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Leadership Strategies for Reducing Turnover Within Child Welfare Departments

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Abstract

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MS, Walden University, 2012

BS, University of South Florida, 2009

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Employee turnover costs companies billions of dollars annually and can damage business sustainability. Childcare managers who lack leadership strategies may struggle to reduce employee turnover. Grounded in the motivation-hygiene theory, the purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore leadership strategies childcare managers in Polk County, Florida, use to reduce employee turnover. Data were collected through semistructured face-to-face interviews with 5 purposively selected childcare managers who have used leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover. Data were also collected via field notes, observations, and company documents. Four themes emerged from the thematic analysis of the data: open communication, feedback and meeting, coaching and training, and open dialogue and transparency. A key recommendation includes implementing a combination of effective leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover in child welfare organizations. The implications for positive social change include the potential for childcare managers to create job opportunities and provide social amenities and welfare, thereby boosting economic growth for local communities.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study in memory of my grandmother, the late Dr. Eva C. Wanton. You are my inspiration! You encouraged me to pursue my dreams despite adversity and to never give up. You achieved so much in your life with earning three PhDs and becoming the founding Dean of General Studies at Florida A&M University. I made a promise to you that I would successfully complete this program, and I am so honored that I fulfilled my promise. This accomplishment is a result of your unwavering love and the foundation you laid for me. A thank you will never be enough; I love you forever and always, my Birdy. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, Larry and the late Debra Mitchell, for instilling in me the drive and desire to overcome any challenge or obstacle that I face in this life with my faith in God. I know now more than ever that with God all things are possible. I am also ever grateful for my baby sister, Lark, without you, I don't know what I would do. I appreciate your support and love forever and always. I dedicate this work and give special thanks to my husband, Brandon Keith Whitten, and my wonderful children, Lyric and Landon Whitten, for being there for me throughout the entire doctoral program. You all have been my best cheerleaders.

Table of Contents

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Employee turnover has become a widespread concern for human resource managers globally (Pepra-Mensah, Adjei, & Yeboah-Appiagyei, 2015). In the United States, approximately 60 million employees left their jobs in 2015 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). Employee turnover costs businesses more than $25 billion per year (Corso, Visser, Ingles, & Perou, 2015). This qualitative single case study was an attempt to explore the leadership strategies that child welfare managers use to reduce turnover rates in their workplaces. The exploration of existing retention models and the result of this qualitative case study could help managers reduce turnover rates within child welfare agencies, especially child protective services. Child care managers should understand the leadership strategies for improving staff motivation to reduce employee turnover rates.

Background of the Problem

Employee turnover is damaging to the sustainability of business organizations (Pepra-Mensah et al., 2015). Children who are victims of abuse, abandonment, and neglect are often rendered services and supervision through child welfare agencies. Dameron-Brown (2015) identified some factors that influence turnover within the human service field to include lack of training, high caseloads, stress, and the inability of employees to maintain a positive balance in their careers. These factors negatively impact continuity, accurate findings for investigations, and permanency for the children, thereby resulting in delay.

Employers may benefit from practical strategies that enhance retention and recruitment of competent staff (Sayer, Barriball, Bliss, & Bakhshi, 2016). Because of the

increased need to improve retention efforts among child welfare organizations, additional research studies are necessary to help child welfare managers develop better retention strategies. With increasing complexity and demand for services in the child welfare system, business leaders are focusing on interventions, which may include systematic changes to improve staff retention in their organizations (Heffernan & Viggian, 2015). The findings from this study could help child welfare service providers gain knowledge on leadership strategies for reducing employee turnover.

Problem Statement

One of the worst problems that Florida's child welfare system is facing is turnover. The turnover rate in Polk County, Florida, is estimated at 80% (Menzel, 2018), and 69% of social service workers in the state of Florida feel undervalued by their managers (Dameron-Brown, 2015). The general business problem is that child welfare service providers experience employee retention issues. The specific business problem is that some managers in the child welfare industry lack the leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the leadership strategies managers use in child welfare service departments to reduce employee turnover. The targeted population comprised of five child welfare managers who have successfully implemented leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover in the Department of Children and Families in Polk County, Florida. Implications for positive social change include providing useful information on how to reduce employee turnover

in child welfare services. Future and current managers in child welfare departments could use the findings of this study as a model for implementing leadership strategies to retain skilled social workers. The results of this study could help child care managers gain knowledge and promote strong foundations for building trusting relationships among child welfare workers and the families they serve. Implications of positive social change from this study could include improving community growth, stable employment, and continuity of care with the families these child welfare organizations serve.

Nature of the Study

The three research methods researchers use are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Akimowicz, Vyn, Cummings, & Landman, 2018; Fujii, Ziegler, & Mackey, 2016). For this study, I used the qualitative method to explore the leadership strategies child care managers use to improve workers' motivation and reduce employee turnover in the child welfare industry. I explored the experiences of child care managers within the context of a phenomenon with the use of the qualitative method. According to Yin (2017), researchers use a qualitative exploratory case study to observe, interview, and collect data from participants. The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because the purpose of the research was exploratory.

Quantitative researchers examine constructs' relationships, test hypotheses, and create numerical data, ignoring human behavioral factors that cannot be quantified (Barnham, 2015; Makrakis & Kostoulas-Makrakis, 2016). A quantitative research design was not appropriate for the study because the goal was not to quantify data or test hypotheses but to provide a contextualized description of the focal phenomenon.

According to Almeida (2018) and Archibald, Radil, Zhang, and Hanson (2015), researchers use a mixed-method approach to study both quantitative and qualitative data. Researchers use the mixed-method approach to identify multiple ways to investigate a research problem (Fujii, Ziegler, & Mackey, 2016). The mixed-method approach was not sustainable for this study because the purpose of this study was not to quantify or examine data but to explore the leadership strategies managers use in child welfare service departments to retain skilled employees.

Some qualitative research designs are phenomenology, ethnography, narrative, and case study. I used a qualitative exploratory single case study design for this research. The case study design is suitable when the researcher seeks to understand real-life events by asking open-ended questions (Guo, Porschitz, & Alves, 2018). Researchers use the case study design to gain an in-depth exploration of participants' perceptions using multiple sources, which include interviews and document review (Yin, 2017). A case study approach was suitable for exploring strategies managers use because it provides a real-life scenario from the perspective of the participants. A qualitative single exploratory case study was the most appropriate research design because I was exploring the leadership strategies that child care managers use to reduce employee turnover.

Qualitative researchers use the phenomenological design to study a participant's lived experience related to an event or phenomenon (Thomas, 2016). Phenomenological researchers do not involve the interaction of self and the environment during the collection of data from at least two sources, such as documentation and interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The phenomenology design was not appropriate for this study

because the focus of the research was not to explore individual lived experiences but leadership strategies for reducing employee turnover from the professional experience of child care managers. Qualitative researchers use the ethnography design to share, participate, and seek to experience the cultural environment of their study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The ethnography design was unsuitable for this study because the focus of the study was not on cultural experience but on leadership strategies for reducing employee turnover. Narrative researchers use chronological or narrative formed interviews to explore life experience stories from individuals or groups (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The narrative design was not appropriate for this study because the purpose of this study was not to study the life experience of an individual or group but to explore leadership strategies for reducing employee turnover.

Research Question

The overarching research question for this study is: What leadership strategies do successful managers in child welfare services departments use to reduce employee turnover?

Interview Questions

1. What leadership strategies do you use to the reduce turnover rate within the department?

2. How did you identify strategies designed to reduce turnover?

3. How long have you been using the identified strategies?

4. How were these strategies implemented?

5. How do you evaluate the effect of the strategy on the company's operational performance?

6. How does the company incorporate employee feedback into management's decision-making process?

7. What other information can you provide on strategies to minimize turnover?

Conceptual Framework

The motivation-hygiene theory proposed by Herzberg in 1959 was the theoretical framework for this study. Researchers use the concept of motivation to explain behaviors such as turnover intentions of employees concerning employee performance and work environment (Herzberg et al., 2011). The lack of an effective implementation strategy could result in retention disparity (Herzberg et al., 2011). The tenets of the motivation-hygiene theory consist of work-related needs and job-related factors. Work-related needs include (a) promotion of employees' achievement, (b) improvement of employees' competence, and (c) promotion of personal value, which correspond to an increase in satisfaction and motivation to work (Andrew, Jamieson, Kirk, & Wright, 2015; Herzberg et al., 2011). Job-related needs consist of (a) proper supervision and management of employees, (b) working conditions and environment, and (c) interpersonal relations on the job (Herzberg et al., 2011; Jamieson et al., 2015).

The motivation-hygiene theory applies to this study because the theory is a useful tool researcher to explore leadership strategies concerning employee retention. The child welfare sector is service oriented. Employee services are critical to accomplish providing services to clients. There is an expected positive connection between motivation and

leadership strategies that could influence employee turnover. The employee retention perspectives identified in the motivation-hygiene theory are the lenses for exploring the leadership strategies that child care managers use to reduce staff turnover in the Department of Children and Families in Polk County, Florida.

Definition of Terms

Child protective services: The preventive and protective services for children who experience abuse and/or neglect (Texas Department of Families and Protective Services, 2016).

Child welfare: An array of services designed to ensure that children are safe and that families have the necessary support to care for children successfully (Yampolskaya, Armstrong, Strozier, & Swanke, 2017).

Employee turnover: The change in a workforce during a definite period (Morriss, 2017).

Employee turnover intention: Intentions among employees to bring about a change in the workforce during a period (Carpenter et al., 2017).

Human resource management: Managing people as assets that are fundamental to the competitive advantage of the organization (Pepra-Mensah et al., 2015).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions in a qualitative research study reflect characteristics or aspects believed to be true without confirmation or verification (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Pemberton-Jones, 2015). The first assumption was that child care managers lack

leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover. The second assumption of this study was that participants would be a true representative of the population under study and would honestly answer the interview questions. Qualitative researchers use open-ended questions during interviews to identify underlying barriers to operational effectiveness (Yin, 2017). The third assumption was that the participants would share real life experiences concerning the research topic during the interview. The fourth assumption was rooted in the belief that effective leadership strategies could lead to reduced employee turnover.

Limitations

Limitations are the gaps and weaknesses in a research study that are out of the researchers' control (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). I identified four limitations within the context of this study. The first limitation was the choice of a single case study. The results may differ if the study involved other qualitative designs. The second limitation was that the research was specific to child welfare managers in Polk County, Florida. The results may vary if the study involved a larger geographical area and the industrial sector. According to Berg, Witteloostuijn, and Brempt (2017), limitations inhibit researchers from researching according to their wishes. The third limitation was that the sample size was limited to five child welfare managers. The study results may vary by using a larger or smaller sample size. The final limitation was that the work environment is the single case organization. The results may differ if the study explored the phenomenon in different organizations.

Delimitations

The delimitation of a research study is how researcher has control to limit the scope of information or data included in an investigation (Eisner, 2017). Delimitations are the characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of a study (Holloway & Galvin, 2017; Yusuf, 2015). This study had three delimitations. The first delimitation was the geographic boundary of the study, which was at Polk County, Florida. The second delimitation was the choice to explore the child care industrial sector in this qualitative single exploratory case study. The third delimitation was related to the sample size. I interviewed five child welfare managers who have served for at least 2 years.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The findings from this study could provide child welfare managers with a practical model to develop leadership strategies for reducing employee turnover. Contributions to the business practice of this study include reducing costs associated with attrition and ensuring the safety of the children under the services of the Department of Children and Families in Polk County, Florida. The findings of this study could fill gaps in understanding effective leadership strategies that positively influence retention efforts. Results from the study may provide information about how leadership strategies and styles influence turnover intentions in the field of child welfare services. Child welfare leaders may gain a better understanding of ways to improve employee job satisfaction, which could result in better performance and growth of the organization.

Implications for Social Change

The results of this study could significantly contribute to positive social change to the people and communities involved. The implications for positive social change from this study include policy and operational improvement, which could reduce employee turnover and positively influence the community by creating additional gainful employment for people within the community. By reducing employee turnover, local government welfare agencies could save money, continue to ensure the protection of children, and could fund additional societal benefit programs. Child welfare center employees may become more knowledgeable of effective leadership strategies leading to an ability to meet the needs of children and families more successfully.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

Researchers and practitioners have recognized the need to study the retention and turnover rates within the child welfare arena (National Child Welfare Workforce Institute, 2010). The content of this literature review is primarily focused on prior studies and research conducted within the child welfare profession. The review of the literature indicates that researchers have studied the turnover rate of child welfare professionals. However, few qualitative studies exist on strategies managers could use to reduce turnover intention among child welfare professionals. Further research is necessary to explore the turnover intention within the child welfare segment to identify leadership strategies managers could use in child welfare service departments to retain skilled employees. This study may contribute and expound the existing knowledge on the

turnover intention within the child welfare arena. In this section, I discussed the strategy for writing academic and professional literature.

I performed an extensive review of the literature regarding leadership strategies and employee turnover rates in the child welfare sector. The sources of information for this literature review included peer-reviewed scholarly articles, academic books, seminars, and professional journals. I used the following databases to search the literature for this study: Google Scholar, Walden University library, online resources, reports provided within the child welfare training and conferences, ProQuest, Business Source Complete, ABI/INFORM, and SAGE. Other sources of information include archival data from a single organization's database. I used the following keywords: *leadership strategies, retention, turnover,* and *child welfare services.* Of the 191 peer-reviewed sources that were relevant and applicable to the research question, 163 (85.3%) of the resources were published within the last 5 years.

Motivation-Hygiene Theory

Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory constitutes the conceptual foundation of this study. Herzberg was interested in people's motivation and job satisfaction and conceptualized the motivation-hygiene theory (Kuijk, 2018). Using moderate sampling, Herzberg researched by asking people about their good and bad experiences at work. Based on the results, Herzberg developed a theory purporting that people's job satisfaction depends on two factors: satisfaction (motivators) and dissatisfaction (hygiene factors). According to Herzberg (2015), people are not content with the satisfaction of lower-order needs at work, such as minimum salary levels and

safe work environments. Instead, people look for gratification of higher-level psychological needs that include recognition, responsibility, and advancement (Herzberg, 1959).

After further studies, Herzberg introduced a new dimension to the motivation-hygiene theory and stated that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not on a continuum with one increasing as the other diminishes but are independent of each other. The motivation-hygiene theory suggests that to improve job attitudes and production, administrators must recognize both sets of characteristics and should not assume that increasing satisfaction leads to decrease in dissatisfaction and vice versa (Hertzberg, 1966). Researchers apply motivation-hygiene theory to examine the concept of motivation and explain behaviors such as turnover intentions of employees about employee performance and work environment (Herzberg et al., 2011). The motivation-hygiene theory is an ideal framework for exploring the leadership strategies managers use to reduce turnover within child welfare departments.

Herzberg's theory focuses on internal work factors as employee motivation (Hackman, 1976). To increase job enrichment for employees, Herzberg created the opportunity for employees to take part in planning, performance, and evaluation of their tasks (Herzberg et al., 2011). Hertzberg suggested four approaches to involving employees in their job planning, performance, and evaluation. The first approach is removing some control management has over employees and increasing employees' accountability and responsibility for their work. The second approach is creating complete and natural work units. The third approach is providing regular and continuous

feedback on productivity and job performance. The final approach involves encouraging employees to take on new and challenging tasks and becoming subject matter experts in the tasks. Child care managers could use motivation-hygiene theory to improve employee turnover rate in child welfare departments.

Demand for Child Welfare Workers

Child welfare organizations are crisis oriented and are responsible for ensuring the safety and protection of children. Child welfare systems across the United States serve the most vulnerable children, youth, and families. The government designed the welfare system to support the vulnerable populations at risk of abuse or neglect. Stability and worker retention are critical to the overall success of child welfare organizations. Disruptions and turnover among staff can result in the delay of permanent placement and resolution for the families requiring services.

The role of a child welfare worker is vital and demanding because of the overwhelming number of child abuse reports. Approximately 7.2 million children per year are suspected of abuse or neglect by a caregiver report to child protective services, and the agency accepts 58.2% of reported cases for investigation (Pelton, 2015). According to Pelton (2015), more than 75.3% of the children reported suffered neglect, 17.2% suffered physical abuse, and 8.4% experienced sexual abuse (Pelton, 2015). Child welfare workers are critical to the overall success and effectiveness of the child welfare agency and the children they serve and protect. The knowledge, awareness, support, and permanence of child welfare workers help regulate the quality of services (Huang, Ryan,

& Rhoden, 2016). Child care managers should understand the factors that motivate child welfare workers so that they can reduce employee turnover and support retention.

Due to high turnover rates within the child welfare industry, there is a high demand for qualified well-trained child welfare professionals. Child care leaders face the challenge of finding, recruiting, and retaining qualified and competent child welfare professionals. Child welfare business leaders are spending significant resources hiring and training qualified welfare professionals to maintain organizations' ability to provide services to children experiencing abandonment, abuse, and neglect. Because of the high employee turnover rates, child welfare organizations face numerous and constant challenges, including a decrease in the quality of services they provide to foster families and children (Hwang & Hopkins, 2015).

Child Maltreatment and Welfare

Child maltreatment is generally defined as child abuse and neglect, which can range from emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and neglect to exploitation (World Health Organization, 2016). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2016) reported the maltreatment of 702,000 victims in 2014, with 75% of victims suffering physical abuse and 8.3% involved in sexual abuse. Some of the consequences and repercussions that result from the maltreatment of children include illness, disability, and death (Child Maltreatment, 2015). Child maltreatment is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in children and poses one of the greatest threats to health, welfare, and social well-being of children (Child Welfare Gateway, 2016a). Nationally, on average, four children die each day from abuse or neglect (Child Welfare Gateway, 2016a). The

maltreatment of children continues to be a growing national concern. To better address this concern, child care managers need to identify the leadership skills required to reduce employee turnover among child welfare professionals.

Researchers have found that child maltreatment is strongly correlated with poverty (Pelton, 2015). Child maltreatment rates are significantly lower in communities with high social processes (Huang et al., 2016). Child maltreatment is prevalent in the United States and is associated with adverse physical and mental health outcomes, including depression (Nowalis, 2017). An array of mental health issues stems from the maltreatment of children. Scholars have linked maltreatment histories, adverse placement experiences, familial relationships, and mental health status to criminal activities (McMahon & Field, 2015). Child welfare professionals are necessary to investigate and address reported cases of childhood maltreatment.

The outcome of investigating child maltreatment is out-of-home placement. Over half a million children are placed in foster care per year because they have encountered maltreatment (Fareneau, 2016). Out-of-home placement consists of foster care, group homes, or kinship placement. Placement with kin caregivers is considered the least restrictive placement option, and relatives are the first individuals child welfare organizations contact for placement (Lin, 2014). Young people who experience out-of-home care or other services are more likely to come from unstable conditions of life that include lower social support, legal issues, poverty, and domestic violence (Vidal et al., 2017). The findings from this study may yield resolutions and positive outcomes concerning child welfare service organizations' systems and processes.

Factors Influencing the Child Welfare Work Environment

Different factors could influence child welfare environment. Some factors that could influence child welfare work environment include workplace morale, caseload and workload assessments, workplace stress, burnout, work-life balance, organizational culture and behavior, and trust. In this subsection, I discussed eight factors that could influence child welfare work environment.

Workplace morale. Employee morale is a crucial influence on the child welfare work environment. Organizations prosper and operate efficiently because of the positive work attitudes of their employees (Munir, Ghafoor, & Rasli, 2016). According to Cowart (2014), employee disengagement is one of the essential factors in declining productivity that leads to increased absenteeism, increased cost, and reduced productivity. Leaderships' demeanors related to individualized consideration promote motivation, enhance morale, elevate results, and inspire teamwork, which are critical indicators of employee engagement (Prasannakumar, 2015). From an array of literature, researchers have suggested a linkage between communication and employee morale, which plays a crucial role in the retention of employees (Sharma & Kamalanabhan, 2014). Open and honest communication is an effective strategy to improve employee morale and promote employee engagement (Decker, 2016). By communicating openly, child care managers can improve employee morale and reduce employee turnover rate.

Employee engagement is critical to the success of organizations because increased engagement leads to improved productivity and profitability (Oswick, 2015). Researchers have demonstrated that employee engagement is necessary to solidify the value of the

workforce; unengaged workers fail to progress in their careers which lead to increased job dissatisfaction and reduced employee retention (Oswick, 2015). Management's inability to create and promote an engaging environment can have adverse consequences on the organization as a whole. Leaders who do not promote employee engagement have a difficult time achieving and sustaining competitive advantage (Nair & Salleh, 2015). Child care managers should engage workers to reduce employee turnover rate.

A significant factor that could influence employee morale is the work environment and culture of an organization. By engaging in open, honest communication, managers can create an environment where employees are not afraid to ask questions, which leads to professional growth (Schaubroek, Lam, & Peng, 2011. Employees who view their leaders as supportive and reliable have a higher level of organizational commitment than workers who had unreliable and unsupportive leaders (Wang, 2015). By promoting employee engagement, leaders bring positive organizational changes that lead to improved creativity and increased productivity (Barrick, 2015). Understanding employee engagement is imperative because of the correlation between performance and improved competitiveness (Bolarinwa, 2015). By fostering engagement with child welfare workers, child care managers can reduce employee turnover rate.

Assessing caseloads and workloads. Caseloads and workloads could have a significant impact on staff work environment (Deloitte, 2015). In the child welfare system, some environmental factors resulting in high caseloads include: (a) rise in maltreatment, (b) increase in reporting, (c) changes to intake criteria or the expansion of services under the child welfare system (Bowling, 2015). In addition to the environmental

factors, an increase in the amount of work required for each case may change due to state and federal laws and policies. Additionally, researchers have linked diminished child safety, well-being, permanency outcomes, and quality of services to increased caseloads of child welfare workers (Hayes, 2015). Child care managers should understand the caseloads and workloads to reduce the employee turnover rate.

The excessive workload is among the most common type of work stressor; therefore, understanding its consequences and correlations could benefit employees and organizations (Bowling, 2015). Workload affects the average time it takes for a worker to complete the work required for each assigned case. Child welfare workers spend non-case time on training, meetings, outreach, and travelling. Deloitte (2015) attributed workload to some characteristics, such as where the child lives (home/foster care), number of children involved, what phase of the process is the child in, court involvement, permanency goals, and complexity of the matter. By understanding the characteristics of workload, child care managers could reduce employee turnover.

The ineffectual administration of caseload is a ubiquitous issue that leaders encounter in numerous work environments (Goh, Pfeffer, Zenios, & Rajpal, 2015). Excessive and unattainable caseloads result in poor performance and outcomes for the children and families that require service from the department. According to Goh et al. (2015), the excessive caseload is inhibition of employees' capacity to meet the demands of their jobs and satisfy work expectations. Business leaders in child welfare organizations experience numerous and constant effects from frequent turnover, which decreases the quality of services provided to foster families and children (Hwang &

Hopkins, 2015). Supervisors admit that child welfare workers face unrealistic work demands, high caseloads, increasing accountability, and high job-related risk (Johnco et al., 2014). Child care managers should consider the challenges that reduce employee turnover

To combat retention issues, most agencies resort to an increase in social support which reduces the burden of excessive job responsibility, thereby enabling providers of social support to distribute work equitably among employees (Goh et al., 2015). Manageable caseloads could enable child welfare professionals to engage families, deliver quality services, improve retention, and achieve positive outcomes for the children and families enrolled for services with the agency. Reduced caseloads may prove satisfying to employees and may mitigate stressful situations affecting workers' organizational well-being (Goh, 2015). Child welfare workers should have manageable caseloads to improve employee retention.

Business leaders in child welfare organizations should develop and execute sound human resource policies and practices to manage excessive caseloads and protect the health and well-being of their employees (Heffernan & Dundon, 2016). Child welfare managers should attend training and develop the competency to observe high-pressure, high workload situation, and identify employees with the skills and capacity to meet the physiological and mental demands of the job. By avoiding excessive caseloads, child care managers could improve workers well-being and reduce employee turnover.

Workplace stress. Workplace stress is the harmful physical and psychological state that results from an imbalance between job demands, job resources, and the

capabilities or needs of an employee (Salem, 2015). Some factors that influence the work environment for child welfare professionals are the myriad of stressful events in the work setting. Stress impacts both the emotional and physical well-being of an individual. It can lead to undesirable coping strategies at work such as poor decision-making skills, lack of motivation and creativity, or even the overuse of alcohol or liquor (Karumuri & Singareddi, 2014). Studies have shown that factors such as caseload, lack of support and supervision, lack of education and training, and burnout contribute to stress within the work environment.

Managing workplace stress can reduce health impairment costs, enhance employees' well-being, and improve the productivity level of the workforce (Dunkl et al., 2015). Interventions to prevent stressful work environment is fundamentally necessary for improved organizational productivity. Health-promoting and transformational leadership styles are essential in aiding employees to recover from work-related stress and are positively related to working conditions (Dunkl et al., 2015). Child welfare leaders with in-depth knowledge of practical strategies and implementation approaches could lower stress by preventing job burnout and enhancing job satisfaction, thereby, lowering turnover intentions (Lu & Gursoy, 2016). The transformational leadership style encourages managers to take actions to reduce job stressors and gauge employees' well-being levels while alleviating workers of associated health problems (Smit, 2016).

Burnout. Child Welfare organizations are crisis-oriented and are responsible for ensuring the safety and protection of children. Child welfare systems across the U.S serve the most vulnerable children, youth, and families. Over time, the emotional exhaustion

can lead to burnout. Marine (2015) conceptualized that burnout comprises of emotional exhaustion, physical fatigue, and cognitive weariness. Schonfeld (2016) stated that another cause of burnout is stressors that a person is unable to cope with stress adequately. The stressors developed slowly, and the person may not recognize the stressor until it becomes severe. The inability to recognize a stressor often occurs when a person's expectations about a job and its reality differ, burnout then begins. Researchers have found that stress experienced by child welfare social workers can lead to burnout (Lloyd et al., 2017). Employers must understand burnout and its causes because employees are a company's most valuable asset. Child welfare managers should understand burnout and its causes to reduce employee turnover.

Burnout is a term that often refers to diminished interest and the experience of long-term exhaustion. Research and literature suggest that there is a positive correlation between burnout and turnover intentions. Employee turnover could result in the delay of services of child care organizations. It increases the time that children spend in dangerous situations instead of maintaining the safety, health, and permanency of foster children within the child welfare system (Hwang & Hopkins, 2015). Byrne (2006) conducted a study on 467 publicly employed child protective professionals and demonstrated that burnout is positively related to increased caseloads and age. Lower caseloads and younger employees experienced moderate effects of burnout. Further to the demanding and increased caseloads, child welfare professionals are exposed to traumatic events as they investigate abuse and maltreatment. Investigating and working under burnout circumstances creates occupational distress.

Burnout amongst child welfare professionals has negative implications for the children receiving services from the organizations. Burnout is a psychological process linked to the ambiguity of roles in the workplace and the organizational effects of workplace behaviors (Zeitlin et al., 2014). Work-life balance is an essential element to overcome burnout. Some challenges that influence a positive work-life balance include family issues, care for one's child during unusual hours, and illness and unpredictability. Researchers have attempted to link the effects of job burnout with job performance and identified the contributing factors of job burnout to include organizational culture, job satisfaction, and the combination of work and family demands (Kim & Kao, 2014). For child welfare workers, understanding burnout and its impact are critical because burnout not only affects the child welfare worker but the children and families they serve (Wilke et al., 2017). Understanding the causes and effects of burnout could help child care managers to reduce employee turnover.

Work-life balance. The first use of work-life balance was in the United Kingdom and the United States in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Researchers used the term to describe the balance that an individual need between time allocated for work and other aspects of life *(*Delecta, 2011). Kumarasamy, Pangil, and Isa (2015) opined that work-life balance is not solely defined by the time one spends at work and the time one spends doing non-work-related items. Individuals can achieve work-life balance by reducing conflict between the time at work and time away from work, but by balancing the multiple roles and tasks. Essentially, work-life balance is a critical component of the child welfare worker environment. Job satisfaction and quality of life depend on various

elements and the ability to find balance among the many demands of their personal and professional lives.

The concept of work-life balance is of growing importance. Organizations are becoming more aware of the need for a work-life balance. Researchers have explored the relationship between variables such as work-hours, role conflict, task freedom, and work schedule flexibility, and showed that they significantly impact employee's work-life balance (Omar& Asif, 2016). Sivatte (2015) believed that work-life balance in the western world is growing in popularity and the importance of implementing policies such as flexible work schedule to increase the satisfaction of employees. Achieving work-life balance within the child welfare arena can prove challenging because the job requires workers to work non-traditional hours and comply with mandatory call schedules. Unfortunately, due to the retention crisis within the child welfare field, work-life balance has not been at the forefront of organizational pursuits. Child care managers should consider work-life balance to reduce employee turnover.

Organizational culture. Guillaume and Austin (2016) described organizational culture as a pattern of underlying assumptions considered valid and taught to new members to perceive, think, and feel in the organization. According to DeVaney (2015), generational views and attitudes impact societal and organizational culture. Generational expectations of leadership influence the organizational culture, which has a direct influence on organizational commitment (Yogamalar & Samuel, 2016). Guillaume and Austin suggested that strong organizational cultures could support and acknowledge positive behaviors. Similarly, negative behaviors could cause barriers to progress.

However, employees not always easily recognize organizational culture. Berkemeyer (2015) commented that most organizations have multiple subcultures based on the overall culture of the organization. Child care managers should understand the organizational culture to reduce employee turnover.

Organizational culture and social identity theories are the common contextual frameworks for studies related to the diversification of social welfare (Hwang & Hopkins, 2015). Organizational culture is paramount in the efficiency of child welfare organizations. Several researchers who have observed organizational culture within foster-care organizations have fixated on reducing the employee turnover rate by accentuating the organizational culture (Hwang & Hopkins, 2015). By understanding and promoting positive organizational culture, child care managers could reduce employee turnover rate.

Hwang and Hopkins conducted a study to determine what role employee attitudes have on employee behavior in the field of child welfare services. The study involved a random selection of 621 participants, including administrators, manager, and child welfare workers who completed a survey to identify their perceptions concerning decision making and their involvement with the decision-making process in the workplace. The results of the study suggest that employees' level of commitment played an integral role in their perception of inclusion and their intent to resign. Hwang and Hopkins indicated that organizational leaders should combine strategies to help improve employees' attitudes and the structure of the organization. Child care managers should develop leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover rate.

A positive organizational culture directly influences organizational commitment amongst employees. Harmonious passion can increase positive organizational commitment in the organization, which can lead to a decline in voluntary turnover (Houlfort, 2015). Scrima (2015) asserted that knowing what type of attachment, such as affective, normative, and continuance attachment an employee has to the organization is integral to determining the level of commitment that the employee possesses. By knowing the type of attachment child welfare workers have with the organization, child care managers could determine their level of commitment and use appropriate leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover rate.

Organizational behavior. To promote effective change, efficient functioning, and excellent work performance, employees within child welfare organizations should regularly engage in organizational citizenship behaviors. Researchers have identified that child welfare workers require behaviors that extend beyond those often noted in formal job descriptions (Ozsahin & Sudak, 2015). Some of the behaviors a child welfare worker should possess include altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Child care managers should create the enabling work environment that promotes positive behaviors to reduce employee turnover rate.

When employees exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors, organizational benefits accrue without extra cost (Vandewaa et al., 2016). Organizational citizenship behaviors can to promote engagement and provide opportunities to foster stability in an unstable environment while enhancing alignment between managers' effort and strategic goals of the organizations (Chiaburu & Kirman, 2017). Employees should engage in

activities and display positive behaviors that extend beyond those noted in the formal job description (Ozsahin & Sudak, 2015). Researchers posited that organizations have attempted to create an environment that promotes a positive organizational climate, but the return on investment in their efforts have remained elusive (Butcher, 2015). Employers should promote positive behaviors to reduce the employee turnover rate.

Contiguity between the personal characteristics of organizations has the potential to encourage positive behavior through (a) increased involvement in a work task, (b) increased contributions toward the goals of the organizations, and (c) increased displays of organizational citizenship behaviors that contribute to organizational success (Unal & Turgut, 2015). Employees can impact person-organization behavior through engagement. The person-organization fit mediates the relationship between public service motivation (the attitude that employees possess to engage in behaviors that benefit society) and organizational citizenship behaviors (Gould-Williams et al., 2015). Child care managers should understand the relationship between person-organization fit and organization citizenship behaviors.

Teimouri, Dezhtaherian, and Jenab (2015) demonstrated that a significant relationship exists between person-organization fit and organizational citizenship behaviors for both employees and managers. Business leaders can direct behavioral citizenship toward the organization or individuals. Gould-Williams (2015) found that person-organization fit exerts a strong influence on organizational citizenship behaviors directed towards the organization than organizational citizenship behaviors directed towards individuals. Researchers have opined that organizational citizenship behaviors

are challenging to require from employees because these types of behaviors are voluntary (Koning & Van Kleef, 2015). Unal and Turgut (2015) stated that compatibility between employee values and organizational values might promote elevated levels of employee energy, involvement at work, willingness to use knowledge to achieve organizational goals, and display of extra-role behaviors.

Trust. Trust is the critical factor binding managers and team members together for increased performance and productivity (Hakanen & Hakkinen, 2015; Nienaber, Romeike, Searle, & Schewe, 2015). According to Edelman (2017), a profound crisis of "lack of trust" in business today has worsened over the last five years (Edelman, 2017). Individuals characterize distrust by emotions such as doubt, worry, and fear (Bligh, 2017). Trust is vital to child welfare organizations because managers and team members need to trust each other to collaborate, communicate, share information, and perform (Boies, Fiset, & Gill, 2015). Child care managers should build among trust team members to reduce the employee turnover rate.

The absence of trust among team members negatively influences team performance (Derven, 2016). Trust amongst team members and management within an organization aids in the facilitation of effective work execution. Trust has a positive influence on collaboration, knowledge sharing, communication, and cooperation amongst employees (Derven, 2016). Team members encounter a challenge in recognizing the abilities, benevolence, and integrity of other team members, which are essential trust-forming attributes, aggravates the difficulty in building trust in teams (Bligh, 2017). Bulatova (2015) suggested that business leaders could consider trust as a multifaceted

construct made up of emotional, cognitive, behavioral, economic, and ethical components.

Due to the prevalent need for trust within child welfare organizations, managers must exhibit certain behaviors and practices that help develop trust with their peers and subordinates. Because management plays a significant role in the formation and establishment of organizational trust, leaders should pay special attention to their behavioral standards (Bulatova, 2015). Trust in organizational leadership has an impact on organizational outcomes, such as, when an employee stays with an organization even when a more attractive offer is available (Bligh, 2017). Researchers suggested that organizational leaders who are trusted will have a "trickle-down" impact on the direct managers and leaders in an organization (Fulmer and Ostroff, 2017). Child care managers should gain the trust of team members to reduce employee turnover.

An essential skill manager required to develop trusting relationships within the child welfare organizations is leadership competency. Effective and trusting leaders must demonstrate competence by providing structure and demonstrating knowledge (Bligh, 2017). Both leaders and followers must gain each other's trust. Trusting leaders typically develop employees who are more productive, cooperative, and likely to stay with the organization for more extended periods (Bligh, 2017). Building trust among child care managers and workers could help to reduce employee turnover rate.

Concept of Turnover and Turnover Intentions

There is an array of factors that contribute to employee turnover. Turnover intention refers to the probability that an employee voluntarily leaves their job in the

period ahead (Zhang et al., 2018). Many researchers have analyzed the factors influencing turnover intention. Some of the factors influencing turnover intention include employment and alternative job opportunities, organizational justice, work stress, affective commitment, leadership, and work hours (Zhang et al., 2018). The turnover intention is a crucial stage before the actual employee turnover occurs (Al Battatet al., 2013). A work environment that has negative aspects and overall perceptions are likely to increase work exhaustion (Arshadi & Shahbazi, 2013). By promoting workplace environments which foster interpersonal cooperation, sufficient job challenge, and diminished role stress, child care managers may alleviate the inherent trauma associated with working in the field of child welfare and reduce turnover intentions amongst staff.

According to Wang, Tsai, Ru Lei, Chio, and Lai (2016), a relationship exists between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions, and voluntary turnover. Employees voluntarily exit a company for reasons such as a promotion, retirement, and health-related issues. Employee's organizational commitment also plays an integral role in turnover and turnover intentions. A direct relationship exists between organizational commitment and turnover. Leaders can avoid the consequences of voluntary employee turnover by improving employees' motivation and job satisfaction (Cloutier et al., 2015). To reduce employee turnover intentions, child care managers should create a work environment that increases workers' organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment can positively influence turnover intention. Employers can achieve organization commitment through effective leadership strategies. Shafique, Kaylar, and Ahmad (2018) posited that managers should demonstrate

effectively, ethical leadership behaviors at the workplace to increase the likelihood of employee's job satisfaction and performance, thereby reducing their intention to leave the job. Employees who experience positive feelings are more committed to the organization they are working for; therefore, would not have a strong desire to leave (Chenevert et al., 2016). To reduce employee turnover, child welfare organizations should implement training and programs that promote ethical leadership and develop effective leadership strategies.

The turnover intention is the precursor for actual turnover within an organization. In many studies, researchers have noted that turnover becomes a reality when a job proves to be unsatisfactory amongst employees. Because of the unfortunate phenomenon of increased employee turnover due to poor job, researchers have a growing interest in identifying explanatory mechanisms of turnover intention. Turnover intentions stand as an insidious problem that impacts on the functioning of organizations and the well-being of their members (Vaamonde, Omar, & Salessi, 2018). By improving job satisfaction, child care managers could reduce employee turnover.

Researchers suggested that organizational commitment has a significant influence on turnover intention. Organizational commitment fully mediates the relationship between person-organization fit and job satisfaction on turnover intention (Risma et al., 2018). Turnover intention does not immediately lead to actual turnover; however, the turnover intention is merely a sign of organizational ineffectiveness related to managerial strategies on human resources and organizational climate (Lloyd et al., 2015). Child care

managers should develop plans and programs that promote workers' organizational commitment to reduce employee turnover.

In addressing leadership and turnover intentions, scholars can explore the perspectives from a hierarchy standpoint. Leadership is a relationship between persons who have the will and desire to lead individuals who choose to follow to help the organization achieve goals (Singh, 2015). Lack of leadership influences low morale, poor performance, stress, and job dissatisfaction, and the factors influence turnover intentions. To achieve organizational success and sustainability, business leaders should possess specific qualifications. Child care leaders should be educated, competent, and well-trained to create an environment that will reduce disorganization, inconsistencies, and increase organizational commitment amongst child welfare professionals. Researchers suggested that poor communication was evident at every level of child welfare organizations and has resulted in the sense of disconnect between supervision and front-line staff (McCrae et al., 2014). Child care managers should establish an effective communication strategy with workers to improve organizational commitment, thereby reducing employee turnover.

Employees with a high normative commitment feel a sense of duty to remain with organizations because of their personal beliefs and values (Nasiri, 2015). Turnover intentions increase when employees with lower levels of normative commitment are not satisfied or feel no sense of obligation to stay with a company (Tarigan & Ariani, 2015). Communication satisfaction and turnover intentions relate when determining organizational commitment (Naz & Gul, 2014). Leadership plays an integral role in an

employees' intent to leave or stay with an organization. Several researchers who have observed organizational culture within child welfare organizations have advised leaders to reduce the employee turnover rate by accentuating the organizational culture (Hwang & Hopkins, 2015). Child welfare worker should support the organizational culture to reduce the turnover rate.

As we look at factors that impact turnover, it is also imperative to look at the cost associated with turnover. Reduced turnover will eliminate the need for leaders to hire, replace, and retain staff consistently. The costs of employee turnover are multifaceted. Many researchers have analyzed the monetary and non-monetary costs associated with the voluntary turnover to understand better and address turnover intention. Some costs of voluntary turnover include the cost to hire and train new employees, increased pay and benefits, decreased production, and reduced morale from the employee due to changes in the workplace (Saridakis & Cooper, 2016). Child care managers should understand the costs of turnover and develop strategies to reduce the turnover rate.

To ensure organizational sustainability, business leaders should recognize the significant value in understanding how voluntary employee turnover affects corporate profitability. Researchers have predicted a nationwide shortage of thousands of employees, with an estimated shortage of 195,000 social workers by 2030 if the issue of voluntary turnover continues unresolved (Lin, Lin, & Zhang, 2015). The cost associated with employee turnover continues to be an unchanging issue (Queiri et al., 2015). Overall, the reduction of turnover can substantially decrease the cost associated with retention efforts.

Systems and Support

The number of families involved in the child welfare system (foster care, juvenile court, and child protective services) has gradually increased since 2011 (Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), 2015). AFCARS (2016) report indicate that over 400,000 children will pass through the foster welfare system each year. The Child Welfare Information Gateway (2015) reported that slightly over half of the children entering the welfare care system (approximately 250,000) will exit the foster care system. According to Casey Family Programs (2017), recent reports illustrate that the number of children reentering the system (foster care, child protective services, and juvenile court dependency system) is on the rise nationally. The primary goal of the welfare system is to bring reunification, but several outcomes can emerge (reunification, re-activation, and termination).

To help combat this child welfare system epidemic, child welfare leaders can apply the four-level social-ecological model. Broffenbrener's (1979; 1986; Dahlberg & Krug, 2002) four-level social-ecological model helps organize risk and protective factors as it relates to families in the child welfare system. The model considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors. The first level of the social-ecological model is the individual level, which consists of characteristics associated with the child, such as, development, medical history, age, and race. The second level is the microsystem level, which focuses on family support, parenting skills, parental marital status, and parental substance use. The third level is the ecosystem level, which focuses on community resources and the neighborhood in which

the child resides. The final level is the macrosystem, which focuses on societal factors such as local and state policies that impact the child welfare system.

Notwithstanding the system level safeguards in place, support and supervision are critical within the child welfare service organizations. Adequate supervision is needed for the fortification and guidance of child welfare professionals because each child neglect abuse case is severe (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2016). Some child welfare service organizations have formal peer support or mentoring programs available to child welfare service professionals to support them with additional tools and resources to be successful in their career (Backer & Kern, 2010; Mallon & Hess, 2014). The peer and support programs may be beneficial to child welfare workers by offering them the opportunity to problem-solve their cases (Backer & Kern, 2010; Mallon & Hess, 2014). Child welfare leaders should develop programs that could help child welfare workers to succeed in their career, thereby reducing employer turnover rate.

Supervisory support within the child welfare profession has a significant impact on the quality and stability of the child welfare organization. The better the rapport between the employees and systems of support, the higher the intentions for child welfare workers to remain with the agency and within the child-welfare profession (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2016). The child care managers should provide an adequate supervisory role to increase the turnover intentions of child welfare professionals.

Education and Training

The key factors that contribute to turnover in the child welfare system include inadequate supervision and support, lack of education, individual demographics, and lack of training (MorBarak et al., 2017). According to AFCARS (2015), between 2006 and 2012, the child welfare system showed a 20% decrease to a low of 397,000 children in foster care services. By 2015, the number of children in foster care increased to 428,000, signifying a 3.5% increase (USDHHS, 2015). In correlation, an increase of children in the child welfare system equals an increase in child welfare worker demands. The added stressors on an over-saturated system create higher employee demands amongst qualified child welfare workers (Lizano & Mor Barak, 2012). If the employee vacancy rate is too inflated due to lack of educated and qualified workers, the child welfare system may have to employ less-skilled workers to fill the positions, which in turn may place children's safety at risk.

To retain qualified child welfare professionals, human resource representatives need to hire case managers who have the educational background and credentials to prepare them to serve in this role. The application of leadership skills is essential for managers to facilitate mentorship and development for their subordinates. Companies that realize the importance of employees achieving organizational goals make every effort to invest in training development as long-term investments (Rusdi et al., 2015). Child welfare leaders should consider investing in the training of child welfare workers to reduce their turnover rate.

Advancement Opportunities

Advancement opportunities are not prevalent within the child welfare arena. The lack of advancement opportunities in the child welfare profession has a negative influence on retention within the child welfare organizations. Furthermore, employers are asking employees to work hours that impede their non-working hours, which offer them less work-life balance, and organizations are no longer providing opportunities for professional development (Rudick & Ellison, 2016). Chan, Mai, Kuok, and Kong (2016) examined the relationships among career adaptability, promotability, and career satisfaction, and found that a lack of career advancement is a strong predictor of turnover intention. Employees today increasingly emphasize learning, skill enhancement, desire for meaningful work, personal control, and job and career satisfaction (Keating & Heslin, 2015). By providing child welfare workers with career advancement opportunity, child care managers could reduce employee turnover rate.

The lack of career advancement and mobility are among the top workforce retention challenges within child welfare organizations because of the flat organizational hierarchies (Knapp et al., 2014). Although advancement opportunities are minimal, the two highly sought-after roles within the Department of Children and Families are a Child Protective Investigator Supervisor and the Program Director. Employees perception of promotion speed and growth has a significant relationship with turnover intention and is a critical reason impeding organizational leaders' efforts to reduce employee turnover (Biswakarma, 2016; Nawaz, & Pangil, 2015). The duties of the Child Protective Supervisor are to perform field-based supervision, mentor, develop, coach, and ensure

that their subordinates receive adequate training and verse to complete quality

investigations. The program administrator oversees child protective investigators and

supervisors for the agency in which they are assigned.

Job Satisfaction and Supervisor Relationships

Job satisfaction, an individual's affective reaction to a job based on a comparison

of practical with ideal outcomes, has been frequently considered as a predictor of

turnover (Zhang et al., 2018). Job satisfaction within the child welfare field is influential

in stabilizing qualified tenured child welfare professionals. Research on leadership traits

that could induce employee job satisfaction continue to be of importance to most

industries. The application of certain leadership traits could provide a solution to several

industry-related issues such as how to improve retention rates, increase job satisfaction,

reduce job stress, decrease absenteeism, and increase productivity and profitability

(Pavlovic, 2016). As organizations work to develop work cultures that promote job

satisfaction and confidence in an organizational mission, a primary consideration should

be the needs of workers on every level (Jacques et al., 2015). Child care managers should

develop leadership traits that induce employee job satisfaction to reduce the turnover rate.

The supervisor plays an integral role to ensure the job satisfaction of their

subordinates. Supervisors should treat their employees fairly and in an unbiased manner

to make them feel good in their workplace (Okan & Akyuz, 2015). Job satisfaction

occurs with some level of empathy toward leaders and organizational processes, which

can become evident through the authentic practice of being in tune with one's behavior

and the psychological impression made on others (Xiong et al., 2016). Ethical and moral

dealing with subordinates is critical. Ethical leaders distinguish themselves by exhibiting traits that are consistent with normative ethical principles such as honesty, fairness, and trustworthiness, and make fair and balanced decisions (Okan & Akyuz, 2015). Ethical dealing with child welfare services is imperative because the children families requiring services from the agency depend on the ethical principles of the child welfare workers.

Concepts and Theories of Leadership

Thomas and Rowland (2014) defined leadership as an activity involving a group consisting of a leader and followers. However, Burns (2014) defined leadership as a democratic process in which individuals act with power and authority. Leadership is not an easy task and requires a high level of stamina, flexibility, and consistency, and principals (Beiko, Barling, Houle, Davies, & Oake, 2016). Effective leadership is essential for the operational effectiveness of child welfare organizations. Leadership functions relate to helping an organization clarify and confirm values, set goals, define a vision, and achieve the visions (Bloom & Abel, 2015). An effective leader should influence others in a decisive manner enough to have a direct impact on the followers, who are the employees assigned to help the leader accomplish the task (Goodall & Pogrebna, 2015). Child care managers should possess leadership traits to influence followers to accomplish organizational goals and reduce the employee turnover rate.

Leadership Strategies

Leadership strategies refer to the different ways' leaders use their positions to influence change or achieve organizational goals (Gruber, Smerek, Thomas-Hunt, & James, 2015). Organizational success depends on effective leadership and satisfied

employees (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). The transformational leadership theory is beneficial when studying leadership strategies and behaviors that managers use to alter employees' performance and organizational engagement (Pohler & Schmidt, 2015). An effective leader's primary responsibility is to ensure that there is a comradery between management and subordinates.

Effective implementation of leadership strategies increases employee engagement and have the potential to reduce employee disengagement (Jena et al., 2017). The lack of effective leadership strategies resulted in low profitability and decreased employee engagement. The ability to understand how to develop successful leadership strategies will help ensure organizational success (Fox et al., 2017; Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). The five disciplines of leadership are decision-making, people, strategy, productivity, and self-improvement (Burian, Burian, Maffei, & Pieffer, 2014). Child care managers could apply the five disciplines of leadership to reduce the employee turnover rate.

Retention Efforts for the Child Welfare Worker

Retention within the child welfare arena has been an ongoing concern for many years. The inability to maintain qualified staff has created a workforce crisis. Because of decreasing retention rate in the child welfare services, case management organizations have implemented strategies and changes to increase retention rates. Organizations are seeking to hire additional staff quickly to reduce caseloads. Child welfare leaders are aware of the long-term issue of turnover and are implementing programs with an emphasis on quality training. Potter et al. (2009) noted that child welfare workers in

agencies with low turnover rates have high levels of support and appropriate levels of supervision, a high sense of pride in their work, and a positive impact of their work.

To understand the retention of child welfare workers, researchers have identified the need to understand what factors cause child welfare workers to leave (Aguiniga et al., 2013). Child welfare organizations with inadequate staff are unable to meet the state and federal child welfare guidelines. They cannot assure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children under their care. Staff retention is critical to child welfare service organizations. Consistent relationships for the families and children served is essential because of the need to make timely decisions regarding placement of children and various relevant case circumstances. Increased employee retention is essential to ensure child safety and well-being in line with the overall mission of the organization. Turnover within the child welfare field is not only detrimental to the children and families served in terms of the quality of services provided but also negatively impacts the financial position of the agency.

Burns (2011) conducted a qualitative research study utilizing grounded theory to examine child welfare professional's intent to leave. Burns used semistructured interviews to collect primary data from child welfare workers and demonstrated a correlation between intent to leave and the perception of the career of child welfare professional. Child care managers should develop leaderships strategies required to reduce the employee turnover rate.

Transition and Summary

Section 1 of this study contains information on strategies some business leaders use to reduce turnover among child welfare professionals. Section 1 contains information on the background of the study, problem and purpose statements, nature of the study, research and interview questions, a conceptual framework based on the Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory, and definition of terms. Other contents of Section 1 include assumptions, limitation, delimitations, the significance of the study, and a review of the professional and academic literature.

In Section 2, I restate the purpose statement, provided narratives on the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, and ethical research. Other areas I discuss in Section 2 include data collection instruments and technique, data organization technique, data analysis, and reliability and validity of the study. Section 3 includes an introduction, presentation of the findings, applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action and future research, reflections, and conclusion.

Section 2: The Project

My aim in conducting this study was to gain more in-depth insight and understanding of the leadership strategies managers in child welfare service departments use to reduce employee turnover. In Section 2, I restate the purpose statement and provide detailed descriptive narratives on the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, and ethical research. Other areas I discuss in Section 2 include data collection instruments and technique, data organization technique, data analysis, and reliability and validity of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the leadership strategies managers use in child welfare service departments to reduce employee turnover. The targeted population comprised of five child welfare managers who have successfully implemented leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover in the Department of Children and Families in Polk County, Florida. Implications for positive social change include providing useful information on how to reduce employee turnover in child welfare services. Future and current managers in child welfare departments can use the findings of this study as a model for implementing leadership strategies to retain skilled social workers. The results of this study may help child care managers gain knowledge and promote strong foundations for building trusting relationships among child welfare workers and the families they serve. Implications of this study for positive and social change could include improving community growth, stable employment, and continuity of care with the families they serve.

Role of the Researcher

The primary role of the researcher in a qualitative study is to serve as the instrument of data collection (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Haahr, Norlyk, & Hall, 2014; Roulston & Shelton, 2015). As the researcher, I was the primary instrument for data collection in this study to capture the essence of the experiences of the participants. Other roles of a qualitative researcher include (a) information gathering through an extensive review of the literature, (b) identification of research participants, (c) organization and analysis of data, and (d) interpretation of data to generate research findings and results (Hernandez-Hernandez & Sancho-Gil, 2015; Phoenix et al., 2018; Yin, 2017). I gathered information from a variety of sources to build a literature pool for this study. Also, I conducted data analysis and interpretation to provide answers to the research question. A qualitative researcher should explore the values, experiences, and behavior of participants during the data collection process (Boddy, 2016). In this study, I explored the values, behavior, and experiences of child welfare staff.

I worked as a child welfare officer for 5 years with the Department of Children and Families in Polk County, Florida. I have the knowledge and experience of working with children and families under the Department of Child Protective Services. My career roles in the department include investigating abuse cases and providing specialized child protective services. The motivation to conduct this study on the leadership strategies managers could use to reduce employee turnover in the child welfare department originated from my career experience in this field. I do not have any relationship with the participants I selected for the study.

Researchers should adhere to the research ethics as outlined in the Belmont Report of 1979. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH, 2015), the objectives of the Belmont Report are to protect participants in a research study from risk. The principles of the Belmont Report include (a) justice, (b) beneficence, and (c) respect for participants. Fiske and Hauser (2014) stated that Belmont Report enables researchers to respect participants, minimize risks, maximize study benefits, and avoid impartial selection of participants. I adhered to the principles outlined in the Belmont Report by respecting participants during the process of data collection; I avoided impartial selection of participants, observed ethical issues, minimized personal bias, and maximized study benefits to participants. Researchers attend an NIH participant protection training course to gain knowledge on the value of the informed consent procedure and how to address ethical issues during the research process (Resnik et al., 2015). I took the NIH online course and obtained the certificate before commencing data collection with participants.

Qualitative researchers use various strategies to mitigate bias and make efforts to avoid data perception through a personal lens. Some of the strategies for mitigating bias include (a) ensuring that interview questions are well constructed and validated by experts, (b) using an interview protocol and a consent form to engage participants in the research process, (c) member checking to validate participant responses, and (d) reaching data saturation (Cope, 2014; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Thomas, 2015). I engaged subject-matter experts to validate my interview questions, and I aligned interview questions with research questions to mitigate personal bias. I used an interview protocol (Appendix A) to collect data and maintain consistency during the interviews. I conducted member

checking to validate the data I collected from participants. Finally, I continued the interview process during data collection until no new information was available to reach data saturation.

The rationale for researchers using an interview protocol is to collect valid data from participants and to minimize personal bias (Boddy, 2016). According to Eisner (2017), researchers ask probing interview questions to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' responses and to conceptualize meaning from their experiences. I asked probing questions during the data collection process. According to Bryman and Bell (2015), researchers can use well-constructed interview questions to collect valid data and reduce the prospects of bias. During the face-to-face data collection, I made efforts to collect data in a trustworthy manner to mitigate bias. Researchers can use an interview protocol as a preplanned tool to collect data while observing the body language and expressions of participants during interviews (Boyle & Schimierback, 2015). I used the interview protocol (Appendix A) to ask open-ended semistructured questions based on the literature resources gathered and the research question.

Participants

The participant selection process begins with determining the eligibility criteria for participants and ensuring individuals meet the necessary criteria to provide information or knowledge concerning the research problem (Elo et al., 2014; Merriam &Tisdell, 2015; Pelosi, 2015). I selected five participants for this study using the following eligibility criteria: (a) has worked for at least 2 years as a manager in the child welfare services department, (b) has successfully implemented leadership strategies to

reduce employee turnover, and (c) is at least 25 years old. Participants in a qualitative study must have the knowledge and the characteristics critical to answering the research question and understanding the phenomenon (Bode, Singh, & Rogan, 2015). I screened all participants to ensure they met the inclusion criteria for the study.

A researcher should have workable strategies for gaining access to participants (Aaltonen & Kivijarvi, 2019; Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). Some strategies researchers use to gain access to participants include personal contacts, telephone calls, social media, text messaging, and e-mail (Maramwidze-Merrison, 2016; Ranabahu, 2017; Yin, 2017). I gained access to child welfare managers through telephone calls, e-mail, and text messaging. I used e-mail to send the informed consent form and a letter of invitation to potential participants.

A researcher must establish a good working relationship with participants (Cleary et al., 2014; Riese, 2019; Saldana, 2018). Keenan et al. (2017) stated that establishing a trusting, working relationship with participants might be challenging for qualitative researchers. Nielsen and Lyhne (2016) outlined strategies for establishing trusting relationships with candidates, which include seeking common ground and presenting an open environment for discussion, communication, learning, understanding, and encouragement to work together. Researchers should spend time with participants before the interview process to establish common ground by earning mutual respect and understanding and overcoming differences (Johnston, Bennett, Mason, & Thomson, 2016). I established a good relationship with the managers of the child welfare services department by sending a letter of invitation to the participants. The information contained

in the letter of invitation included the purpose of the study, participants' selection criteria, and the voluntary nature of the study. Participants read and signed the informed consent form before they participated in the study. I spent time with the participants before and during the interview process to build trust and promote mutual understanding.

Research Method and Design

Researchers select and use appropriate research methods and designs to conduct their study (Abutabenjeh, 2018). Qualitative investigations include in-person interviews, collecting and analyzing information, and reaching conclusions through analysis (Keenan, 2017). Research methods include qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches (Abutabenjeh, 2018). Some qualitative research designs are case study, phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative (Yin, 2017). I used the qualitative case study approach for this study. Qualitative case study researchers use information gathered from participants to gain in-depth insights and views of an event or phenomenon (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). The qualitative exploratory case study approach enabled me to explore the leadership strategies child protective service managers use to reduce employee turnover in child welfare departments. In this subsection, I discuss the rationale for choosing a qualitative method and case study designs against other research methods and designs and how I ensured data saturation.

Method

Researchers can select from three research methods—qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods—to conduct research (Leppink, 2017; Nelson & Evans, 2014). I selected the qualitative method for this study. Qualitative researchers explore the

meaning of a phenomenon from the perspectives of the participants based on their experiences to develop themes (Kongnso, 2015; Yin, 2017). According to Dasgupta (2015), qualitative researchers use dialogue to collect data from participants, which enables them to ask the *how rather than how many* questions to understand the phenomenon and answer the research question. I selected the qualitative method for this study to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon from the perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of the participants.

Asking probing questions to gain an understanding of the human experience is the core of qualitative research (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). The researcher gathers information based on the knowledge, experiences, and perspectives of participants using the qualitative method (Smith, 2015). According to Thunder and Berry (2016), researchers use the qualitative method to describe a phenomenon in the form of narratives that represent participants' attitudes, perceptions, or experiences with the subject. The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because it offered me the opportunity to obtain in-depth information and gain better insight into the leadership strategies that child welfare managers use to reduce turnover among employees.

Quantitative researchers use numerical and statistical techniques to collect and analyze data and prove or disprove a hypothesis (Aykol & Leonidon, 2014; Paiders & Paiders, 2014). The quantitative researcher is interested in answering *what, where, how much,* and *how many* types of questions (Fellows & Liu, 2015). Quantitative research is about collecting empirical data to test the hypothesis, examine trends and relationships among variables, and draw statistical inferences (Akimowicz et al., 2018; Zoellner,

2017). The quantitative method was not appropriate for this study because the purpose of this research was not to test a hypothesis and establish a relationship between statistical variables but to explore the leadership strategies for reducing employee turnover.

Mixed-methods researchers combine qualitative and quantitative techniques to blend different types of data to create a comprehensive picture in understanding the research phenomenon (Abro et al., 2015; Keenan et al., 2017). According to Cortina, Aguinis, and DeShon (2017), mixed methods researchers are concerned with methodological pluralism in combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods concurrently or sequentially to complement the strength and weaknesses of both research methods. A mixed method approach was not appropriate for this study because the intention was not utilizing both the qualitative and quantitative approach to explore the research phenomenon. The qualitative approach was most suitable for this study because it allowed me to explore the experiences of child welfare managers on the leadership strategies they used to reduce employee turnover.

Research Design

Some of the research designs quantitative researchers use in conducting a study are case study, phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative approach (Bode et al., 2015). The type of design a researcher selects for a study should provide a suitable framework to gather information pertinent to the research question (Eisner, 2017). Qualitative case studies involve face-to-face interviews based on knowledge and experiences of individuals on the phenomena under study (Merriam &Tisdell, 2015). For this study, I used the qualitative single case study exploratory design. The alternative approaches I

considered are the descriptive and explanatory case study designs. The descriptive and explanatory case study designs are most appropriate when researchers are seeking answers to questions (Yin, 2017). The descriptive and explanatory case study designs are not appropriate for this study because the purpose of the study was not to seek answers to questions but to explore the leadership strategies that child welfare managers use to reduce employee turnover. Qualitative researchers use the case study approach to collect data on the different knowledge and experiences of participants (Lewis, 2015). The case study design was most appropriate for this study because it enabled me to use multiple sources such as interviews and documentation to collect data on the different knowledge and experiences of the study participants.

Other qualitative designs that researchers use include phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative approach. Researchers use the phenomenological design to explore the lived experiences of individual participants in a study (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2017). Ethnography design is appropriate when the researcher is interested in exploring and interpreting shared patterns of behavior and cultural beliefs of the individuals or a group of individuals (Atkinson & Morris, 2017; Merriam &Tisdell, 2015). Phenomenology and ethnography were not appropriate designs for this study because the purpose of the study was not to explore lived experiences or shared patterns of behavior or cultural beliefs of child welfare managers. Researchers use the narrative design to describe the life experiences of an individual or group of individuals in chronological order (Beattie, 2014). The narrative design not appropriate for this study

because it did not offer me an opportunity to explore an in-depth understanding of a research phenomenon.

To ensure data saturation, a researcher should continue to collect data until no new information is emerging from the interview process, and no new themes are available (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Kalla, 2016; Kornbluh, 2015). According to Morse (2015) and Ajjan, Kumar, and Subramaniam (2016), data saturation occurs when a researcher reaches a point in the data collection process when additional sampling will not produce new information to answer the research question. During the data collection process of this study, I continued to conduct interviews and obtain archival data from the child welfare services managers until no new information is emerging to attain data saturation.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was a group of professionals in the child welfare services department located in South Florida. The sample consisted of child protective service managers from a single organization. The sample included five managers who have a minimum of 2 years' experience in a managerial role and had successfully used their leadership skills to reduce turnover in the Department of Child Protective Investigators in South Florida. The purpose of the sampling was to select a suitable representative part of a population to determine the characteristics of the whole population (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Researchers should use suitable sampling technique to select study participants.

Qualitative researchers use a purposeful sampling technique to select and gather appropriate information from the sample population based on relevant experience and expertise to answer the research question on the study phenomenon (Yin, 2017). According to Palinkas et al. (2015), purposeful sampling involves the selection of individuals who are information rich on issues of importance to the purpose of the research. Awaiagah, Kang, and Lim (2016) stated that purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique researcher use to select participants based on their knowledge and professional judgment. According to Guetterman (2015), qualitative sampling focus on information richness rather than a representation of the opinion of the respondents. The purpose of selecting five participants from a group of experienced child protective managers is to gain an in-depth understanding of the leadership strategies child welfare and protective managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. I used the purposeful sampling technique to select the participants for this study.

The sample size in a qualitative case study depends on available resources, the experience of participants on the phenomenon under study, and the data trend and depth required for the study (Boddy, 2016; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Guetterman, 2015). Creswell and Poth (2017) opined that appropriate sample size for a qualitative exploratory case study ranges between five and 25 individuals, which are considered significant enough to extract rich data and small enough to reach data saturation. Furthermore, Smith (2015) stated that the recommended sample size in qualitative studies is between five and 25. The sample for this study consisted of five participants who have successfully used leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover and achieved positive effects on

organizational performance. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) explained that data saturation might occur before or after the completion of 10 interviews. I selected interview locations that were of convenient and comfortable for the participants. Wilson (2016) opined that a face-to-face or technology-based interview should take place in a setting that is comfortable for the participant and conducive to a recorded session. I made sure that scheduled interview locations are convenient and conducive for the participants.

To ensure data saturation, researchers continue to collect accurate and valid data from participants during the interview process until no new information and themes are emerging (Boddy, 2016; Fusch & Ness, 2015). According to Hennink et al. (2017), data saturation occurs during the data collection process when no additional themes emerge. Furthermore, a researcher can reach data saturation by full data collection, which could provide a deep and extensive insight into the phenomenon under study. I continued to conduct semistructured interviews with participants until no new information is available to reach data saturation. Another strategy qualitative researchers use to attain data saturation is triangulation. By collecting data from multiple sources, researchers increase the chances of reaching data saturation through triangulation (Fusch& Ness, 2015). I collected data through interviews, observations, and review of company archival documents to ensure data saturation.

Ethical Research

An essential requirement for conducting research is ethical integrity (Creswell & Poth, 2017). I maintained the highest ethical standards required by Walden University and its Institutional Review Board (IRB). Eisner (2017) posited that all research

participants must receive full disclosure of the risks and benefits associated with a study before participation. Consequently, I provided research participants with electronic and in-person copies of informed consent forms. The consent is an implied in-person or written communication between the participant and researcher on the protection of data, the integrity of research, and global understanding of the study (Helft, Williams, & Bandy, 2014). The consent form contains information on (a) the purpose and nature of the study, (b) identity and confidentiality safety measures, (c) procedures for the interview process, and (d) Walden University's IRB approval number and expiration date. Each participant received a copy of the signed consent form for his or her record. In general, the consent process is the beginning of a trusting and responsive relationship between researcher and participant (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Haines, 2017). I ensured that all participants received and read the informed consent form as a way of establishing good rapport and relationship.

I informed the participants in a clear and concise statement within the context of the consent disclosure that participation in this study was voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time via email or phone before their scheduled interview. Any participant wishing to withdraw from the study can do so verbally during the interview process. All participants are aware that I would hold the information they provided in the utmost confidence. Incentives may be given to participants by some researchers to encourage participation (Guetterman, 2015). The information about giving compensation to participant is contained in the informed consent form. I did not give any incentives to the participants of this study.

Researchers have a duty to protect participants during a research study. Yin (2017) stated that researchers should use the coding of participants to ensure confidentiality and protection. For confidentiality, I used codes such as P1, P2, P3 to protect the identity of the participants. I did not disclose the names of the businesses used for this study but used letters and numbers such as CWS1, CWS2, CWS3 to represent the companies. I communicated confidentiality measures to participants through informed consent form, and to the Child Welfare Departments officials through a Letter of Cooperation. I will share a summary of the study findings with the participants. I saved and stored all data and confidential documents in a password-protected computer. I specified 5 years retention period in the informed consent form, after which I will destroy permanently all data and information collected from the participants.

Data Collection

Instruments

Researchers use a variety of data collection tools and sources to obtain information for the study. The researcher is the primary instrument for data collection in qualitative research (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Yin, 2017; Sarma, 2015). As a researcher, I served as the primary instrument for data collection in this study. In this study, I used semistructured interviews contained in the interview protocol (see Appendix A), direct observations, and review of company archival documents as instruments for data collection. Face-to-face dialogue can serve as an active channel for obtaining rich, in-depth information about a phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). I conducted face-to-face semistructured interviews with the participants.

According to Lewis (2015), semistructured research questions allow researchers the opportunity to probe for responses that encourage participants to share experiences learned from observation or direct involvement related to the phenomenon. I displayed calmness and confidence during the interview process to elucidate rich information from the participants. Some of the strategies I used during the interview process include being mindful of body language, active listening, being observant of verbal and nonverbal cues, and reflecting on the participants' responses. Each participant selected a convenient date and time for the interview. The duration of the interview was approximately 30 minutes.

To enhance the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments, I used the processes of triangulation and member checking. Qualitative researchers triangulate interview data with data from multiple sources to enhance the reliability and validity of their data collection process (Yin, 2017). I collected data through interviews, direct observations, and review of company archival documents to achieve data triangulation. I shared the interview transcripts of data collected through interviews with participants to check the accuracy of the information obtained. Member checking and in-depth interviews are effective strategies for ensuring reliability and validity in a qualitative study (Awiagah et al., 2015; Dasgupta, 2015). I used an in-depth interview, data triangulation, and member checking to enhance the reliability and validity of the data collection instrument.

Data Collection Technique

Qualitative researchers use a variety of data collection techniques to collect data, including direct observation, interviews, documentary information, and archival data

(Creswell & Poth, 2017; Padgett, Gossett, Mayer, Chien, & Turner, 2017; Yin, 2017). In case study research, researchers may use interviews to collect rich and thick data (Colorafi & Evans 2016; Roulston, 2016). The primary data collection techniques I used for this study were (a) asking open-ended interview questions (see Appendix A) through face-to-face semistructured interaction, (b) taking field notes, and (c) reviewing company documents, written documentation (company records, newsletters, and journals), and archived records.

Data gathering techniques among researchers include the use of electronic media (visual or audio recording), written documents, observations, and interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Patton (2015) posited that the use of digital recording devices and notebooks is beneficial for data collection. Most qualitative researchers use an electronic device to record interviews with study participants (Humble & Green, 2016; Torres & Figueira, 2018). I used a tape recorder and telephone to record the proceedings of the interview session with the participants to ensure active listening and enhance the quality of response and follow up questions to the participants.

Taking notes during the interview will allow researchers to collect information through observations, body language, and facial expressions (Rubin & Rubin, 2016). During the interview process, I took notes of my observations and the participants' body language and nonverbal expressions. Researchers use the process of data triangulation to collect data from multiple sources (Hadi & Closs, 2015; Shaban, Considine, Fry, & Curtis, 2017). Document review is a useful technique researcher use to overcome the bias of single method, thereby increasing the scope for interpreting the results of the study and

validate the data collection instruments (Yeo & Carter, 2017). To ensure data triangulation, I collected data from participants using multiple techniques and sources, including semistructured interviews, direct observation, and review of company documents and archival data.

One advantage of using the interview technique to collect data is the opportunity it offers the researcher to obtain in-depth information on the phenomenon under study from the participants (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Furthermore, a researcher can use the face-to-face interview technique to ask probing questions to participants to obtain rich data (Yin, 2017). I used face-to-face semistructured interviews to collect data. Taking notes and reviewing data from the company's records, newsletters, journals, and archives has the advantage of enabling the researcher to increase the validity and reliability of the study (Rubin & Rubin, 2016). I took notes of my observations and nonverbal expressions of the participants to enhance the reliability and validity of the study.

The disadvantage of collecting archival data is that the company's data collection process may not collect the data with the rigor necessary for the research purpose (Das et al., 2018). I used the document review to collect secondary data from participants on the leadership strategies they use to reduce employee turnover. Some researchers conduct a pilot study to the adequacy of their planned data collection and analysis techniques (Drummond, 2017). I did not conduct a pilot study in this study. I used the expertise of my Walden University committee reviewers to serve as instruments for validating the interview questions contained in the interview protocol (see Appendix A). Additionally, I

used the purposive sampling technique to select participants with expert knowledge of the research problem from the study population.

Qualitative researchers use the process of member checking to share the interpretation of the information, and data participants provided with the participants to ensure accuracy and enhance reliability and validity of the study (Brear, 2019; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Iivari, 2018). According to Morse (2015), member checking allows a qualitative researcher to assess the accuracy of the interpretation of the response's participants provided during data collection. Participants have the opportunity to make corrections or adjust the information the researcher presents to them (Chase, 2017; Harvey, 2015). I used the process of member checking to verify, augment, and clarify the accuracy and completeness of the information collected from the participants. All participants reviewed the word-for-word transcript of their responses during the interview process for member checking to determine the accuracy of the interview data.

Data Organization Techniques

The focus of data organization in a qualitative study is to identify emerging themes, patterns, and trends from the interviews the researcher conducted with the participants (Yin, 2017). Data organization in qualitative research involves coding and preparation of data for analysis (Javadi & Zarea, 2016; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Some strategies researchers use to organize data include coding and computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) programs such as Atlas and NVivo software (Thomas, 2015; Woods et al., 2016; Zamawe, 2015). I used the NVivo software to organize and store data.

Proper organization of data helps to maintain the integrity of the participant's identity, the interview data, and the reliability and validity of the research (Eisner, 2017). Taylor et al. (2015) suggested that researchers store the interview transcript, interview recordings, consent forms, and journal notes in electronic files. Keenan et al. (2017) stated that researchers have various ways to store raw data to ensure confidentiality of research participants. Taylor (2015) explained that proper storage protects against loss of data and ensures the confidentiality of participants. I collected data from participants using notes and digital recording devices. Sutton and Austin (2015) recommended handwritten notes and the audio recording as useful tools for data organization. I stored all electronic copies of data, including audio tapes in password-protected personal computer and all raw data such as field notes, signed informed consent forms, and hard copies of company documents in a secured fireproof cabinet. I will save all data and documents for five years, after which I will permanently delete or destroy the data following Walden University IRB research protocol.

Data Analysis Technique

Based on the research design and data collection approach, researchers should identify the most appropriate data analysis method. Qualitative analysis of data involves the thematic exploration of the data the researcher collected from participants through interviews, observation, and documentary sources (Yin, 2017). Data interpretation and analysis are essential elements when conducting research (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Yin, 2017). In a qualitative research study, the different methods for collecting and analyzing data are the inductive process of understanding and developing patterns, themes, and

exploring the interrelationships amongst the patterns and themes (Colorafi & Evans,

2016; Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). I collected both primary and secondary data for analysis.

In this study, the primary data sources include face-to-face interviews, notes, and

observations while the sources of secondary data are organizational documents on policy

and procedures, and records on employee retention. The review of evidence from the

different sources of data enabled me to analyze information related to this study and

increase the credibility of the research findings.

Researchers use the triangulation strategy and thematic analysis approach to

collect data from different sources to gain multiple perspectives, validate data, and reach

data saturation (Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2018; Yin, 2017). Furthermore, a qualitative

researcher uses a thematic analysis approach to explore themes and patterns from the data

collected from participants (Colorafi & Evans, 2016; Sutton & Austin, 2015). I used data

triangulation and thematic approach to analyze data. I reviewed the data collected

multiple times to ensure accuracy and to identify themes. NVivo 11 software is a

CAQDAS researcher use to compare words and phrases and to identify emerging themes,

subthemes, categories, and tags through word recognition and auto-coding function

(Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017; Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). I used the NVivo 11

computer software to organize and analyze data to find answers to the overarching

research question regarding the leadership strategies that child services manager use to

reduce employee turnover.

Themes emerge from the iterative arrangement of codes during data transcription

in qualitative interviews. Qualitative researchers should establish connections among the

emerging themes (Yin, 2017). During the data analysis, I identified emerging themes that align with the research question, conceptual framework, and review of academic and professional literature. I related the emerging themes from the interviews, field notes, observations, and company documents to relevant themes from the literature review including new studies published after writing the proposal and the conceptual framework regarding motivation-hygiene theory.

<div align="center">**Reliability and Validity**</div>

Researchers use reliability and validity to establish the quality of a study (Noble & Smith, 2015). Reliability is a measure of the dependability of the analytical procedure of a research study, while validity occurs when the results of a study can be replicated (Yin, 2017). Reliability and validity of a qualitative study are indicators of the dependability, credibility, conformability, transferability, and trustworthiness of the data the researcher used in the study (Cypress, 2017; Sutton & Austin, 2015). In this subsection, I discussed the approaches for mitigating personal bias to enhance the reliability and validity of the study findings.

Reliability

Reliability is a measure of the consistency and rigor of the analytical process a researcher used in a study to ensure that other researchers reach similar conclusions and results (Noble & Smith, 2015). Reliability is a measure of the level of dependability of a study (Yin, 2017). Researchers should address the reliability of their study findings.

Dependability. Dependability refers to the consistency and stability of data over time (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Researchers ensure the dependability of research results by

using verification trails, triangulation, and member checking (Hadi & Closs, 2016). According to Morse (2015), some strategies qualitative researchers use to ensure the dependability of a research study include member checking, coding, peer review, triangulation, and external audit. I used member checking, coding, and triangulation to assure dependability of the study findings.

To enhance the reliability and validity of data collection for a study, researchers use member checking and an interview guide or interview protocol to reduce inconsistencies during data collection (Keenan et al., 2017). According to Eisner (2017), reliability in research consists of statements of truths, uniformity, and accuracy in measurement. In a qualitative study, building trust begins with sound methods of analysis and practice of research principles involving the confirmation of data collection and assessment (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). Reliability in research is the consistency of qualitative study results over time (Nobel & Smith, 2015). I used member checking to establish the accuracy and dependability of data collected. Furthermore, I used triangulation, peer review process by experts, coding, and the interview protocol (see Appendix A) to ensure the dependability of the findings.

Validity

Researchers use validity to establish the effectiveness of a research study by focusing on internal and external validity (Yin, 2017). The validity of the research study encompasses the suitability of the selected methodology, design, sample size, data collection techniques and analysis as they relate to the central research question (Leung, 2015). The criteria qualitative researchers use to determine the validity of a study include

(a) credibility, (b) transferability, and, (c) conformability (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). To ensure validity, a researcher should relate data collection instruments to the research question and findings as real perspectives of the study participants (Leung, 2015). In this subsection, I discussed the approach to address the validity of the study.

Credibility. Credibility is a measure of the richness of data concerning the relevance to the research question (Hays et al., 2016). Researchers ensure credibility by elaborating on the research experiences and by conducting member checking with the research participants to verify the research findings (Harvey, 2015; Shaban et al., 2017). Member checking is an essential process in qualitative research that researchers use to check the correctness of the participants' transcribed data and to validate the accuracy of the interpretation of the data (Smith & McGannon, 2018). Qualitative researchers use triangulation to establish the credibility of their study (Abalkhail, 2018). To ensure the credibility of this study, I conducted member checking and triangulation of different sources of data. Also, I conducted semistructured interviews with participants until no new data emerged to reach data saturation.

Transferability. Transferability is a measure of the stability of the research findings in a qualitative study and the consistency of another researcher getting the same results if the study is replicated (Sutton & Austin, 2015). According to Morse (2015), transferability is the point in qualitative research when the findings or results of the study are generalizable under a different research context. Qualitative researchers show the research quality of transferability when their research findings apply to other similar situations or organization (Hoyland, Hagen, &Engelbach, 2017). Some strategies

qualitative researchers use to ensure transferability include member checking, rich and detailed description of the research process, triangulation, and purposive sampling method of data collection (Yin, 2017). To ensure transferability in this study, I used the processes of member checking, triangulation, purposive sampling, and detailed description of the data the participants provided during data collection.

Confirmability. Confirmability in qualitative research is an indication that the research findings are connected to the data the participants provided (Elo et al., 2014; Squires & Dorsen, 2018). According to Maree et al. (2016), researchers may use audit trail strategy which involves a detailed description of the research process and justification of the research method used to reach findings, as a tool for ensuring confirmability. Using the audit trail will enable a reader to understand how the researcher interpreted the study (Hays et al., 2016). I used the audit trail approach to ensure confirmability in this study. Furthermore, I provided a detailed description of the research process and explained the reflexive approach I used to engage the participants during data collection.

Data saturation is an indication the researcher can generalize the findings and scholars can replicate the study. To ensure data saturation, a qualitative researcher continues to collect data during the interview process until no new information and themes emerge (Fusch & Ness, 2015). A researcher may reach data saturation as a strategy to reveal new insight into the research phenomenon (Constantinou et al., 2017). Through data saturation, researchers demonstrate that a research inquiry is replicable (Elo et al., 2014; Leung, 2015). According to Morse (2015), researchers apply data saturation

as a strategy to assure the validity of a research study. To attain data saturation, I

continued to collect data using the interview process and archival documents until no new

information, data, and themes emerge from the data collection process.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 of this study contained narratives on the purpose of the study, the role of

the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, and

ethical research. Other topics discussed in Section 2 included data collection instruments

and technique, data organization technique, data analysis, and reliability and validity of

the study. In Section 3, I provide an overview of the study, present the study findings, and

discuss how the findings relate to the literature and conceptual framework. Also, in

Section 3, I discuss applications to professional practice, implications to social change, a

recommendation for action and further study, reflections, and summary and study

conclusions.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

In this section, I provide an overview of the study and present the findings on the leadership strategies child care managers use in child welfare organizations to reduce employee turnover rate for improved business performance. Using the examples from the study participants, I link the research findings with the conceptual framework regarding motivation-hygiene theory. Other topics I discuss in this section include applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action and future research, reflections, and summary and conclusions.

Overview of Study

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the leadership strategies managers use in child welfare service departments to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. The motivation-hygiene theory was the conceptual framework, and the overarching research question was: What leadership strategies do successful managers in child welfare services departments use to reduce employee turnover? Five child care managers from a child welfare department who have successfully implemented leadership strategies to improve employee turnover rates participated in this study and provided me with the primary data to answer the overarching research question. During the data collection process, I collected secondary data from observations, field notes, and company archival documents. I achieved data saturation when no new information emerged from the interview process and document review. Based on the participants' responses to the interview questions and the document review, I identified four themes: (a) open communication, (b) meeting and feedback, (c)

coaching and training, and (d) open dialogue and transparency. Within this study, motivation-hygiene theory related to the study findings and provided a better understanding of the leadership strategies some child care managers use to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. The study findings indicate that child care managers use a combination of strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question for this study was: What leadership strategies do successful managers in child welfare services departments use to reduce employee turnover? Human resources professionals are concerned about the global increase in employee turnover rates (Pepra-Mensah et al., 2015). Some of the factors influencing turnover intention include employment and alternative job opportunities, organizational justice, work stress, affective commitment, leadership, and work hours (Zhang et al., 2018). Business leaders can reduce employee turnover by demonstrating effective, ethical leadership behaviors at the workplace to increase employees' motivation and job satisfaction (Cloutier et al., 2015; Imran et al., 2018). Managers should develop effective leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover and improve business performance.

The success of an organization depends on the effectiveness of the leaders and the satisfaction of the employees (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Managers should implement effective leadership strategies to increase employee engagement and reduce employee disengagement (Jena et al., 2017). Managers should develop successful leadership strategies to ensure their organizational success (Fox et al., 2017; Osborne & Hammoud,

2017). The four themes I identified in this study were (a) open communication, (b) meeting and feedback, (c) coaching and training, and (d) open dialogue and transparency. In the following subsections, I present the four themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of the participants' responses to the interview questions.

Theme 1: Open Communication

Sharma and Kamalanabhan (2014) posited that a relationship exists between communication and employee morale, which plays a crucial role in employee retention. Open and honest communication is an effective strategy to improve employee morale and promote employee engagement (Decker, 2016). Leaders should promote employee engagement to achieve and sustain competitive advantage (Nair & Salleh, 2015). The theme of open communication emerged from Interview Questions 1, 2, and 4. All participants recognized the importance of using open communication as a leadership strategy to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

By engaging in open, honest communication, managers can create an environment where employees are not afraid to ask questions, which can lead to professional growth and reduction in employee turnover rate. According to Imran et al. (2018), effective ethical leadership behaviors at the workplace can increase the likelihood of a worker's job satisfaction and performance, thereby reducing employee turnover. Business leaders should use sincere communication to avoid preventable turnover (Conner, 2018). Responding to Interview Question 1, P1 said, "The leadership strategies that I use is primarily focused on open communication amongst my unit." P2 stated, "I create opportunities for communication to discuss what is and what is not working." P3 said, "I

am an advocate for communication. It is very important to communicate with my subordinates due to the nature of the cases that are being investigated." P4 stated, "Communication is critical in identifying strategies to reduce turnover. I effectively communicate with my subordinates routinely." And P5 remarked, "The leadership strategies that I use are clearly defining expectations and communicating."

Communication between employees and senior management is an essential factor leading to overall job satisfaction and reduction in employee turnover. Managers should send clear, precise, and timely job instructions; engage in downward communication; and use multiple channels to communicate (Raina & Roebuck, 2016). In response to Interview Question 2, P1 stated, "By communicating with investigators, they provide information that they felt need to change to create a positive effective work environment which has helped to reduce turnover." P5 said, "Effective communication creates a bond of trust between us. I have learned that effective communication and defining expectations create a better work environment." In response to Interview Question 4, P1 stated, "After communicating ideas, I allow my unit and I to explore options together and implement processes together." P5 said, "I communicate with the supervisors, and we collectively discuss the changes or recommendations before implementation."

The participants' responses to Interview Questions 1, 2, and 4 demonstrated that open communication is a leadership strategy for reducing employee turnover for improved business performance. All the child care managers who participated in this study confirmed using open communication as a leadership strategy to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

My review of the company documents revealed that child care managers had implemented some communication programs to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. As applied in this study, the responses from the participants aligned with Conner's (2018), Decker's (2016), and Raina and Roebuck's (2016) assertions that managers use open communication to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Theme 2: Feedback and Meetings

By providing constructive feedback related to job performance, managers can enhance job commitment and reduce the likelihood of employees leaving their organizations (Raina & Roebuck, 2016). Managers can use the 360-degree method to provide feedback on employee behavior and turnover intentions (Kanaslan & Iyem, 2016). The theme feedback and meetings emerged from Interview Questions 1, 2, and 6. P1, P2, P3, and P4 echoed Raina and Roebuck's (2016) opinion, attesting that they used feedback and meeting as leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

In response to Interview Question 1, P2 stated, "I create opportunities for staff meetings, we discuss case intake process and distribution, on-call hours and shift and flex-time schedules." Responding to Interview Question 2, P1 said, "I allow an opportunity for feedback whereby subordinates provide information that they felt need to change to create a positive effective work environment which has helped to reduce turnover." P2 stated, "Through employee feedback, we discuss what is and what is not working amongst the unit." P3 said, "We have office meetings with investigators and

supervisors monthly. However, I also have individual weekly meetings with my investigators to identify cases currently open and what their case findings are and the next steps to be taken." P4 stated, "During our meetings, we share ideas and determine how to implement the suggestions and recommendations."

Responding to Interview Question 6, P1, said, "During office meetings, we allow the opportunity for feedback from investigators and implement change at the supervisor level. However, there may be times when recommendations are taken to the Program Administration level." In response to Interview Question 6, participant P2, stated, "During monthly meetings, investigators express their concerns. As a supervisor, we are receptive to suggestions and work as a team to make the change." Responding to Interview Question 6, P3, said, "We offer the opportunities for investigators to provide feedback during monthly meetings, and I offer the opportunity for individual feedback during weekly one on ones."

A review of the company documents revealed that child care managers have recognized that lack of feedback demotivates employees and could increase workers' turnover intentions. Most child care professionals are motivated at the start-up of the job but become demotivated within months due to lack of feedback on their performance. From the company documents, I observed that P2 and P3 established regular feedback with child care workers to motivate employees and reduce turnover rate for improved business performance.

The participants' responses to Interview Questions 1, 2, and 6 aligned with Raina and Roebuck's (2016) and Kanaslan and Iyem's (2016) statements that business leaders

use feedback and meeting as a strategy to reduce employee turnover rate for improved

business performance. The study findings indicated that child care managers used

feedback and meeting as a leadership strategy to reduce employee turnover rate for

improved business performance. As applied to this study, 80% of the participants attested

to using feedback and meeting as a leadership strategy to reduce employee turnover rate

for improved business performance.

Theme 3: Coaching and Training

Business leaders should use their human capital to invest in employee training to

improve performance (Koyagialo, 2016). Child welfare leaders could reduce employee

turnover rate by investing in the training of child care professionals. Building human

capital could improve business performance and profitability. Managers could improve

employee performance through training and coaching (Al-Mamary, Shamsuddin, Hami,

& Al-Maamari, 2015; Durgin, Mahoney, Cox, Weetjens, & Poling, 2014). The theme of

coaching and training emerged from Interview Questions 1-2, and 4. Three participants

recognized the importance of coaching and training for reducing employee turnover rate

to improve business performance.

Researchers have demonstrated that lack of training is a crucial factor that

contributes to turnover in the child welfare system (MorBarak et al., 2017). Business

leaders have realized the importance of investing in employees' training for improved

business performance (Rusdi et al., 2015). Responding to Interview Question 1,

participant P3 said, "I am an advocate for coaching. It is very important to coach my

subordinates due to the nature of the cases that are being investigated." In response to

Interview Question 2, P2, stated, "Ongoing training is focused on identifying burnout and ways to reduce burnout." Responding to Interview Question 2, participant P3 said, "I coach and develop to identify a strategy and plan to effectively close cases to reduce caseload." In response to Interview Question 4, P5, stated, "Each supervisor is responsible for coaching their direct team members on the changes and how it will be implemented." My review of the company documents revealed that child care managers implemented for coaching and training programs to improve the competency of child welfare professionals.

The participants' responses to the interview questions aligned with Durgin et al.'s (2014), Koyagialo's (2016), MorBarak et al.'s (2017), and Rusdi et al.'s (2015) statements that coaching and training are crucial approach for reducing employee turnover for improved business performance. The study findings indicated that child care managers used coaching and training as a leadership strategy to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. As applied to this study, 60% of the participants attested to using coaching and training as a leadership strategy for reducing employee turnover to improve business performance.

Theme 4: Open Dialogue and Transparency

A key factor that binds managers and team members together for increased performance is trust (Hakanen & Hakkinen, 2015; Nienaber et al., 2015). Responding to Interview Question 1, participant P2 said, "I create opportunities for open dialogue. We discuss what is and what is not working." In response to Interview Question 1, P4, stated, "Dialogue is critical in identifying strategies to reduce turnover." Responding to

Interview Question 2, participant P5 said, "Effective transparent creates a bond of trust between us." In response to Interview Question 3, P4, stated, "I have open dialogue throughout my career with the Department over the last 7 years."

The participants' responses to the interview questions demonstrated that open dialogue and transparency is an essential strategy for reducing employee turnover for improved business performance. The study findings indicated that 60% of the child care managers who participated in this study acknowledged using open dialogue and transparency to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. As applied in this study, the participants' responses aligned with Hakanen and Hakkinen's (2015) and Nienaber et al.'s (2015) assertions that mangers use open dialogue and transparency to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Findings Related to Motivation-Hygiene Theory

The motivation-hygiene developed by Herzberg in 1959 was the conceptual framework for this study. The lack of an effective strategy to motivate employees could result in retention disparity (Herzberg et al., 2011). Herzberg conceptualized the motivation-hygiene theory to understand people's motivation and job satisfaction (Kuijk, 2018). Business leaders should understand how to develop successful leadership strategies to improve business performance (Fox et al., 2017; Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). The central concept of Herzberg's theory is the difference between motivation factors and hygiene factors or intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Alshmemri, Shahwan-Aki, & Maude, 2017). Researchers have identified several strategies that are available for organizations to employ, which could enable companies to more effectively lower

turnover rates by providing different solutions to such a dynamic problem (Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018). The findings indicate that child care managers could reduce employee turnover by implementing leadership strategies based on the motivation-hygiene theory. As applied in this study, all participants affirmed using a combination of leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Researchers have used Herberg's theory as a conceptual framework for exploring job satisfaction among nurses in a variety of geographical settings (Alshmemri et al., 2017). According to Atalic, Can, and Canturk (2016), both hygiene factors and motivation factors contribute to satisfaction, and especially, hygiene factors were more satisfying factors in the high school teachers' group. Human beings are complex individuals, and what motivates them is also complicated (Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018). By listening to employees, they become more committed to doing their tasks because they feel appreciated and have a sense of belongingness towards the organizations (Rahman, Wahab, & Nadzri, 2018). As applied in this study, child care managers should establish leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. All participants confirmed the motivation-hygiene theory regarding the use of a combination of strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Organizations must pay attention to motivation strategies to increase satisfaction and decrease dissatisfaction levels at work (Kushta, 2017). A significant issue for leaders in the various industries is the turnover of professionals; hence, businesses need strategies to retain a productive workforce (Bryant, 2018). According to Yeboah and Abdulai

(2016), managers should understand critical theories that help them learn the basic needs of their employees. As applied in this study, child care managers used leadership strategies involving open communication, coaching and training, feedback and meeting, and open dialogue and transparency to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. All participants' responses validated the application of motivation-hygiene theory to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Applications to Professional Practice

The identification of the leadership strategies that child care managers use to reduce employee turnover is crucial to improve business performance. Business leaders face challenges of developing effective leadership strategies to improve business performance (Fox et al., 2017; Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). Human resource managers have recognized the widespread global concern on employee turnover (Pepra-Mensah et al., 2015). The findings from this study could provide child care managers with knowledge of effective leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. New and upcoming child care managers may use the study findings to understand the importance of implementing leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Business leaders can use several strategies to lower employee turnover rates more effectively by providing different solutions to such a dynamic problem (Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018). According to Bryant (2018), the high employee turnover of professionals in the various industries is a significant concern for business leaders, and managers are seeking strategies to retain a competent workforce. The results of the study could help

child care managers to reduce employee turnover and improve business performance. The study findings could significantly contribute to information sharing among child care managers who are seeking leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. Some child care managers with weak strategies may apply the findings of this study to reduce employee turnover and improve business performance.

Managers should understand critical theories that help them learn the basic needs of their employees (Yeboah & Abdulai, 2016). Employee turnover costs businesses more than $25 billion per year (Corso et al., 2015) and is damaging to business sustainability (Pepra-Mensah et al., 2015). According to Bryant (2018), employee turnover costs care facilities billions of dollars on an annual basis. Based on the study findings, the most significant contribution to professional practice may be the identification of potential leadership strategies that child care managers use to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. Child care managers could use the results from this study to reduce employee turnover and improve business performance.

Managers may benefit from practical strategies which improve employee retention and promote the recruitment of competent staff (Sayer et al., 2016). According to Hwang and Hopkins (2015), child welfare organizations face numerous and constant challenges of frequent employee turnover. Imran et al. (2018) advised managers to establish dynamic, ethical leadership behavior to increase workers' job satisfaction and performance, which could reduce employee turnover. The findings from this study could contribute to the literature on reducing employee turnover for improved business

performance. The study findings may help organizational leaders, including

governmental and non-governmental agencies, child welfare organization owners, and

entrepreneurs to gain useful information on leadership strategies to reduce employee

turnover for improved business performance.

Implications for Social Change

The study findings may significantly contribute to positive social change by

providing child care managers with leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for

improved business performance. By implementing excellent leadership strategies, child

care managers could improve business performance, reduce employee turnover, and

positively influence the community by creating additional gainful employment for

residents. As illustrated in this study, application of leadership strategies might assist

child care managers to reduce employee turnover, which may improve business

performance, thereby, boosting economic growth for local communities. With reduced

employee turnover and improved business performance, child care organizations will pay

more corporate taxes, which municipal government could use to build public institutions

and provide social amenities to the local citizens.

The implications for a positive social change of this study may include assisting

child care managers to understand the leadership strategies for reducing employee

turnover for improved business performance and gain adequate knowledge to establish

useful leadership model. Child care managers may become more knowledgeable of

effective leadership strategies leading to their ability to successfully meet the needs of the

children and families the welfare agencies serve. As demonstrated in this study findings,

reducing employee turnover may assist child care managers to improve their business performance and continue to provide job opportunities to the local community. By reducing employee turnover, local government welfare agency could save money, continue to ensure the protection of the children, less depletion of community finances, and therefore could fund additional societal, beneficial programs and or projects.

The contemporary child care managers could use the information from this study to improve working relationships with child welfare professionals to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance and sustainability. As indicated in this study, adopting leadership strategies might assist child care managers to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. The general public might learn from the study findings the leadership strategies that child care managers use to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Recommendations for Action

An effective leadership strategy is essential to reducing employee turnover for improved business performance. The success of an organization depends on its employees' attitude to work (Munir et al., 2016). Employee morale and engagement play a crucial role in the retention of employees (Oswick, 2015; Sharma & Kamalanabhan, 2014). Business leaders should adopt effective strategies to enhance employee retention and recruitment of competent staff (Sayer et al., 2016). I recommend that child care managers should implement a blend of effective leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

To reduce employee turnover in child welfare organizations, child care managers should implement leadership strategies that would improve employee motivation and job satisfaction. The significance consequence of frequent employee turnover rates to child welfare organizations is the decrease in the quality of services they provide to foster families and children (Hwang & Hopkins, 2015). With increasing complexity and demand for the services in the child welfare system, business leaders are focusing on interventions to improve staff retention in their organizations (Heffernan & Viggian, 2015). I recommend that child care managers should adopt leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance, growth, and sustainability.

Some child care managers lack leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. The study findings indicate that child care managers use a combination of leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. The knowledge, awareness, support, and permanence of child welfare workers help regulate the quality of services provided to foster children and families (Huang et al., 2016). I recommend that child care managers should have adequate education, training, and experience to adopt the appropriate leadership strategies for reducing employee turnover for improved business performance. I will disseminate the results of this study to interested stakeholders through knowledge sharing in my social media and place of employment; presentation in literature conferences, training, and seminars; and publications in business and academic journals.

Recommendations for Further Study

This qualitative single case study aimed to explore the leadership strategies that child care managers use to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. Researchers have identified the importance for managers to develop effective strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance (Hwang & Hopkins, 2015; National Child Welfare Workforce Institute, 2010; Sayer et al., 2016). The study was limited to a cross-sectional, qualitative single case study involving child care managers in the Department of Children and Families, Polk County, Florida. I recommend that further studies should involve the use of longitudinal, quantitative or mixed methods on participants selected from varying levels of authority in the various industrial section at different geographical locations.

The study findings contain rich information which future researchers could explore concerning the leadership strategies that child care managers use to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. A significant limitation of this study was the small sample size of five child care managers from the Department of Children and Families, Polk County, Florida. Researchers who use larger or smaller sample size may obtain different themes. Consequently, I recommend that future researchers should consider using a larger sample size of participants with varying roles from many organizations within different industrial sectors.

I am evolving in my competency and knowledge of the doctoral study. An essential limitation of the study is my subjective evaluation and accurate of the participants' responses to the interview questions. The study was also limited to my

personal beliefs and professional experience with the topic involving the leadership strategies that child care managers use to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. I recommend that future researchers should comprise of experts from related multi-disciplines in leadership and employee motivation to divulge some details I must have omitted in this doctoral study.

Reflections

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the leadership strategies that child care managers use in child welfare service departments at Polk County, Florida, to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. In conducting this doctoral research study, I used the purposive sampling technique to select five child care managers who have at least 2 years managerial experience in child welfare services department and successfully implemented leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover. Using the purposive sampling technique to select participants, I observed improvements in my networking and interpersonal skills. By choosing the qualitative research method, I conducted semistructured interviews which enabled me to interact with the participants and provided me with the opportunity to improve my listening, communication, self-confidence, and emotional intelligence skills. Conducting the interviews at the participants' convenient time and location-enabled the respondents to express themselves freely and provided me with the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies they use to reduce employee turnover.

Reflecting on the participants' responses, I observed that child care managers use a combination of similar leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved

business performance. Of particular interest is the knowledge that most child care managers use open communication, feedback and meeting, coaching and training, and open dialogue and transparency as primary strategies for reducing employee turnover for improved business performance. The study findings changed my personal biases and preconceived ideas and values on the approaches for reducing employee turnover in child welfare organizations because I have gained knowledge and understanding from five child care managers.

In conducting this study, I understood that child care managers could use a variety of leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. From the study findings, I obtained an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the research problem and learned that child care managers use a combination of similar leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. Reflection on my experience within the DBA doctoral study process, I gained a better understanding and knowledge of the research process, which made a positive change regarding my personal biases and preconceived ideas and values. The knowledge gain from this doctoral research study improved my understanding and skill in conducting academic research work.

Summary and Study Conclusions

Child care managers face challenges in using effective leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. This qualitative single case study aimed to use motivation-hygiene theory to explore the leadership strategies that child care managers use to reduce employee turnover for improved business

performance. I administered seven open-ended questions through semistructured interviews with five child care managers from the Department of Children and Families, Polk County, Florida, to collect the primary data to answer the research question. My sources of secondary data are company field notes, observations, and archival documents. The four themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of data were (a) open communication, (b) meeting and feedback, (c) coaching and training, and (d) open dialogue and transparency. The study findings indicated that child care manager used a blend of leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance.

Adopting leadership strategies might assist child care managers to reduce employee turnover, which may improve business performance, thereby boosting economic growth for local communities. With reduced employee turnover and improved business performance, child care organizations will pay more corporate taxes, which municipal government could use to build public institutions and provide social amenities to the local citizens. Also, reducing employee turnover may assist child care managers to improve their business performance and continue to provide job opportunities to the local community. The general public might learn from the study findings the leadership strategies child that care managers use to reduce employee turnover for improved business performance. The use of motivation-hygiene theory as a lens for this study involving child care managers may fill a gap in the literature on employee turnover rate. The study findings align with the conclusions by previous scholars regarding the need to

implement effective leadership strategies to reduce employee turnover for improved

business performance.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

A. Introduce self to participant.

B. Verified receipt and/or responds to consent form, answer for any questions and/or concerns of participant.

C. Get confirmation and acknowledgement that interview is being recorded.

D. Turn on recording device.

E. Thank participant for accepting to participate in the study.

F. Start interview with question 1; follow through to final question.

G. Observe the participant and take notes of non-verbal queues

H. On the participant's request, paraphrase the interview questions as needed.

I. Ask follow-up probing questions

J. End interview and discuss/schedule follow-up member checking interview with participant.

K. Thank the participant for partaking in the study. Confirm the participant has contact information for follow up questions and concerns.

L. End protocol.

Interview Questions

1. What leadership strategies do you use to reduce turnover rate within the department?

2. How did you identify these strategies?

3. How long have you been using the identified strategies?

4. How were these strategies implemented?

5. How do you evaluate the effect of the strategy on the company's operational performance?

6. How does the company incorporate employees' feedback into management decision making process?

7. What other information can you provide on strategies to minimize turnover?