analysis

Researchers collect data from various sources as evidence to support their research projects (Yin, 2018). Also, researchers prepare the data for analysis by (a) organizing; (b) transcribing; (c) interpreting; and (d) coding the data to confirm, correct, or discover new knowledge about to study's research question (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Methodological triangulation is the process of using multiple methods and sources to decrease biases and increase the validity and strength of the study (Heesen, Bright, & Zucker, 2016; Joslin & Muller, 2016). Researchers use methodological triangulation as a means of gaining a comprehensive view of the research phenomenon (Cope, 2014). I used methodological triangulation to ensure the dependability of the analyzed data. I used Yin's (2016) recommended five-step process for data analysis, which consists of compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding.

Compiling Data

Compiling data is the process of organizing the data to allow researchers to be familiar with the data (Cornelissen, 2016; Haines, Summers, Turnbull, Turnbull, & Palmer, 2015). Researchers create a database to organize data, such as field notes, interviews, and other materials collected during the study (Haines et al., 2015). I transcribed each interview from the audio recordings. I reviewed field notes and institutional documents for additional insight by comparing data included in the documents related to employee retention strategies. I included the transcribe data in MS

Word documents and stored the documents on my computer with a backup on a secure

flash drive.

Disassembling Data

Disassembling data is the process of performing a content analysis of the data

(Maher, Hadfield, Hutchings, & de Eyto, 2018). Researchers perform data content

analysis to describe, analyze and interpret the meanings that a text contains (Maher et al.,

2018). I disassembled, divided, and labeled the data into different groups using open

coding. I organized the data from the face-to-face interviews by the assigned coding. I

identified similar ideas and themes. I included the data in NVivo 12 for further analysis.

Reassembling Data

Reassembling data is the process of rereading all documents and if necessary,

revising codes to look for any new patterns of data interpretation (Haines et al., 2015).

Researchers use the method of reassembling data to avoid misinterpreting the data

(Maher et al., 2018). I reread all documents and validated whether I needed to revise any

of the codes for proper interpretation. I assessed the validity of the themes to avoid any

misinterpretation of the data. I then reassembled the data for key themes and correlated

the issues with existing literature and new published studies.

Interpreting Data

Interpreting data is the process of making sense of the data to find patterns of

meaning across the data (Cornelissen, 2016). Researchers interpret data after

reassembling data to look for new types of information to confirm existing interpretations

or to rule out alternative explanations (Yin, 2018). I reassessed my understanding of data

to determine if there were any new meanings to the data. I also scheduled an appointment with each participant for member checking purposes to validate my interpretation of the data and sought any additional clarification.

Software Plan

Researchers use computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software to assist with content and data analysis (Haines et al., 2015; Woods et al., 2016; Yin, 2018). The computer-assisted software has features, such as character-based coding, rich text capabilities, theme identification, and multimedia functions to assist researchers with qualitative data management (Woods et al., 2016). Researchers use qualitative data analysis software programs, such as NVivo, to analyze research data. NVivo benefits include time saving, transparent and multiplicity, and processing a significant amount of data (Dollah, Abduh, & Rosmaladewi, 2017). A major benefit of NVivo is that the software program can accommodate different types of data, such as Microsoft Word documents, images, PDFs, video, spreadsheets, web pages, and social media data (Dollah et al., 2017). I used NVivo 12 in conducting my qualitative data analysis. I also used MS Word as my data processing software.

Key Themes

Researchers use qualitative data analysis software programs to identify themes (Dollah et al., 2017; Haines et al., 2015). Researchers also manually seek themes within the data that address the research question (Haines et al., 2015). Researchers use a key feature of NVivo to group related material together (Dollah et al., 2017). I used NVivo to identify key themes and ideas that may develop into themes. I compared the themes to

grasp a better understanding of the participants ideas related to employee retention. As the researcher, I continued to pay attention to the meaning of the data as conveyed by the themes. I continued to review new literature that correlates with the research question and conceptual framework.

Reliability and Validity

Researchers strive for the highest possible quality when conducting and reporting research (Cope, 2014). Reliability deals with demonstrating that a researcher can obtain the same results by repeating the data collection procedure on a consistent basis (Noble & Smith, 2015). Validity refers to whether the researcher's final product conveys that study's results (Haradhan, 2017). In qualitative studies, researchers focus on dependability, which involves the participants' evaluation of the findings to ensure the accuracy of the data to support the findings (Johnson et al., 2020). Other factors include credibility is another factor which conveys the correct interpretation of the participants views, confirmability which affirms that the findings are authentic, and transferability which allows other to compare their experiences to the findings (Johnson et al., 2020). A valid qualitative study exists when a researcher properly interprets the data so that the conclusions accurately reflect and represent the real world that the researcher studied (Yin, 2016). In qualitative research, the researcher focuses on dependability, credibility, confirmability, transferability, and data saturation (Benoot et al., 2016; Cope, 2014).

Dependability

Dependability refers to the constancy of results of data for similar conditions (Cope, 2014). Researchers demonstrate consistency in a data pattern when they use the

same approach to create and analyze the data to replicate the results (Pratt & Yezierski, 2018). Researchers achieve dependability when another researcher concurs with the decisions at each stage of the research process (Cope, 2014).

To enhance dependability, I reviewed the interview protocol, analyzed transcript reviews, and conducted member checking. Researchers use the interview protocol to ascertain participants' perspectives regarding an experience pertaining to the research topic (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Researchers read and reread interview transcripts to become familiar with participants' responses to ensure a proper interpretation of the data occurs (Cornelissen, 2016). Member checking is the process researchers use to allow participants the opportunity to validate the interpretation of their interview responses (Harvey, 2015). I used an interview protocol, analyzed the data objectively, engaged participants in member checking, and reached data saturation to enhance my study's dependability.

Credibility

Researchers provide assurance that their research is credible when they properly collect and interpret the data to reflect and represent the findings and conclusions of the study (Yin, 2016). Researchers use credibility techniques to persuade readers of the quality of analysis and implicitly claim that the study procedure leads to valid and credible findings (Cotos, Huffman, & Link, 2017). The researcher supports credibility by indicating engagement, methods of observation, and audit trails (Cope, 2014).

I used member checking to allow participants the opportunity to correct any misunderstandings or inaccurate interpretations of the interview data. I continued to

employ member checking until I reached data saturation. I used methodological triangulation by reviewing the organizations' monthly hiring and termination staff reports, retention policies, and participant transcript review.

Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the researcher's ability to show that the data represents the participants' responses and not the researcher's viewpoints (Cope, 2014). Confirmability conveys the objectivity of the research study (Johnson & Rasulova, 2017). Researchers use member checking, triangulation, and data saturation to demonstrate the authenticity of their research study (Yin, 2016). Researchers focus on confirmability to validate that the participants made accurate representations of themselves, that documents and other materials are authentic, and the participants did not reveal any new data, themes, or coding (Birt et al., 2016; Maher et al., 2018; Yin, 2016).

I provided all participants a summary transcript of my interpretation of their interview for their comments on the accuracy of the transcripts and further comments. I compared their responses with company source documents and other materials. Finally, I continued the member checking process until I reached the point in which no new data, themes, or coding emerged.

Transferability

Transferability occurs when the research results have meaning to individuals not involved in the study; readers can associate the results with their own experiences (Cope, 2014). Transferability refers to the degree to which the reader judge whether the findings are transferable to other possible contexts (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Yin (2016)

suggested that transferability involves posing a study's implications at a conceptual level higher than that of the specific finds in the initial study. I provided a detail description of the findings to allow others not connected to the study to compare the context of the study to their experience. The detail description will include sufficient information to enable to reader to determine the study's relevance to their situations. I followed the case study protocol associated with interview and member checking processes.

Data Saturation

Data saturation occurs when the researcher builds rich data with the process of inquiry to fully accounts for all categories of data (Saunders et al., 2018). Saturation means that the researcher collected sufficient data to account for all aspects the phenomenon (Tran et al., 2017). To reach data saturation, researchers can use various means, such as interviews, methodological triangulation, and member checking (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Yin, 2016). I used the interview transcripts, member-checking results, and review of company documents to account for all categories of data until no new information, data, themes, or coding emerged.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I reiterated the purpose of the qualitative case study, explained my role as the researcher, and described the participants and the selection criteria I used in the study. I identified the population and sampling method. I explained and justified the research method and design, the sample size, and the data organization and collection techniques. I discussed the ethical considerations and the framework of the data

collection process, the proposed data analysis procedures, and my plan to ensure

credibility, confirmability, dependability, and data saturation.

In Section 3, I will present the findings of the study, provide several applications

for professional practices, and present the implications for social change. Section 3 will

also contain several recommendations for action analyzed from the findings of this study,

recommendations for further research, my reflections of the research process, and a

concluding statement to finalize the study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies some college and university leaders used to retain employees. I conducted semistructured interviews with five leaders from five higher education institutions who implemented successful strategies to retain employees in the Midwest region of the United States. Section 3 includes the presentation of data collection and a detailed explanation of the three themes from the study findings. I also discuss the methodological triangulation achieved by including semistructured interviews, university documents on public educational domains as data sources. I used member checking to validate the accuracy of data interpretation. The themes that emerged from the analysis of the study participants' responses and institutional documents were (a) employees' compensation and benefits strategy, (b) organizational employee commitment strategy, and (c) employee feedback systems to improve working conditions strategy. The three strategies used by the leaders in higher education may be helpful to other institutional leaders seeking to retain valuable employees.

Presentation of the Findings

The research question for this study was, What strategies do college and university leaders use to retain employees? To answer the research question, I conducted semistructured interviews using open-ended questions with two provosts, a vice president of academic affairs, and two college deans who successfully implemented strategies to reduce turnover within the past 5 years. I used NVivo 12 software to identify themes

from the interviews, institutional website documents, and publicly available data to achieve triangulation. I protected the identity and confidentiality of the participants by not using their names or institutions' names. To attain data saturation, I collected data until no new themes or patterns emerged. I identified each participant with a label (P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5). Table 2 is a display of the key strategies leaders in the study used to retain their employees.

Table 2

Strategies College and University Leaders Used to Retain Employees

Strategy	Percentage of use by educational institutions
Employee compensation and benefits	80%
Organizational employee commitment	100%
Employee feedback systems to improve working conditions	80%

Theme 1: Employee Compensation and Benefits Strategy

The first theme identified during the data analysis process was employee compensation and benefits. Four of the five participants indicated that employee compensation and benefits were relevant to employees and their decision to remain with the institutions. Salary and incentive-based pay along with fringe benefits were the key subthemes of Theme 1. Table 3 is a display of the subthemes of the compensation and benefits strategy along with the percentage of use by the participants' educational institutions.

Table 3

Subthemes of Employee Compensation and Benefits Strategy

Subtheme	Participants	Percentage of use by educational institutions
Salary and incentives	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5	100%
Benefits	P1, P2, P3, P4	80%

Salary and incentives. Three of the five participants noted that employees were willing to accept a lower initial salary if the employees believed that there were future opportunities for salary increases. P2 stated, "Faculty members can earn extra compensation by teaching summer courses, and qualified staff members can also teach courses and do supplemental work for additional compensation." P5 also noted, "Faculty members can obtain additional compensation by writing grants and participating on special committee projects." Two of the five participants said they offered competitive salaries to their employees. P1 and P3 revealed that they offer very competitive salaries to their employees to keep pace with competitors. Also, P1 stated, "Salary offers and adjustments after they are hired are based on their classification." This finding confirmed the research of Mabaso and Diamini (2018), who noted that universities should carry out salary revisions to develop a reward management structure that is externally competitive and internally fair. I discovered from the faculty and staff handbooks located on the institutions' websites that all five participants' institutions offered employees salary adjustments based on annual performance evaluations, promotions, and years of service. All five participants' institutions compensated their faculty for course work beyond normal workload (teaching more than 24 semester hours during the academic year).

Benefits. Four of the five participants' institutions offered liberal benefits packages as incentives to retain employees. P1 stated, "The university has a robust benefits package including an above-average retirement contribution and an additional matching contribution program for employees who elect to participate in it." P1 also noted, "Recently some new benefits options (dental, new life insurance, etc.) have been made available at employees' expense, but they are at a reduced cost due to the group nature of the policies." This finding confirmed the research of Kristal et al. (2020) in that benefits determination is more organizationally embedded than wages mainly because workplaces have greater ability and incentive to alter benefits. Consequently, workplace compensation practices, including type of employment relations, are more important for benefits than for wages (Kristal et al., 2020). P3 revealed that its institution included in its benefits package a tax-deferred annuity; saving programs; retirement benefits including matching retirement funds; health, long-term disability, dental, and life insurance; free parking, and paid holidays. P2 indicated the institution offers employees a liberal fringe benefit package such as various leave programs; professional and personal leaves of absence; and health, life, disability, dental, and vision insurance packages. I validated the interview data from P2 and P3 by reviewing their institutions' website, finding corroborating information within the faculty and support personnel handbook. Four of the five participants' institutions offered tuition assistance and tuition exchange programs for undergraduate and graduate courses and children and spouse tuition assistance after employees had completed at least 2 years of continuous service.

I reviewed the institutions' websites containing faculty and staff handbooks, which included an outline of the salary requirement based on the employee's position and the benefits available to employees. I also reviewed the full-time instructional and nonmedical staff salary data contained in the U.S. Department of Education Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System for 2015-2018. I used methodological triangulation to ensure the validity of my study findings. Researchers use methodological triangulation to validate data saturation, credibility, validity, and reliability of the data (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Yin, 2016). I focused on publicly available documents to enhance my research processes and to crosscheck the credibility of the interview data. Also, I used my journal entries to further the methodological triangulation process.

The findings regarding university leaders using employee compensation and benefits strategy aligned with the motivation-hygiene theory. Herzberg et al. (1959) identified salary as a hygiene factor that leads to employee dissatisfaction and possible employee turnover. Salary, conversely, can also prevent dissatisfaction. University leaders who understand the importance that employee compensation and benefits strategies have on employee retention should offer a competitive salary and benefits to retain valuable employees.

Theme 2: Organizational Employee Commitment Strategy

The second theme identified during the data analysis process was the organizational employee commitment strategy. All five participants confirmed that the organizational employee commitment strategy was an effective means to minimize employee turnover. All five participants acknowledged that employees expected their

organization to provide (a) professional development, (b) promotion opportunities, and (c) job security as conditions of continued employment. Table 4 is a display of the subthemes of the organizational employee commitment strategy along with the percentage of use by the participants' educational institutions.

Table 4

Subthemes of Organizational Employee Commitment Strategy

Subtheme	Participants	Percentage of use by educational institutions
Professional development	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5	100%
Promotion opportunities	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5	100%
Job security	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5	100%

Professional development. P1 stated, "It supports professional development support for faculty each year to maintain licenses, organizational memberships, journal subscriptions, etc." This finding confirmed the research of Burton (2020) in that professional development fosters technical growth, professional learning quality, collaboration with liked-minded individuals to improve their educational knowledge base and skill set. P3 commented that the institution allows faculty time to attend professional development seminars, conduct research, and apply for scholarship opportunities. P2 and P5 acknowledged that in addition to professional development and faculty development programs, staff, and trade employees were encouraged to take advantage of tuition assistance and tuition exchange programs for undergraduate and graduate courses. P4 stated, "The institution offers faculty members release time for visiting professor

opportunities at another institution, research, an externship in the industry to experience best practices in the field and attend professional conferences." P4, commented that "The institution provides free tuition for administrative personnel and trade professionals who want to change their career path." This finding confirmed the research of Smolinska and Dzyubynska (2020), who concluded that the professional development of teachers should contribute to improving the quality of education, the implementation of strategic tasks, and the development of the professional community.

Promotion opportunities. All participants noted the value of providing employees with promotion opportunities regarding improving employee retention rates. P2 stated, "Faculty members on tenure track compete for promotions, and staff members can apply for an in-house position for which they qualify." P1 stated, for those in the tenure track, research support is provided to give them every opportunity to be successful in their pursuit of tenure." This finding confirmed the research of Ting et al. (2020) in that employees prefer tangible and visible attributes, such as income, promotion, and job level, based on their effort and outcome. P3 noted that tenure track faculty members have the opportunity to obtain tenure status and promotion opportunity to a position as a department chair, dean, associate positions, or provost." P4 and P5 acknowledged that their institutions were able to attract adjunct and visiting professors by providing promotion opportunities for the professors to obtain a full-time professorship. I used information from the faculty and staff handbooks from each other institutions to verify the interview data regarding promotion opportunities and the requirements to obtain ensure status.

Job security. All five participants' institutions offered employees an opportunity to participate in bargaining units to enhance job security. Each educational institution' website contained information regarding collective bargaining units and the employees' ability to participate in collective bargaining. P1 stated,

> Layoffs have seldom occurred in the university's history, and the administration works hard to avoid situations where they would be necessary. The administration is transparent about the university's financial situation, so employees tend to trust that the administration is making wise decisions even when they are difficult ones.

This finding confirmed the research of Kim (2019) in that employees that believe to have high levels of job security may trust and increase the quality of their organizational belonging. P3 noted, employees who received annual contracts felt very secure in their position with the organization and were motivated to volunteer for extra assignments to meet the institution's mission. P1 acknowledged, "The university maintains a very rigorous hiring process to ensure that prospective hires are engaged with and committed to the university's mission and hires for the long term." P4 stated, "Employees are searching for a career package, including but not limited to, a comfortable institution culture, career path, diversity of responsibility, and job security." P5 indicated, employees considered job security as one of their main considerations for working at the institution.

I reviewed the institutions' websites containing faculty and staff handbooks which outlined the procedures for competing for professional development opportunities. I also

validated the promotion and tenure criteria contained in the institutions' faculty and staff

handbooks and human resources policies. The findings regarding university leaders'

employing organization commitment to employees' strategy aligned with the motivation-

hygiene theory. Herzberg et al. (1959) identified advancement, growth, and security as

factors influencing employee motivation to remain with the job. University leaders

focusing on organization commitment to employees' strategies can increase the retention

of valuable professionals and reducing unnecessary personnel costs.

Theme 3: Employee Feedback Systems to Improve Working Conditions Strategy

The third theme identified during the data analysis process was the employee

feedback systems to improve the working conditions strategy. All five participants

confirmed that the employee feedback to improve working conditions strategy influenced

whether employees remain with an organization. Employees provide university leaders

with feedback through different mechanisms. In most instances, employees share their

concerns with university leaders to improve working conditions. Table 5 is a display of

the subthemes of the employee feedback systems to improve working conditions strategy,

coupled with the percentage of use of the participants' educational institutions.

Table 5

Subthemes of Employee Feedback Systems to Improve Working Conditions Strategy

Subtheme	Participants	Percentage of use by educational institutions
Workplace and job satisfaction surveys	P1, P3, P4, P5	80%
Town hall forums and monthly meetings	P1, P3, P4, P5	80%
Exit interviews	P1, P3, P4	60%

Workplace and job satisfaction surveys. Four of the five participants stated they used workplace satisfaction surveys to solicit employees' input to improve working conditions. P1 noted that the university uses workplace and job satisfaction surveys to ascertain employee concerns. P1 stated, "The Vice President of Academics uses the faculty review system to inquire about issues that may cause the faculty member to consider leaving. The university encourages an atmosphere where employees feel comfortable discussing concerns." P3 stated, "Managers use employee satisfaction surveys to address employees' concerns and suggestions for workplace improvement." P4 stated,

> Managers must start by listening to employees and solicit their input. For example, survey employees by having them complete questionnaires whereby they rate their general satisfaction with the organization and their jobs on a scale of 1-10 with one being dissatisfied and 10 being very satisfied.

P5 noted, "We give employees a platform to voice their concerns. The platform consists of employee surveys and one-on-one meetings with their department chair. Managers must also provide feedback and the status of all concerns the employees addressed." This finding confirmed the research of Alamsyah and Ginting (2018) in that companies could retain their employees by prioritizing what matters most to their workforce and ensuring that employees are motivated and enthusiastic about work every day, and better understand employee voice.

Town hall forums and monthly meetings. Four of five participants indicated that they use an all-hands town hall forum and monthly faculty and staff meetings to solicit employee concerns to improve working conditions. P1 stated, "The President and Vice President for Academics set up town halls for faculty and staff to raise issues of concern to be addressed." P5 noted, "We have monthly faculty and staff meetings where we invite the President to discuss workplace concerns. The President commits to providing feedback on all concerns discussed in the meetings." P3 indicated that the use of town halls to share with employees the state of the institution and institutional concerns was a valuable venue to disseminate information and receive feedback. P4 stated, "Managers hold two town hall meetings during the semester and monthly faculty meetings to discuss concerns and process improvement opportunities." This finding confirmed the research of Alamsyah and Ginting (2018), who noted that to analyze employee voice, companies used surveys, interviews, employee forums, or social networks.

Exit interviews. Three of five participants indicated that they use employee exit interviews to identify reasons the employees decided to leave the organization and any workplace concerns that the institution can address to improve working conditions. P1 stated,

> University human resources completes an exit interview with all employees who leave the university. Human resources shared the information from these interviews with vice presidents from the division associated with the employee so

that if there are areas of concern raised, the vice president will respond moving

forward.

This finding confirmed the research of Givens-Skeaton and Ford (2018), who noted exit

interviewers and human resources managers must uncover the real causes of voluntary

turnover to improve their employee retention rate. P3 noted, "Human resources conduct

exit interviews when an employee resigns to identify any concerns or systemic problems

that caused the employee to separate." P4 indicated, "systematically, human resources

professionals interview employees before they leave to determine reasons for departure,

conduct an analysis of mitigating factors, and determine the need for systemic

improvements." I reviewed the institutions' websites containing their human resources

polices concerning administering workplace and job satisfaction surveys and exit

interviews. I also validated the workplace and job satisfaction and exit interviews

procedures in the institutions' faculty and staff handbooks.

The findings regarding university leaders using employee feedback to improve

working condition strategy align with the motivation-hygiene theory. Herzberg et al.

(1959) identified that employees consider working conditions as a factor that influences

an employee's intention to remain with an organization. Herzberg (1968) suggested that

employees need motivators that give them real satisfaction to perform at their best.

University leaders focusing on employee feedback to improve working conditions

strategies can enhance employees' voices resulting in improving working conditions and

retaining valuable employees.

Applications to Professional Practice

Higher education institutions play a vital role in the distribution of knowledge and skills for sustainable development of societal structures (Roos & Guenther, 2019). Modern higher education institutions can become the basis for sustainable development of the region by preparing future responsible employers, workers, producers and consumers, investors, and other stakeholders (Trunina & Khovrak, 2019). Leaders of higher education institutions must work extremely hard to ensure their sustainability and growth to meet the ever-increasing demands of university students, parents, and stakeholders (Ntoyakhe & Ngibe, 2020). Employee retention strategies are an integral part of a successful organization's vision, values, and policies (Cloutier et al., 2015). University leaders in higher education institutions might use the findings in this study to develop strategies to retain valuable employees.

University leaders could implement employee compensation and benefits strategies to encourage employees to stay with their institution. Employees are motivated to remain with an institution when they are satisfied with their salary and opportunities to increase their compensation. Institution leaders can also attract long-term employees when the institution offers a liberal benefits package. Effective use of employee motivation factors influences employees to perform at their highest levels.

University leaders who engaged in employing organizational employee commitment strategies experienced lower employee turnover. Employees' commitment to organizations increases when employees perceive that their institution is willing to invest in their future. Employees are eager to remain with their institution when they have

evidence that university leaders offer opportunities for professional development, promotions, and job security. Effective use of showing employees that an institution is committed to their success fosters employees' willingness to give back to the institution.

University leaders who used employee feedback to improve working conditions strategies increase employee retention for current and future employees. When university leaders listen to their voices and act on their concerns, employees sense a state of belonging to their institution to improve working conditions and relations. University leaders must not only provide an avenue for employees to voice their concerns, but also to report to the employees what action they have taken to address their concerns. Effective acknowledging the value of employees' voices for improvements in organizations' policies and practices help retain valuable employees.

To be competitive and sustainable, higher education institutions must attract and retain high-performing and committed employees. The application of findings in this study could help higher education institutions leaders minimize employee turnover, reduce unnecessary personnel cost, increase financial stability, and improve employee morale.

Implications for Social Change

University leaders implementing effective strategies to retain employees can contribute to positive social change by increasing student enrollment, improving student learning opportunities outcomes, and graduation rates (Garibay, 2015). Institutions that retain employees also provide a stable community environment. College graduates have more employment opportunities, earn higher wages, and contribute more time and

resources to the community and civic organizations than those who do not have a college degree (Stephens et al., 2015). Higher education institutions that maintain a stable workforce will increase their leadership contributions to their communities by serving on community boards and committees and providing expertise in resolving community issues.

Higher education institutions' stable presence fosters community respect and trust for students, employees, community residences, and stakeholders regarding business ethics, social responsibility, and social involvement. Institutions leaders play an essential role in community relations and providing a voice to diversity and inclusion. Colleges and university leaders can positively contribute to social change by creating employment opportunities; thereby, increasing the community's standard of living.

Recommendations for Action

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies some college and university leaders use to keep employees. I recommend that university leaders use effective employee compensation and benefits strategies to retain valuable employees. Employees value salary incentives and benefits as job satisfaction factors that contribute to their happiness and commitment to the organization. Implementing the findings in this study, university leaders may reduce employee turnover, improve employee productivity, and minimize the cost of employee replacement, recruitment, and training.

I recommend university leaders utilize effective organizational employee commitment strategies to supports employees' success. Employees are willing to remain

with an organization when they know that their employer will invest in their future. Employees consider professional development, promotion opportunities, and job security as critical factors toward their success. The findings in this study provide university leaders with opportunities to demonstrate to employees the supported efforts they are willing to devote to their success and professional development.

I recommend that university leaders implement effective employee feedback systems to improve working conditions. Employees want to have nonthreatening systems to communicate to managers their concerns. When employees believe that their employer cares about their concerns, issues, and suggestions, the employees feel more confident in the work environments. An effective employee feedback system can improve working conditions and reduce employee turnover. Employers that implement workplace and job satisfaction surveys, town hall forums, and monthly employee meetings and exit interviews can minimize employee turnover.

Hangel and Schmidt-Pfister (2017) noted that researchers publishing findings of their study contribute to the existing body of knowledge. I intend to publish the findings from this study to enhance the body of knowledge in higher education business administration and management. I plan to develop and submit the findings from this study to various academic journals, such as the *American Educational Research Journal*, *Higher Education Quarterly*, and *Review of Higher Education*. I will seek out higher education conferences and individual colleges and universities to present my findings. I will also publish my study in ProQuest.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some college and university leaders use to retain employees. A limitation of my study was a small sample size from five colleges and universities. I recommend future researchers increase the sample size to gain more diverse data. I recommend further research on the topic using a quantitative method to test the relationship among variables, such as turnover rate, compensation, benefits, professional development, promotions, workplace and job satisfaction surveys, and exit interviews to overcome the limitation of this case study of no generalizability to a larger population.

Another limitation of my study was applying the study in the geographic region of the Midwest region of the United States. I recommend a future researcher conduct a qualitative multiple case study in a different region of the United States to test the transferability of the finding of my study. Further researchers could benefit from gaining innate knowledge from the perspectives of other populations.

A further limitation was that the eligibility requirement that participants must be leaders who used effective strategies to retain employees. Many first-level supervisors and managers do not have the authority to implement retention strategies, but make crucial decisions concerning employees continued employment. The impact of a supervisor's or manager's decision can have an impact on an organization's retention strategy. I recommend future researchers include various levels of management. I recommend further research using a mixed-method approach to collect both numeric data for statistical analysis and interview data to improve the richness of the information.

Reflections

Wow, what a journey! The moment I adopted the mindset that embarking on a doctorate is a journey and not a race, I intentionally focused on the excitement of the educational experience. With my change of perception, I developed an enormous appreciation for the volume of academic literature that is available to doctoral students. Along this journey, I reminded myself of my chairperson's (Dr. Ronald Jones) advice concerning "Managing Expectations of the Review Process." Although he spoke primarily about the review process, I applied his advice to my journey at Walden University. Explicitly, he stated, "by managing your expectations, you will be better prepared to cope with the emotional and mental aspects of completing your doctoral study." His advice has enabled me to stay focused and realize that I will achieve the goal of earning a doctorate with the right attitude and mindset.

One of the most rewarding experiences of this program was meeting some of my peers at various residence experiences. Putting a face to a name was a reminder that I am not alone in this process. But it also allowed me to share and be on the receiving end of positive thoughts concerning the Doctor of Business Administration degree program. I will always cherish those experiences.

I also think it is essential to share that I thought about withdrawing from the program at various times. But every time that I completed a course or accomplished a specific milestone, such as approval of my prospectus, proposal, or approved IRB application, I celebrated and reminded myself that I could do this! One of the enormous benefits that the doctoral program afforded me was the exposure to global knowledge.

Under normal circumstances, I would have never had an opportunity to be exposed to the peer-reviewed documents, studies, and dissertations that enhance my knowledge base. It is clear to me that knowledge is power.

Finally, I have learned that employee retention is critical to the successful functioning of an organization. Although turnover will occur in an organization, too much turnover is very costly to organizations. Therefore, employers must be willing to invest in their employees to create a win-win situation for all.

Conclusion

University leaders who use effective employee compensation and benefits, organizational employee commitment, and employee feedback systems to improve working conditions strategies can retain valuable employees. The purpose of this qualitative multiple study was to explore strategies some college and university leaders in the Midwest region of the United States used to retain employees. The participants in this study consisted of five university leaders from five different institutions of higher education. The strategies that the participants used resulted in maintaining a lower employee turnover rate of 85% of the time over turnover rates reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor for the education sector for 2015-2018. The findings indicated that university leaders that invest in their employees' welfare, support their careers, and give voice to their concerns improve employees' productivity and retain their services. Applying the application of professional practice findings in this study could help higher education institutions leaders minimize employee turnover, reduce unnecessary personnel costs, increase financial stability, and improve employee morale. Colleges and university

leaders can positively contribute to social change by creating employment opportunities leading to expanding the community standard of living, fostering community respect and trust for students, employees, community residences, and stakeholders regarding business ethics, social responsibility, and social involvement.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Participant # _____   Date of Interview _____

Hello, my name is Michael Simmons. I am a doctoral student at Walden

University. Part of my requirements to complete my Doctor of Business Administration

(DBA) degree program is to conduct a research study on the topic of employee retention

strategies in United States colleges and universities. Once completed, my study will

partially fulfill the requirements of the DBA program at Walden University.

First, I would like to say thank you for your willingness to participate in this

research study to allow me to explore effective retention strategies used to reduce

voluntary turnover. With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview to

ensure that the representation and transcription of your perspectives are accurate. I want

to reiterate that at any time during the interview that you change your mind and wish not

to be recorded, please let me know and I will stop the recording of the interview. [Get

participant's verbal agreement to record interview and begin recording.]

Second, your responses to the interview questions will be confidential. Your

responses to the interview questions that I will ask you today will help me explore your

perspective on management retention strategies and your views on the effectiveness of

these strategies on retaining employees. Before we get started with the actual interview, I

want to make sure you have reviewed the Consent to Participate form that was sent to

you with your invitation email. Do you have any other questions you would like to ask

regarding the form, or your participation in this study? [Pause for any questions] Be sure

to keep a copy of the Consent to Participate document for your records.

Third, just to reiterate some of the key points about your participation in this study before we get started with the interview: (a) participation in this research study is strictly voluntary, (b) you can withdraw from the study at any time before, during or after the interview (c) the audio recording of this interview along with any other electronic document pertaining to you or data collected for this study will be downloaded on a password protected USB Flash drive. Any manual documents and the USB Flash Drive will then be maintained in a locked deposit box for a period of 5 years. At the end of the 5-year period all data and other documents will be destroyed. Are there any additional questions you have that I can answer? [If yes, then answer the questions; if no, proceed to the interview questions below].

Finally, once again, thank you for your willingness to participate in this research study. I am glad that you are here to share your thoughts concerning employee retention strategies in U.S. colleges and universities. You may ask me any questions at any time during the interview.

Interview Questions

1) What strategies do you use to retain employees?

2) How, if at all, do you tailor your retention strategies to different employee classifications, such as faculty, administrators, and trade professionals?

3) What strategies do you use to improve employee satisfaction?

4) What strategies do you use to minimize employee turnover?

5) What strategies were effective in retaining employees?

6) How do you gauge the effectiveness of your strategies to retain employees?

7) What additional information would you like to share about strategies you use to

   retain employees?

Appendix B: The National Institutes of Health Certification

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Michael Simmons** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 03/12/2016.

Certification Number: 2030918.