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Strategies Used by Nonprofit Social Service Business Leaders to Retain Employees

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MBA, Shepherd University, 2016

RBA, Shepherd University, 2014

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Low employee retention among nonprofit social service organizations results in decreased productivity and performance. Business leaders who fail to implement employee retention strategies risk increased employee turnover resulting in the loss of economic constancy and organizational profitability. Grounded in Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies nonprofit social service business leaders used to increase employee retention. A purposeful sampling of 4 leaders from 4 nonprofit social service organizations in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area who successfully used strategies to increase employee retention participated in this study. Data were collected from semistructured interviews, observational notes, and business documents related to the organizations' retention programs and were analyzed using a coding analysis. Three themes emerged: recognition for achievement, growth and advancement opportunities, and employee benefits and compensations. A key recommendation is nonprofit leaders should strive to implement strategies within the organization to increase employee satisfaction and motivation by improving the quality of leadership and communication. Positive social change could result from nonprofit organizations increasing employee retention, providing additional charitable services to local communities, and improving the quality of life for local communities they serve.

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Dedication

This doctoral study is dedicated to my family. To my mother, Shirley Hardy Price, for giving me the will and determination to stay focused and never give up regardless of how many roadblocks encountered. Mama, your words are my inspiration, rest in peace. To my father, Samuel Price Jr., for opening the doors to education and challenging me at an early age; it is because of you that I will not back down. To my son, Kedrick, my anchor, you have been my inspiration from conception. Thank you for being my support, my eyes, and my conscience. To my daughter, Kristan, you use your tunnel vision to keep my direction ordered, to remain sturdy, and to stay motivated. You keep me grounded by ignoring obstacles and overcoming barriers. To my grandchildren, Ramel and Lydia, you are my legacy; I look to you to accept the challenge. To Tiffany and Mason (Imani), my daughter-in-law and son-in-law, for helping me to breathe when I thought I could not take another breath. My family is my strength and my light; you allow me to be the person and the professional I am. Kedrick and Kristan, this is our accomplishment; we did it!

Acknowledgments

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Nonprofit organizations do not operate to achieve profits; all funding after operating expenses is allocated toward the community to fulfill the organization's vision and mission (Neumayr, Schneider, & Meyer, 2015). Recruiting and retaining qualified employees with a minimum human resource budget could be a challenge affecting operations, productivity, and performance. Financial independence and organizational stability are crucial to supporting the community and the organizational goals (Y. Phillips & Hernandez, 2018).

T. Lee, Hom, Eberly, Li, and Mitchell (2017) argued that collective turnover could have a negative impact on organizational performance and productivity because of the absence of retention strategies. Akingbola and van den Berg (2017) determined that nonprofit organizations could improve leadership practices such as organizational operations, productivity, and performance by implementing employee retention strategies. In the current qualitative multiple case study, I sought to explore strategies nonprofit social service business leaders use to retain employees.

Background of the Problem

Nonprofit organizations such as the American Red Cross aid millions of people by providing food, shelter, education, health care, and emergency services (National Council of Nonprofits, 2019). The National Council of Nonprofits (2018) reported that the national nonprofit sector contributed more than $878 billion to the U.S. economy in 2012, equivalent to the 16th largest country in the world. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017) reported that nonprofit organizations contribute to 10.2% of the U.S.

workforce, employing more than 11.4 million people (National Council of Nonprofits, 2018).

Due to spending cuts and high turnover, nonprofit organizations experience low employee retention, creating the loss of qualified and experienced staff (McKeever, 2015, 2018). Failure to retain employees results in low productivity and employee morale, leading to adverse performance within the organization (Call, Nyberg, Ployhart, & Weekley, 2015). Nonprofit leaders are forced to withhold or limit services and resources due to low retention. Marasi, Cox, and Bennet (2016) argued that the high expense of replacing employees exposes nonprofit leaders to the challenge of maintaining daily operations. Donations suffer because nonprofit leaders are focused on recruiting employees instead of funding the organization's mission (Bratt, 2017). Implementing employee retention strategies could create a positive culture of achievement within nonprofit organizations, thereby increasing operations, productivity, and performance (Word & Park, 2015).

Problem Statement

Low employee retention can have an adverse effect on nonprofit organizational operations, productivity, and performance (T. Lee, Hom, Eberly, Li, & Mitchell, 2017). Employee retention dropped by 70% during July 2015, costing employers in the United States approximately 13.5 million dollars to recruit and train new employees (U.S. Department of Labor, 2016). The general business problem is the failure to retain employees leads to low productivity for nonprofit organizations. The specific business

problem is some business leaders of nonprofit social service organizations lack strategies to retain employees.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies nonprofit social service business leaders use to retain employees. The targeted population included business leaders from four nonprofit social service organizations located in the District of Columbia Metropolitan area in the United States who had successfully implemented strategies to retain employees. The contribution to positive social change within organizations includes the potential to increase employee retention. The contribution to social change for the community and society consists of the potential to improve economic stability, economic growth, and contributions to charitable services within the community.

Nature of the Study

I selected the qualitative method for this study. The qualitative method is associated with a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon as the researcher interprets the expressed results of the study (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014). The qualitative method was appropriate for my study to explore a phenomenon by observing and interpreting strategies in the original setting. The quantitative method involves testing hypotheses and analyzing independent and dependent variables' relationships or differences using statistical methods (Heale & Twycross, 2015). The quantitative method was not appropriate for this study because I did not examine numerical data for statistical analysis. Researchers use the mixed-methods approach to combine qualitative and

quantitative data collection techniques and analyses to attain a comprehensive approach to a research question (Sparkes, 2014). The mixed-methods approach was not appropriate because I did not need to test a hypothesis, analyze variables' relationships, or interpret categories of data.

I used the multiple case study design for this study. Researchers use the case study design to identify and explore strategic processes within the context of the research topic settings (Villarreal Larrinaga, 2017). The case study design was appropriate for the current study because of the unit of analysis and time bounded by the study. Researchers use the ethnographic design to study cultural behavior in a setting (Rhiannon & Chloe, 2016). The ethnographic design was not appropriate because I did not observe or identify groups' cultural behaviors. Researchers use the phenomenological design to explore a phenomenon in human nature through the meanings of lived experiences of a small number of participants (Abayomi, 2017). The phenomenological design was not appropriate for this study because understanding the lived experiences of the participants was not necessary to answer the research question.

Research Question

The research question for this study was the following: What strategies do business leaders of nonprofit social service organizations use to retain employees?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use to retain employees?

2. How are they effective in supporting employee retention?

3. What, if any, modifications did you make to strategies that were least effective?

4. How do you measure employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the organization?

5. How do you reward or recognize employees for outstanding contributions to the organization to support retention?

6. What development and training programs do you offer to support employee retention?

7. What reasons do your employees give for leaving your organization?

8. What additional information can you provide that will help understand your strategies for planning and implementing employee retention for nonprofit organizations?

Conceptual Framework

Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation was the conceptual framework used in this study. Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) introduced the two-factor theory, also referred to as the hygiene-motivation theory. The two-factor theory's tenets are hygiene factors and motivator factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Hygiene factors consist of extrinsic factors and lead to essential existence-related needs (Herzberg et al., 1959). Motivator factors consist of intrinsic factors and lead to emotional and growth needs (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg's (1974) two-factor theory of motivation includes achievement, personal development, and job satisfaction. Herzberg described growth factors as the authentic drivers of motivation. The key concept of Herzberg's two-factor

theory is that gratified needs regulate behavior and performance increasing the culture of the organization by encouraging employee motivation and performance (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation provided the lens for me to understand the strategies and processes used by the participants and provide leadership strategies that may be effective in increasing employee retention. Based on my literature review, I selected Herzberg's two-factor theory as the foundation to explore strategies social service nonprofit business leaders use to retain employees.

Operational Definitions

Employee retention: A process in which employees are encouraged to stay with an organization, resulting from the work environment and the relationship with leadership and management support, employee training and development, and employee satisfaction (Bibi, Ahmad, & Majid, 2018).

Employee turnover: The result of employees moving from current jobs to other jobs due to dissatisfaction with the current organization or alternative job options (T. Lee, Hom, Eberly, & Mitchell, 2017).

Extrinsic motivation: Factors developed and driven by external rewards outside of the employee's personal feelings or individual motivators (Senecal & Whitehead, 2018). The lack of outside motivators can result in the absence of motivation or progress.

Hygiene factors: Extrinsic motivational factors associated with operational components of a business (Herzberg, 1974). Hygiene factors are responsible for job dissatisfaction but are avoidable (Herzberg et al., 1959).

Intrinsic motivation: Intrinsic motivation implies an activity at its end, suggesting a perceptual fusion between the event and the end, which are seen as inseparable (Woolley & Fishbach, 2018).

Nonprofit social service organizations (social welfare organizations): A U.S. tax-exempt organization that is organized and operated under the tax-exempt section 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code. The organizations are leading innovators in addressing social problems by developing systematic approaches without financial gain or obligations to stakeholders (Suh, Harrington, & Goodman, 2018).

Qualified and experienced employees: Qualified, loyal, and motivated employees who exhibit talents, skills, and a readiness to participate in an organization by showing a willingness to be creative and competitive within the labor force (Sloka et al., 2015).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are claims assumed to be true without legitimate evidence (Schendel & Tolmie, 2016). Assumptions for qualitative studies are often related to the research methods (Yin, 2018). My first assumption was that business leaders would provide honest information regarding employee retention. The second assumption was that the interview questions would be appropriate for an in-depth exploration of the leaders' strategies to retain employees. The third assumption was that the strategies presented in the interview would increase employee retention in nonprofit social service organizations.

Limitations

Limitations are the constraints or restrictions affecting the legitimacy of the study, in which the researcher has no control (Holloway & Galvin, 2017). The limitation of this qualitative multiple case study was the organizations selected in the geographical area may not provide an accurate representation of nonprofit social service organizations and strategies for successful employee retention.

Delimitations

Delimitations in a study indicate the boundaries of the scope (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The delimitations for this qualitative case study included participants with a minimum of 2 years of leadership experience in nonprofit social service nonprofit organizations. The scope of this study was limited interviews with members of upper leadership or individuals determining and/or monitoring retention strategies within organizations located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

Significance of the Study

This study could be of value to stakeholders, communities, and advocates for social causes. Nonprofit organizations employ paid and unpaid employees (Jaskyte, 2015). Implementing employee retention strategies for nonprofit social service organizations could be a significant contribution to business practices and social change. Jaskyte (2015) argued that a significant catalyst of employee and organizational outcomes results from business leaders' willingness to satisfy employees' needs. I expected to identify successful retention strategies implemented by nonprofit social service organizations that could help nonprofit business leaders retain qualified and

experienced employees who could contribute to improving business practices and effect social change.

Contribution to Business Practice

By implementing employee retention strategies, nonprofit leaders could create a positive culture of success and achievement within the organization (Word & Park, 2015). This study may contribute to the effective practice of business practices by defining successful strategies and implementation processes to promote employee retention. The contributions to professional applications may be the effective practice of business and the improvement of business practices by defining and implementing strategies promoting employee retention. Employee retention reduces turnover cost and the cost to recruit and train, in addition to employers maintaining talented employees (Suh et al., 2018).

Implications for Social Change

The effect of positive social change of my study consists of the potential for economic growth and stability within the community when businesses are established and beneficial. Contributing to the retention of qualified and experienced employees may increase funding opportunities benefiting communities (Maier, Meyer, & Steinbereithner, 2016). Qualified and experienced employees in nonprofit social service organizations may lead to increased and successful community activities, strengthening funding and contribution opportunities and leading to improved economic stability, economic growth, and reliable charitable services within the community.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

This review of the academic and professional literature provides a foundation for the subject of employee retention in nonprofit social service organizations. The purpose of this study was to offer an analysis of previous and current strategies nonprofit social service organization leaders use to maintain employee retention. Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation provided the conceptual framework for the study. Herzberg (1974) based the two-factor theory on motivational factors in the workplace that cause employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the workplace. Academic and professional literature provided the sources for the literature review of employee retention and Hertzberg's two-factor theory. The sources used in this literature review addressed factors encouraging employee retention with less focus on voluntary and involuntary turnover.

I organized the literature review using four categories: (a) Herzberg's two-factor theory, (b) supporting and contrasting theories, (c) nonprofit social service organizations, and (d) themes and phenomena. The study addressed strategies used by leaders of nonprofit social service organizations to increase employee retention. The subheadings for the conceptual framework include critical analysis and synthesis of the literature about intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. The supporting and contrasting theories section include subheadings for Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, Vroom's theory, and job embeddedness. The subheadings for the nonprofit social service organizations section are the nature of the nonprofit and the performance of nonprofit organizations. The themes and phenomena section includes subheadings for

organizational culture, leadership and management, and the impact of employee retention and turnover.

I obtained the sources for this study by researching the topic using academic libraries, websites, databases, peer-reviewed journals, and related books. Databases from Walden University library and Shepherd University library were used to access research literature through ABI/INFORM Global, Business Source Complete, EBSCO, Google Scholar, ProQuest, and Sage Premier, in addition to government websites. The search terms and phrases included *employee performance*, *employee retention*, *employee turnover*, *Herzberg two-factor theory*, *hygiene-motivation theory* and *job satisfaction* paired with *nonprofit organizations*, *organizational culture*, and *strategies.*

The literature review included 112 peer-reviewed academic sources, journals, books, and dissertations with 90% of the sources published between 2014 and 2019. To comply with the Walden's DBA doctoral study rubric requirements, I ensured that the references were peer-reviewed sources and at least 85% published within the past 5 years. Table 1 provides a summary of the sources used in this literature review according to reference type and percentages.

Table 1

Literature Review Reference Content

Reference type	Total	<5 years	>5 years	% Total < 5 years
Peer-reviewed journals	105	97	8	92%
Dissertations	2	2	0	100%
Books	2	0	2	0%
Non-peer reviewed journals	3	2	1	67%
Total	112	101	11	90%

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

The purpose of the literature review was to provide a critical analysis and synopsis of research that addressed strategies nonprofit social service organizational leaders use to retain employees. The conceptual framework for this study was Herzberg's two-factor theory. In 1959, Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman introduced Herzberg two-factor theory, also referred to as the hygiene-motivation theory. The two-factor theory's tenets are hygiene factors and motivator factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Hygiene factors consist of extrinsic factors and lead to essential existence-related needs (Herzberg et al., 1959).

Employees who are satisfied with their company or job credit themselves, but when employees are dissatisfied, they blame the company or external factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg's motivational theory is based on Maslow's (1943) theory of hierarchy and the fourth and fifth levels of esteem and self-actualization. Herzberg

conducted his study by interviewing 200 engineers and accountants in the Pittsburgh

area. Herzberg asked the participants to think of a time when they felt good about their

job and when they felt bad about their job, and to describe the circumstances that led to

those feelings (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg (1974) then classified

the responses in one of two categories: extrinsic hygiene factors and intrinsic motivator

factors.

      Extrinsic motivators. Extrinsic hygiene factors, also referred to as dissatisfiers,

are necessary to keep employee satisfaction at a reasonable level; their absence can cause

dissatisfaction, though the factors will result in satisfaction (Oluwatayo, 2015). Hygiene

factors can demotivate employees if they are not present, but do not motivate if present

(Soodmand Afshar & Doosti, 2016). Extrinsic hygiene factors are (a) pay, (b) financial

rewards, (c) working conditions, (d) work environment, (e) relationship, (f) leadership,

(g) policies, and (e) job security (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg (1974)

determined that hygiene factors cannot create motivation, but can reduce negative

attitudes and dissatisfaction. Soodmand Afshar and Doosti (2016) clarified that the

opposite of satisfaction is not dissatisfaction, and the opposite of dissatisfaction is not

satisfaction; being not dissatisfied does not mean being satisfied. Hygiene factors reduce

negative attitudes and dissatisfaction associated with the employee's sense of

physiological needs, safety, and belonging (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959).

      Hygiene factors related to the work environment include pay, status, job security,

working conditions, fringe benefits, policies, interpersonal relationships, personal life

(insurance, benefits for family), and fair and clear company policies (Kuranchie-Mensah

& Amponsah-Tawiah, 2015). Combinations of hygiene factors and motivator factors can lead to situations in which employees are motivated and comparatively complaint free or may become apathetic complainers (Karadag, 2015). Herzberg et al. (1959) argued that external hygiene factors could represent the dissatisfying aspects of the job. Hygiene factors must be resolved before moving on to the motivator factors. Internal motivation drives behavior and can influence positive attitudes by providing the basis for work ethic and persistence amid employee challenges and crises (Fischer, Malycha, & Schafmann, 2019). Zopiatis, Constanti, and Theocharous (2014) argued that though extrinsic features of a job are significant, an employee's intrinsic value of their work has a greater impact on retention because as intrinsic value increases employee retention increases.

Intrinsic motivators. Intrinsic motivators, also referred to as motivational factors, are factors that directly motivate employees (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959). Motivators include (a) more responsibility at work, (b) meaningful and fulfilling work, and (c) achievement and recognition (Basinska & Dåderman, 2019). Herzberg et al. (1959) indicated that intrinsic factors are motivators that yield job satisfiers. When motivators are a part of an employee's work life, the factors serve as motivation, but when they are not present, employees may not be dissatisfied (Herzberg, 1966; Herzberg et al., 1959; C. Lee, Mullins, & Cho, 2017).

Meaningful and challenging work, recognition for accomplishments, feelings of achievement, increased responsibility, and opportunities for growth are motivating factors that affect the employee's level of satisfaction, creating positive attitudes (Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015). The difference between no satisfaction

and satisfaction and the feeling of accomplishing something are intrinsic motivator factors affected by the opportunity for growth, advancement, responsibility, recognition, sense of achievement (Winkler, Busch, Clasen, & Vowinkel, 2015). Motivator factors encourage employees to perform and want to achieve. Without the existence of motivator factors, employees are not demotivated but are not inherently motivated (Herzberg, 1966). Job enrichment and job empowerment are leading intrinsic motivators to affect the employee's ability to remain satisfied with the job (Kang, Gatling, & Kim, 2015).

Job enrichment. Herzberg (1966) determined that an employee could not be motivated to do a good job if the employee cannot do the job. Motivation is a function of ability and a function of the opportunity to use that ability (Herzberg, 1966). A wider variety of tasks, greater complexity and challenge, and a greater sense of achievement are contributors to intrinsic motivational factors that lead to satisfied versus not satisfied employees (Oluwatayo, 2015).

Job empowerment. Efferin and Hartono (2015) defined empowerment as the transferring of power to the employees in the organization, thereby allowing employees to have control, power, and authority. More responsibility and autonomy, less supervision, and the ability to make independent decisions empower employees by demonstrating trust, therefore increasing esteem and self-actualization on the job (Barrick et al., 2015). Leaders need to inspire employees, creating a sense of confidence and trust in their leader (Singh, 2016). Singh (2016) determined that when employees are committed to an organization that empowers them, the employees are more engaged and satisfied.

Herzberg's two-factor theory and the focus of employee retention. Researchers have applied Herzberg's two-factor theory and strategies for employee retention in nonprofit social service organizations. Uduji (2013) explored how hygiene factors influenced employee motivation and determined that business leaders include employees as part of organizational strategies to improve employee motivation and lower employee dissatisfaction. The results of Uduji's (2013) study could encourage employee retention using Herzberg's two-factor theory. Damij, Levnajić, Skrt, and Suklan (2015) determined that using Herzberg's two-factor theory, aligning motivation with the organizational strategy would lead to a satisfied workforce. Other studies indicated inverse responses to applying the motivation-hygiene theory.

Atchison and Lefferts (1972) reviewed Herzberg's two-factor theory and found that job satisfaction has an inverse relationship with turnover; job dissatisfaction increases turnover, therefore reducing employee retention. To avoid the inverse relationship, researchers found that employers encouraging work-life programs such as telecommuting, childcare, and health and wellness initiatives are helpful (Caillier, 2014). C. Lee and Nowell (2015) determined that previous research indicated employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction is influenced by a combination of motivation and hygiene factors, in addition to addressing the organization's retention strategies.

Employers who focus on retention factors have used Herzberg's two-factor theory successfully. Islam and Ali (2013) noted that retention factors are related to job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction. Motivational factors of growth, recognition,

achievement, and responsibility are factors that influence employee retention (Islam &

Ali, 2013).

Supporting and Contrasting Motivational Theories

   Supporting theory. Herzberg's two-factor theory is based on Maslow's (1943)

hierarchy of needs pyramid. The fifth level of Maslow's pyramid of needs is self-

actualization, which refers to one's ability to achieve their full potential. The association

between Herzberg's two-factor theory and the fifth level of Maslow's theory, self-

actualization, suggests that job satisfaction is part of an employee's uppermost level of

need (C. Lee, Mullins, & Cho, 2017). Yusoff, Kian, and Idris (2013) argued that

Herzberg's two-factor theory model indicates that employees who attain a high level of

social and economic progress are primary motivators consistent with the five stages of

Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

   In 1943, Maslow created the theory of needs pyramid, which identified human's

basic needs in order of importance. Maslow's hierarchy of needs has five stages of needs

to achieve satisfaction: (a) physiological, (b) safety and security, (c) love and social, (d)

esteem, and (e) self-actualization. Maslow proposed the physical needs such as air, food,

water, shelter, sex, and sleep as the foundation for the pyramid because they are

sustainable needs for life. According to Maslow's theory, each level of the pyramid has to

be attained before moving upward. For example, self-actualization cannot be achieved

until the lower levels of the pyramid have been achieved (Maslow, 1943). Herzberg's

two-factor theory is related to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, though there are more factors

to measure how employees are motivated in the workplace (Yusoff et al., 2013).

Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of need recognizes the fifth level (self-actualization) as the ultimate level, the level at which a person attains personal growth and fulfillment. In comparison, Herzberg's two-factor theory argues that intrinsic motivation cannot be attained until extrinsic hygiene factors are fulfilled. I did not choose Maslow's hierarchy of needs because I chose to explore the relationship between the employee's hygiene and motivator factors within the organization. Herzberg's two-factor theory of needs identifies the reasons for the employee's level of dissatisfaction and how motivational factors affect employee satisfaction, resulting in employee retention (De Gieter & Hofmans, 2015).

Bercu and Onofrei (2017) researched factors affecting motivation and the effects on job satisfaction using the Maslow-Herzberg combined model, conducted in Iasi County, Romania. The goal was to determine why some factors enhance employee motivation, while other factors are not as effective (Bercu & Onofrei, 2017). Motivation determines the employees' actions and encourages the employees to achieve best results by use of a combination of two factors: internal factors of the individual, such as attitudes, needs, value systems and perception of tasks, and external factors of the organization, such as incentives, tasks, and feedback (Abraham, 2019; Bercu & Onofrei, 2017). Motivation and satisfaction are two independent occurrences: motivation encourages a person to respond in a certain way whereas satisfaction is the result of an event that produces a feeling of pleasure or acceptance but does not necessarily change behavior however can lead to motivation (Bercu & Onofrei, 2017; Herzberg et al., 1959; Maslow, 1943).

There is a relationship between satisfaction and motivation. Motivation is the impulse or goal to reach satisfaction resulting in a cause and effect scenario: Motivation is identified as the cause and satisfaction is the effect (Bercu & Onofrei, 2017). Motivation can influence satisfaction, but not the reverse (Bercu & Onofrei, 2017).

Contrasting theory. Job embeddedness theory, introduced by Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, and Erez (2001), explores how three primary factors (links, fit, and sacrifice) affect the employee's decision to stay with an organization (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2016). As with Herzberg's two-factor theory, managers can influence hygiene factors by affecting adjustments in the organization's environment, but Charlier, Guay, and Zimmerman (2016) argued that the base of job embeddedness includes the work environment in addition to the employee's social and family lives. The links, fit, and sacrifice between the employees and both the organization and the community affect the employee's ability to trust or have confidence with social interaction on the job.

Fit. Employee Fit is the employee's perceived compatibility or comfort level with the organization and the surrounding environment (Kiazad, Holtom, Hom, & Newman, 2015). Allen, Peltokorpi, and Rubenstein (2016) determined that employees prefer to work in organizations where leaders encourage growth thereby increasing their compatibility within the organization. The better fit one has with the organization and the community; the one fits within the job. Fit is subjective to the perception of alignment and support due to managerial actions (Kroeten, 2018).

Links. Links are the number of connections (formal or informal) that a person has with the surrounding community and the organization connections with other people or

groups in the organization (Kiazad et al., 2015). The more links a person has with the organization and community, the more embedded one is in the organization (Kiazad et al., 2015).

Sacrifice. Sacrifice is the perceived cost of materials or psychological benefits that may be forfeited from broken links (with the organization and community) by leaving a job (Kiazad et al., 2015). Sacrifice includes the loss of job stability, the possibility of advancement, and accrued eligibility for a pension plan. The sacrifice between an employee and the community is usually associated with job embeddedness if the individual is required to relocate when changing jobs (Kroeten, 2018).

I did not choose job embeddedness theory. My study is a qualitative case study, researching strategies used by leaders to retain employees. Researchers use job embeddedness theory as a predictor in studies using attendance, turnover, retention, and organizational performance (Charlier, et al., 2016). My qualitative study is to explore the strategies leaders use to retain employees.

Second Contrasting theory. In 1964 theorist Victor Vroom studied the relationship between employment performance, outcomes, satisfaction, and expectation, introducing Vroom's expectancy theory (Ballard, Yeo, Loft, Vancouver, & Neal, 2016; Jeske & Axtell, 2017). Vroom (1964) focused on the results of the employee's motivation instead of the employee's satisfaction of his needs (Jeske & Axtell, 2017). Vroom determined that a person would be motivated to put forth a higher level of effort if they believe their efforts will result in higher performance and thus better rewards. The expectancy theory is an assumption about employee motivation and how the organization

recognizes the value of how employees meet their goals (Jeske & Axtell, 2017; Vroom, 1964). Vroom's expectancy theory is based on three areas of measurement tenets: (a) expectancy, (b) instrumentality, and (c) valence. Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation identifies a person's work pattern, for example, *employee exerts work effort* to achieve *task performance* and realize *work-related outcomes* (Vroom, 1964). Expectancy is the employee's perception that actions will result in the expected outcome, instrumentality is the belief that increased effort could lead to a greater outcome will occur, whereas valance is a determining tenet of the probability of an acceptable outcome (Nimri, Bdair, & Al Bitar, 2015).

The employee measures the ability to achieve the expected results at the expectancy tenet; this is the individual's personal belief. An individual's ultimate selection of behavior is motivated by their expected results or the desirability of their expected outcome (Vroom, 1964). The manager's ability to know and understand the expectancy tenet can help to create motivational programs in the workplace, leading to identifying and measuring performance. Vroom (1964) argued that the employee's capacity to apply the expectancy tenet identifies the effort an employee will need to achieve performance, the instrumentality tenet.

Instrumentality is the level of performance based on the strength of the relationship between an employee's behaviors and the rewards they can receive from those actions (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Task performance is the employee's ability to measure their belief that the organizational leader will follow through with expectations (Vroom, 1964). The employees' trust in their leaders is a determining factor when

measuring performance. An employee's lack of relationship and the quality of the leader are de-motivators and determining factors for employee retention (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959). Attracting and motivating nonprofit employees to be productive and to stay with the organization can be difficult, but it is possible (Fomenky, 2015).

Valence, the level of efforts is the rewards for the performance. Rewards are assessments as to how valuable the employee finds the reward (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). The valence is determined by (a) reviewing how rewards can help managers create rewards programs, (b) managers determining if the reward can be offered, and (c) managers aligning performance expectation with the reward (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018; Vroom, 1964). The valence tenet is the employee's measurement of the value attached to the reward (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). The rewards can be intrinsic motivators creating levels of employee satisfaction or extrinsic hygiene factors that affect performance levels (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959).

The managerial implications accompanying Vroom's expectancy theory consists of an effort-to-performance expectancy, performance-to-reward expectancy, and reward valences (Parker, 2018). Baumann and Bonner (2017) determined when using Vroom's expectancy theory as a retention strategy the organizational leader should focus on the relationship between performance and motivation. An employee, who has a high level of expectancy for a valuable reward, also tends to have a high motivation to increase performance (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Motivational force and level of satisfaction results derives from expectancy, instrumentality, and valence.

Harris, Murphy, DiPietro, and Line (2017) validated that the tenets of Vroom's expectancy theory can influence employee characteristics to (a) engage in a particular course of action, (b) increase in performance, and (c) lead to the desired outcome. Vroom's expectancy theory relates to the employee's relationship and measurements of the employer or leader. I did not choose Vroom's expectancy theory for my study because my study is to identify and understand the strategies used to retain employees instead of focusing on why managers make retention decisions and the outcome of those decisions.

Nonprofit Social Service Organizations

A nonprofit social service organization is operated exclusively to promote social welfare; an organization that must operate primarily to further the common good and general welfare of the people of the community, such as by bringing about civic betterment and social improvements (IRS, 2018). Since 2009, nonprofit organizations have shown substantial growth to become one of the largest employment sectors in the world. The similarities between leadership in nonprofit and for-profit organizations also differentiate the two; leadership has to develop a service or product to make money or to attain results for a social cause (Osula & Ng, 2014). The charitable nature and not-for-profit foundation is the core of the nonprofit organization.

The nature of the nonprofit organization is to serve the public or specifically to serve and benefit exclusively the members identified under the 1987 Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act. The profit accrued by the nonprofit organization benefits the organization, the growth, and maintenance of the organizational activities; profits cannot

be distributed or divided between the directors, officers, or stakeholders of the organization (IRS, 2018). The nonprofit organization can make a profit, an incidental profit, to serve the goals and missions of the nonprofit. Social service nonprofit organizations receive approximately 60% of the total revenue from government funding, in addition to funds from donations, fundraisers, membership fees, or special events and products to raise money (NCN, 2019). Due to limited funding, leaders and employees of the nonprofit organization must process the skills to manage and work with the team using vision, skill, and resources to accomplish the organization's mission (Kuenzi & Stewart, 2017).

Nonprofit social service leaders have intricate challenges working with clients, organizations, government agencies, donors, paid staff, and volunteer staff (Groble & Brudney, 2016). A successful nonprofit employee should process-specific skills; (a) communication, (b) knowledge of governments rules and regulations, (c) financial management, (d) fundraising, (e) human resource management, (f) specific program knowledge, and (g) planning and organizational development. The cost to replace an experienced nonprofit social service leader can cost the organization two times the annual salary of the employee (Kuenzi & Stewart, 2017). The cost can be a financial burden for the organization due to the limited resources of most nonprofit organizations, in addition to the transitional period between leaders. The executive board plays a significant role in the retention of qualified and experienced employees by maintaining clear communication, encouraging feedback, and seeking opportunities to enhance training and growth within the organization (Groble & Brudney, 2016).

Townsend, McDonald, and Cathcart (2016) researched the effect of small, nonprofit organizations and the role the small firms play in the economy. Townsend et al. used data collected from five small non-profit organizations in Australia to examine human resource management practices, including flexible work arrangements to retain employees (2016). Townsend et al identified three tensions or characteristics for human resource management in nonprofit organizations that have implications for the success or lack of success. The three tensions recognized are (a) contradictions between formal and informal practices, (b) employee values that favor external market forces and social justices, and (c) the employee's commitment to the organization. The leaders' ability to apply the three tensions could be managed using discretion within the organizational culture and climate, leadership style, and employee commitment (Townsend et al., 2016).

Themes and Phenomena

Organizational culture and climate. The organizational culture, unwritten rules that guide employees towards ethical and rewarding behavior, represents predefined policies that guide the employees, giving the employee a sense of direction. Performance, profitability, diversity, collaboration, accountability, beliefs, and values are shared values and characteristics that define organizational culture (Nivoix, Milliot, Pare, & Lemaire, 2016). The interaction of the organizational characteristics contributes to the employee's behavior and governs the organizational culture (George, 2015). Researchers agree that the employees' organizational culture, both visible and hidden, plays a significant role in shaping behavior and productivity in the organization when leaders influence ethical behaviors (Ristino & Michalak, 2018).

Organizational culture at its worse can reduce productivity thereby creating a cultural disconnect; whereas organizational culture at its best increases productivity, energizes the emotional atmosphere, and maintain organizational alignment (Cooke & Szumal, 2013; Thomas & Peterson, 2017). When there is cultural disconnects in the organization the top three drivers generated are the failure to (a) lead by example, (b) express shared mission and values, and (c) encourage the organization's goals (Lee et al., 2017). In comparison to Herzberg two-factor theory, the cultural disconnect drivers related to employee dissatisfaction are compensation, lack of respect and support for one another, and work-life balance as with extrinsic de-motivators (Jarupathirun & De Gennaro, 2018).

Herzberg et al. (1959) argued that the absence of dissatisfiers would not motivate employees; instead, the existence of motivating factors will build motivation to achieve. The organization's culture is the personality of the organization lead by leadership, directing a self-sustaining pattern of behavior (Strenitzerová & Gaňa, 2018). Poor leadership and poor relationship with management are factors affecting job attitudes that lead to dissatisfaction and a negative organizational culture (Ou, Seo, Choi, & Hom, 2017). The organizational culture defines the guidelines and boundaries of the organization, which determines how the employees experience the climate of the organization (Alshathry, Clarke, & Goodman, 2017).

The organizational climate or atmosphere is the result of the properties observed by the employees that influence their actions and performance in the workplace (Koekemoer, 2014). The employees' means of experiencing the culture of the

organization is embedded in their organizational behavior, creating a distinct atmosphere that is difficult to change (Wong & Kong, 2017). The culture of the organization represents the personality of the organization whereas the organizational climate represents the organization's mood. The organizational climate is much easier to experience and measure than organizational culture and much easier to change.

Alshathry et al. (2017) determined that the organizational environment strongly relates to the employee's experience with the employer attitudes and supervision, all of which are determining factors of employee retention. Organizational climate can promote retention by initiating pre-employment and employment policies and programs (Booth-Kewley, Dell'Acqua, & Thomsen, 2017). Management should implement pre-employment policies such as better recruitment and selection policies and assessments in the hiring process to promote retention (Barnard & Van der Merwe, 2016). Employment enrichment programs, such as recognition programs, career pathing, and employee development are tools used to enhance the organizational climate, increasing employee retention (Alshathry et al., 2017). Organizational engagement can be the result of successful enrichment programs implemented as part of the organizational culture.

The organization's leadership and management shape the organizational climate of the organization, which can change frequently depending on the organization's mood (Koekemoer, 2014). Three specific types of employee moods that affect the organizational climate are engagement, motivation, and recognition (Polo-Vargas, Fernández Ríos, Bargsted, Ferguson, & Rojas-Santiago, 2017). The employees generally appear happy, feel happy, and smile often when engaged. When motivated, the

employees feel valued, do their best, and take the initiative to do more. The employees feel pride and communicate their experiences and achievements with everyone when they feel recognized by the organization. The climate or atmosphere affects the employee retention rate of the organization either positively or negatively (Alshathry et al., 2017).

Ćulibrk, Delić, Mitrović, and Ćulibrk (2018) concluded that managers and business leaders who want to retain their employees must create an environment conducive to long-term retention. Kundu and Lata (2017) investigated the relationship between supportive work environment and employee retention within the organizational engagement. The researchers conducted a quantitative study by analyzing data from 67 organizations to examine employee retention and the organizational environment. The results of Kundu and Lata's study revealed that a supportive work environment plays an essential role in affecting employee retention. To achieve a supportive work environment, leaders encourage employees to be creative and willing to take risks by fighting to effect change and remaining focused on the goals and objectives of the organization (Sacks, 2017).

Leadership and management. Leadership encourages motivation, inspiration, and influences employees to achieve the organization's goals and mission (Bottomley, Mostafa, Gould-Williams, & León-Cázares, 2016). Morgan (2014) conducted an analysis of active leadership and the effects of managing the workforce by examining challenges faced by leaders in the workforce including contributing factors to the organizational success encouraging employee retention. The results of the analysis indicated the importance or a leader to encourage employees to be creative and willing to take a risk.

Leaders that adapt their leadership style to the team can be efficient and retain quality employees because not all strategies used by business leaders may be useful for all organizations and groups (Morgan, 2014).

Leadership style can affect employee retention, turnover, and employee performance (LePine, Zhang, Crawford, & Rich, 2016). Understanding the leadership styles and strategies used by leaders can affect employee perception leading to employee retention. Decisive leadership styles, flexible planning, and strategic agility are essential to promote innovation within an organization (Barnard & Van der Merwe, 2016). Leadership promotes innovation (To, Herman, & Ashkanasy, 2015).

Innovative management strategies establish the relationship between organizational innovation and sustainability, which can present the need for change (Barnard & Van der Merwe, 2016). When management and leaders of an organization realize operations are not operating efficiently and at full potential, change is required, in doing so, the leaders have to implement change (Du Plessis & Mabunda, 2016). Leaders have to develop strategies to communicate with employees facing change to achieve low resistance, to effect successful change (Du Plessis & Mabunda, 2016). Kotter (2012) identified the importance of change management because people need help responding to changes, especially in the workplace.

Communication and cooperation are essential to achieving effective change management. There are no specific guidelines or simple instructions to effect change. The organizational leaders' ability to implement change can be a determining factor for employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Every organization has specific guidelines and

structures intended to affect change. Before implementing a change management process, the need for change has to be established, change agents must be on-board, and a plan developed. The type of business or organization does not change the need for a strategic plan, open communication, and acceptance (Liden, Wayne, Chenwei, & Meuser, 2014). Leaders who encourage and manage employee relationships have a better chance to influence the organization's culture and their commitment to the goals and mission (Liden et al., 2014). Rawat, Khugshal, and Chaubey (2015) argue that it is the responsibility of the manager to motivate staff members.

Rawat et al. (2015) examined the attitude towards motivational practices and determined that respondent's demographic characteristics differ according to the employee's attitude towards motivational practices. Rawat et al. (2015) defined the difference between motivation and employee motivation by identifying types of incentives and motivational methods leadership should consider. Milman and Dickson (2014) researched the characteristics of employee retention among employees and revealed that the retention of the employee is based on experience, satisfaction, pay, and the opportunity to advance. Herzberg (1974) determined that extrinsic hygiene factors, such as poor pay, company policies, working conditions, and the quality of leadership are essential to keeping a reasonable level of employee satisfaction.

Olafsen, Halvari, Forest, and Deci (2015) stated that workplace encounters and hygiene factors could influence job satisfaction. Employee retention increases as employee satisfaction increases (Cohen, Blake, & Goodman, 2016). Employees are more likely to provide the employer with constructive information when there is a positive

response to job satisfaction, thereby increasing job performance (Colbert, Bono, & Purvanova, 2016). In contrast, some researchers argue that job satisfaction will not increase workplace performance because employees will always want more than the organization can provide (Petrou, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2018). Bang (2015) suggested that when employees reach job satisfaction in the workplace, employers would need to provide incentives to maintain employee satisfaction and job performance. Herzberg et al. (1959) identified intrinsic motivators such as varied work, increasing opportunities to grow within the organization, and implementing achievement and recognition programs.

Employee retention. Employees change jobs continuously in today's working environment; employee retention is an ongoing human resource problem (Idris, 2014; Michael, Prince, & Chacko, 2016; Rose & Raja, 2016). Human resource practices within organizations should be in place but monitored and altered as needed to encourage employee retention. Employees are the organization's most valuable asset, an asset that should be recruited and valued, but also retained (Kossivi, Xu, & Kalgora, 2016). Low employee retention creates billions in annual financial losses for US organizations (U.S. Department of Labor, 2016).

The U.S. Bureau of Statistics (2017) reported that between June 2015 and July 2015, approximately 2.7 million employees voluntarily separated from their jobs reducing the employee retention rate by 70%. Losing key employees is costly to an organization. Replacing good employees cost the organization 30% - 50% of the former employee's salary, in addition to knowledge, employee morale, and camaraderie. The National Council of Nonprofit (2018) found that in 2015, 84% of operating nonprofit

organizations do not have employee retention strategies. Nonprofit leaders are beginning to have increased concerns about strategies to recruit qualified employees because there is less attention in the nonprofit sector (Mason, 2015). Nonprofits account for 11.4 million jobs, 10.3% of all private sector employment.

Leaders of nonprofit organizations could improve leadership practices in the workplace by implementing employee retention strategies (Akingbola & van den Berg, 2017). Leaders in the nonprofit sector could retain top talent if more attention were given to retention strategies as recruitment continues (Mason, 2015). The employee's experience with the employer and the organizational environment are related to the leader's ability to retain employees (Alshathry et al., 2017). The ability to retain employees reduces training expenses and is vital to maintaining experienced talent, those who are familiar with the policies and procedures of the organization (Witmer & Mellinger, 2016).

Benefits of employee retention. Organizational leaders, including nonprofit leaders, are using strategic methods to make sure their valued asset, trained and talented employees do not leave the organization (Frosch, 2016). Herzberg et al. (1959) argued that gratified needs to govern the behavior and performance of the employee, classified in hygiene and motivator factors. Benefits of employee retention are reduced turnover, improved employee morale, reduced acquisition, and training time and cost. In addition to dedicated company experts, increased productivity, better customer experience, and lower costs and higher profits. By implementing employee retention strategies, nonprofit

leaders could create a positive culture of success and achievement within the organization (Word & Park, 2015).

Employee engagement leads to goal setting and positive outcomes encouraging employee performance and retention (Shoaib & Kohli, 2017). Implementing goal-setting strategies encourages employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational behavior, thereby increasing employee morale, productivity, and performance (Shoaib & Kohli, 2017). The organizational leaders' ability to implement motivator factors will lead to a rise in the satisfaction level, and decrease the level of employees, that are not satisfied or motivated (Herzberg, 1974). The ability to achieve increased employee retention decreases turnover and the cost to recruit, hire and train new employees (Özçelik, 2015). Some leaders have determined that there are advantages to employee turnovers, thereby reducing the rate of employee retention.

Studies have shown that millennials, who will make up 50% of the workforce by 2020, are driven by compensation and less likely to commit to a position for no more than 3 to 5 years (Özçelik, 2015). Hiring experienced employees interested in ownership or entrepreneurship requires less training, can be beneficial to the organization, which will reduce the cost for training. One of the strategies is the implementation of entrepreneurship, the creation of small collaborative teams to achieve long-term successful teams within the organization (Özçelik, 2015). The strategy is to provide significance, support, and satisfaction for the millennial, as with all employees, providing extended commitment, creating sustainability for the business and employee longevity (Mason, 2015).

Employee turnover. The percentage or number of workers who leave an organization and are replaced by new employees determine employee turnover. Two types of turnover are voluntary (quits or resigns) and involuntary turnover (is fired). Turnover is expensive, disruptive, and affects the morale of existing employees. With attention, employers can reduce voluntary and involuntary turnover by offering market-driven compensation, above average employee benefits, and a culture that appreciates and engages employees by providing advanced training and measures encouraging employee retention. The profit margin is affected with turnover because the organization has to pay for continued benefits, severance pay, and cost of recruiting, hiring, training, and resulting in lost productivity, revenue, and employee morale in some cases.

Good turnover. Good turnover is useful when the new person can add value to the organization by outweighing the cost of recruiting and training. A new employee has to learn, understand, and blend in with the organizational culture to be fully functional (Siddique, 2017). It takes approximately 6 months for a new employee to become operational although the timeline is different for companies as training can be the determining factor (Tabvuma, Georgellis, & Lange, 2015). Compromised public goods and services provided to a community is the result of high turnover and the company's failure to maintain low employee retention (Carroll, 2016).

Impact of employee retention and turnover. Employee satisfaction is crucial to employee retention. Managers can exhibit unconscious bias, causing organizations key employees and expense (May, 2016). Employees are likely to disengage and leave when they think the boss is unfair (Hewlett, Rashid, & Sherbin, 2018). Studies indicate that

employees who are dissatisfied with their manager's action would become angry and

burned out, and disengaged and alienated (Hewlett et al., 2018). Companies realize the

importance of employee retention but fail to implement the right approach at the right

time, which leads to high rates of employee turnover (Aurora, 2015). The results of the

study identified specific organizational strategies such as fair compensations, promotions,

appreciation, empowerment, and trust that increase employee retention.

Employee turnover is a principal concern for managers and executives (Lee,

Hom, Eberly, & Li, 2017). The Society for Human Resource Management reported

employee retention and increased employee turnover is the top concern of more than 46%

of human resource managers in 2016, which is a 21% increase in 3 years. The price to

replace employees who leave their jobs could cost the employer as much as 200% of the

annual salary to recruit, hire, and prepare new employees (Lee, Hom, Eberly, & Li,

2017). In addition to the financial cost, organizations suffer the loss of credibility and

alienate customers, especially in small organizations, and donors in the case of a

nonprofit organization (Bornstein, 2019).

Other implications of low employee retention and high employee turnover hinder

workforce diversity, reduces employee morale by increasing remaining employees

workload, and setting off a turnover spiral. Aurora (2015) argued that due to existing

limited resources, the nonprofit leader's inability to retain employees in nonprofit

organizations is crucial. The practice of employee retention is critical to the success of an

organization, which organizations often lose when comparing the cost of employees

(Aurora, 2015; Mendoza-Abarca & Gras, 2017). The economic and human resource loss of one employee can be compared to the loss of two; the costs to recruit, hire, and train.

Employees change jobs frequently in today's working environment; resulting in an ongoing human resource problem, employee retention, and turnover (Michael et al., 2016; Rose & Raja, 2016). Employee retention is a process where employees are encouraged to stay with an organization reducing expenses for recruiting and training (Duffy, Douglass, Autin, England, & Dik, 2016). Studies revealed that employee retention results from the work environment in the relationship between leadership and management support, employee training and development, and employee satisfaction (Bibi et al., 2018). Employee turnover occurs when an employee voluntarily quits or leaves an organization (Dawson, Stasa, Roche, Homer, & Duffield, 2014). Business leaders' willingness to satisfy employee needs provides a significant impact on employees and the organization, leading to a positive effect on the community (Jaskyte, 2015). Contributing to the retention of qualified and experienced employees may increase funding opportunities and participation in the community (Maier et al., 2016).

Taylor (2016) concluded, with observations from studies that the potential of a total reward can improve employee retention, which is providing salary progression relating to performance pay benefit packages, and compensation tools. A determining factor regarding employee retention and turnover could be an individual's sense of their monetary worth, especially when employed in poorly paid jobs (Taylor, 2016).

This literature review included an analysis of sources relating to employee retention using a synthesized conceptual framework. The use of an assessment of

successful strategies can support employee retention of nonprofit social service organizations. This review is the result of past research derived by analyzing employee retention and the consequences of successful strategies used by nonprofit leaders. The findings from this study could provide business leaders of nonprofit organizations, specifically nonprofit social service organizations, the necessary strategies to increase employee retention.

An organizational leader who recognizes and understands motivator factors such as recognition, achievement, and growth can inspire employees, increasing the opportunity to retain qualified and valued employees. This study is beneficial because understanding why people stay increases employee retention and lowers the cost of staffing and turnover.

Transition

In Section 1 of this study, the intent was to explain the foundation of this study, identify the background of the problem, and outline the purpose of the study, the nature of the study, and the conceptual framework to explore strategies that some nonprofit social service leaders use to retain employees. Section 1 concludes with an analysis and synthesis of existing peer-reviewed professional and academic literature related to employee retention in nonprofit organizations. The literature review presented applications to the business problem by reviewing employee retention, the conceptual framework, and both supporting and challenging theories. The literature review included an in-depth discussion of the potential themes as the recommendations for management applications from business, nonprofit, and organizational literature. Exploring retention strategies nonprofit leaders use to retain employees can provide insight into ways nonprofit social service organizations can retain talented and productive employees.

In Section 2, the specifics of the study are presented. Section 2 includes a restatement of the purpose statement, an analysis of the role of the researcher and the participants, a discussion of the population and sampling, the ethical approach, data collection (instruments and techniques), data organization and analysis, and reliability and validity.

Section 2: The Project

In Section 2, I present the details of the methodology and design of this research project. The first section includes the role of the researcher and the participants' eligibility criteria. The second section presents the method and design techniques selected over research methods and designs. The third section includes the selection of participants and sampling to ensure data saturation; I also clarify measures used to ensure ethical protection of the participants. The fourth section clarifies data collection, instruments, techniques, and the study site. In the fifth section, I describe the procedures used to achieve reliability and validity of the data.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies nonprofit social service business leaders use to retain employees. The targeted population included business leaders from four nonprofit social service organizations located in the District of Columbia Metropolitan area in the United States who had successfully implemented strategies to retain employees. The contribution to positive social change within organizations includes the potential to increase employee retention. The contribution to social change for the community and society consists of the potential to improve economic stability, economic growth, and charitable services within the community.

Role of the Researcher

My role as the researcher and primary data collection instrument in this qualitative multiple case study included collecting and analyzing the data. Marshall and

Rossman (2016) determined that the role of the researcher in a qualitative study is to compile and analyze the data in an ethical manner to reduce inconsistent results. In the semistructured interview process, I collected the participants' responses using audio recorders to review the responses with the participants. Recording the interview can be a method to ensure member checking (Connelly, 2016). The researcher's role is also to investigate the participant's responses and behaviors using the data, notes, and participant observation (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

My interest in the research topic resulted from my managerial and voluntary experience with nonprofit organizations on a national level and from the management of my nonprofit organization. As the previous manager of a large nonprofit organization, I was familiar with the challenges leaders face to retain employees and volunteers; however, I had no employment history or relationship with the organizations or participants in this study. Researchers should maintain impartiality and avoid personal bias during the research process (Yin, 2018). The standards outlined by Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Belmont Report are provided to ensure ethical research.

In 1979, the Belmont Report was established due to The National Research Act of 1974, creating the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavior Research. The Belmont Report established three mandatory ethical principles for researcher compliance: (a) the principles of respect for persons, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice. For this qualitative multiple case study, I followed the ethical principles identified in the Belmont Report and Walden University's IRB by protecting

the participants' confidentiality and data collection guidelines. I ensured that the research was ethical; at no time did I compromise the results of the study, the confidentiality of the organizations or participants, or the standards set forth by the Belmont Report (see U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979).

To mitigate researcher bias, I followed the protocol for member checking and data saturation. I interviewed participants whom I had no personal or professional experience with, and I set aside my personal experiences, beliefs, or familiarity with the nonprofit culture. Triangulation can play a critical role in the qualitative data collection process by strengthening the construct validity of a case study (Yin, 2018). A researcher should exclude personal viewpoints, experiences, values, or morals when conducting a research study (Cairney & St. Denny, 2015). To avoid interjecting preconceived opinions, I remained neutral when collecting data that were contrary to personal beliefs. Member checking is a technique used to validate the trustworthiness of the results (Connelly, 2016). I shared a summary of the results of the interview with the participants to check the accuracy of the participant's experiences and the interviewer's interpretation. The participants were allowed to engage with me to clarify the interview summary, as outlined in the interview protocol for this study.

The interview protocol is used for data collection relating to data saturation. The use of the semistructured interview protocol can ensure the results of the study are credible (Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2018). The rationale for interview protocol is to ensure the consistency of the questions and processes are used for each case and participant, thereby adding to the reliability of the research (Castillo-Montoya, 2016; Fusch & Ness,

2015). The four steps outlined in the interview protocol document are (a) ensure

interview questions align with the research questions, (b) construct an inquiry-based

conversation, (c) receive feedback on interview protocol, and (d) pilot the interview

protocol (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). I followed these steps when designing my interview

protocol (see Appendix).

Participants

The participants for this study included high-level leaders from four nonprofit

social service organizations located in the District of Columbia Metropolitan area in the

United States who had successfully implemented strategies to retain employees. I ensured

the participants met the eligibility criteria for this study: (a) over the age of 18, (b)

employed with the nonprofit social service organization for a minimum of 2 years, and

(c) responsibilities included developing and implementing retention strategies for the

organization. The sample for this study was four leaders, one from each of the four

selected nonprofit social service organizations. Malterud, Siersma, and Guassora (2016)

recommended that in the initial stage of a qualitative study, the sample size requires an

interim decision. Hoyland, Hollund, and Olsen (2015) argued that researchers should

select participants with sufficient experience and information to contribute to the study.

Selecting one leader within each organization with a successful retention rate ensured that

participants would have the appropriate experience and the ability to manage their

schedules to participate in the study.

My strategy for gaining access to participants was to send letters of invitation via

email or the postal service to 20 organizations listed in the Directory of DC Area

Nonprofit Organization, specifically the social service nonprofit section. Yin (2018) suggested that to gain access to participants, the researcher should approach potential participants through personal communication, such as telephone calls, emails, or a personal visit. I introduced myself as the researcher in the solicitation letter. I included a description of the study, a sample of the interview questions, and the consent form. I asked the participants to indicate their interest by contacting me via email or telephone. My goal was to establish a working relationship with the potential participant with the initial contact.

Before the interview, I spoke with the participant to answer questions they may have had regarding the consent forms, the study, confidentiality, the interview questions, and the member checking process. The researcher's ability to establish an honest working relationship with the participant is essential to conducting a qualitative study (Yin, 2018). I maintained a professional yet casual relationship with the participants by encouraging open communication and accessibility (see Yin, 2018). The participants were provided with general information about why this research was necessary, how results of the research may affect nonprofit organizations, participants' rights, and their option to withdraw from the study at any time. Establishing a healthy researcher relationship with the participant will build trust and increase the credibility of the study (Berger, 2015).

I ensured that participants' characteristics would enable me to answer the research question: What are the strategies nonprofit social service organizations use to retain employees? Developing a cordial relationship with participants was intended to increase the credibility of the data collection process. Wang, Sui, Luthans, Wang, and Wu (2015)

affirmed that participants feel more relaxed and eager to share experiences when they are in a healthy working environment.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

The three research methods are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. I selected the qualitative method for this study because I wanted to explore strategies leaders of nonprofit organizations use to retain employees. The qualitative method is used to gain an understanding of a specific phenomenon, primary reasons, and insight from various perspectives by providing the opportunity to gain in-depth, rich data (Dasgupta, 2015; Hayward, Bungay, Wolff, & MacDonald, 2016; Kroeten, 2018). Researchers use the qualitative method to retrieve data and information from the participant through open-ended questions and conversations (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Researchers also use the qualitative method to explore what, how, and why questions, creating an in-depth, probing base to understand the participant's responses (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2018). I determined that the qualitative method was appropriate for my multiple case study, allowing me to identify and explore strategies used to retain employees in nonprofit social service organizations.

The quantitative method is a systematic approach to observe phenomena using dependent and independent variables through statistical or mathematical techniques (Lewis, 2015; Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) noted that the quantitative method is limited because the studies do not reflect why the participants respond in a specific manner, nor do they explain the rationale behind the strategies. The quantitative method was not

appropriate for this study because I was seeking to explore strategies used to successfully retain employees.

The mixed-methods approach was also not appropriate. The mixed-methods approach is used to create cross-referencing and validation for the study if data are required to accept or reject the null hypothesis (Makrakis & Kostoulas-Makrakis, 2016). A mixed-methods approach includes statistical methods to analyze data based on theory, requiring verification, validation, and analysis of data (Yin, 2018). The mixed-methods approach was not appropriate for my study because I did not need to collect and analyze numerical data to answer the research question. Collecting multiple forms of data, including qualitative and quantitative, is a tradition of a mixed-methods case study (Guetterman & Fetters, 2018), which was not appropriate for the current study.

Research Design

I used the case study design for this study. Researchers use the case study design is to conduct a thorough analysis of a topic or phenomena within a real-life setting (Saunders & Bezzina, 2015). Researchers use the case study design as a means to investigate and understand participants and their behaviors (Yin, 2018). Case study research generally involves several sources of data to explore a phenomenon within the bounds of the study (Singh, 2016; Yin, 2018). The data collected in a case study include interviews, observations, and archival documents for triangulation of the findings (Rose, Spinks, & Canhoto, 2015). Yin (2018) noted that data triangulation in case studies includes different sources to investigate a phenomenon. Triangulation strengthens the validity of the study by addressing the phenomenon in multiple ways (Yin, 2018).

The multiple case study design is used to explore the strategic process using open-ended questions within the research topic setting (Villarreal Larrinaga, 2017). I used a multiple case design for this study. The data and evidence produced from a multiple case study are stronger and more dependable than a single case study, increasing the reliability of the results (Gustafsson, 2017). The multiple case study was the most appropriate design to study strategies social service nonprofit leaders use to retain employees.

The ethnographic design was not selected for this study. Researchers use the ethnographic design to observe the cultural behavior of the participants in a setting (Rhiannon & Chloe, 2016). The credibility of the ethnographic study depends on the researcher's ability to accurately observe and identify the participants without personal bias (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The ethnographic design was not appropriate for the current study because the research question did not involve exploring a group in a culture-sharing setting.

The phenomenological design focuses on the lived experiences and behaviors of the participants (Lewis, 2015; Moustakas, 1994). Researchers use the phenomenological approach to describe the participants' personal beliefs and feelings (Vadera & Aguilera, 2015). The phenomenological design was inappropriate for the current study because the personal lived experiences of the participants were not relevant to answer the research question.

The descriptive multiple case study design was appropriate for studying current organizational practices with emphasis on leadership management aspects, such as employee retention strategies. Descriptive case studies are identified as introductory or

illustrative presentations of a phenomenon that provide a detailed description to develop a common language for use to describe a phenomenon (Yin, 2018). Researchers use evidence from multiple organizations and sources to gain a thorough understanding of the experience of the organization or social practice (Yin, 2018).

Fusch and Ness (2015) identified the importance of reaching data saturation to enhance the validity of the study. Glaser and Strauss (1999) introduced the concept of data saturation, referring to the point in a qualitative study when no new information or concepts appear during data collection. To ensure data saturation and rigor, I used coding to confirm that no new findings were appearing during analysis of the participants' responses. Researchers use qualitative coding to ensure data saturation by analyzing data to determine when information is being replicated during the study (Saunders & Bezzina, 2015). The researcher determines when the data collection has come to the point when further collection will not reveal new themes (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Orri, Revah-Levy, & Garges, 2015).

Population and Sampling

The population chosen for this qualitative case study included a purposeful sample of four nonprofit social service leaders located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area who had successfully used strategies to retain employees. Purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research to identify information-rich cases related to the research question (Palinkas et al., 2015). According to Yilmaz (2013) and Ilker, Sulaiman, and Rukayya (2016), researchers can use a small number of participants when using the purposeful sampling method because there are precise selection criteria.

Purposeful sampling was an appropriate technique for the current qualitative study because I had the opportunity to interview participants who had firsthand experience and knowledge of the research topic (see Boddy & Boddy, 2016; Malterud et al., 2016).

The sample size is critical for research. Guest, Namey, and McKenna (2017) stated that researchers could use considerable sample sizes for case study interviews. The sample size for a qualitative study should represent the population and should be between three to six participants (Englander, 2016; Harf et al., 2015). Yin (2018) recommended a minimum of two to three cases when conducting a multiple case study. To achieve data triangulation, information retrieved from a case study could include interviews, observation, and documentation for triangulation of the findings (Rose et al., 2015). For a case study, researchers examine sources such as employee handbooks, office memos, and correspondences, in addition to interviews and personal observations (Yin, 2018). Data collected for this study also included organizational policies and other documents related to employee retention strategies to support triangulation.

The criteria for this study were that the participants must currently work within the nonprofit social service organization, occupy a position of leadership for at least 2-years, and have maintained a successful employee retention record. Four eligible participants were selected for this multiple case study using purposeful sampling. I selected leaders from the list of organizations that submitted a positive response for the study, of which four were used. Data saturation can be complete with as little as 3 participants (Phillips, 2017).

The participant criteria and the sampling method ensured data saturation for this study. Data saturation occurs when no new information arises during the interview or research (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Yin, 2018). The saturation point indicates that the sample size in the qualitative method adequately supports the research question (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017). o ensure data saturation, I used an interview protocol (See Appendix) for each participant to provide the participants with the same questions, the same process, and the opportunity to verify the responses. Using purposeful sampling, I used the same criteria to screen the participants, allowing the opportunity to develop a professional relationship and level of trust for the interview (Palinkas et al., 2015).

I collected data by interviewing each participant using identical semistructured interview questions. I also followed a structured interview protocol for each participant interview. Four participants were selected for the study, one nonprofit social service leader from each of the four organizations. Purposeful sampling and snowball sampling align with qualitative research (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Researchers use purposeful sampling when the participants are selected based on defined criteria (Sharma, 2017). I used purposeful sampling to select organizational leaders for this qualitative study. Researchers use snowball sampling to gain access to potential participants through other individuals with knowledge of the requested information (Sharma, 2017). Snowball sampling was not selected for this study; one leader from each organization was sufficient to meet the criteria.

To develop the relationship, I contacted the participants via email, phone, or in-person to answer any questions regarding the study and completion of the Letter of

Consent. For the interview, I asked the participants to select a time and place for the

discussion, based on their schedule and availability. The primary objective was to meet

face-to-face for no more than an hour. Telephone interviews or video conferences were

an option if we could not agree on a face-to-face interview. The interview setting was

free of unnecessary noises to record the conversation using a digital voice-recording

device to avoid distraction (Yin, 2018).

Ethical Research

Ethical consideration is the researcher's responsibility to protect the participants

by protecting critical information and data, respecting privacy, and providing

confidentiality (Yin, 2018). Walden University requires agreed participants to sign

consent forms before the study. The consent form details the purpose of the study,

procedures, nature of the study, and privacy details.

I attempted to establish contact with the organizational leader by telephone and

email. I introduced myself briefly to discuss my topic, the purpose of the study, and how

their participation would benefit the research and potentially nonprofit social service

business leaders. I asked the prospective participants to confirm their agreement to

participate in the study by responding to the consent form by email.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2017) requires researchers

to consent from potential participants and issue a consent form in conjunction with IRB

guidelines before the collection of data or initiation of the study. The consent form must

include instructions or guidelines for asking additional questions, contacting the

researcher, and opting out of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Participants received a

copy of the consent form. The participant responded by email with the phrase "*I consent*" as a means to consent to the study.

Participants could withdraw from the study by sending an email or calling me, the researcher at the designated email or phone number if they were no longer interested in participating in the study. There was no need for an explanation; participation in the study was at-will. Participation in a research study should be voluntary. Participants should never be coerced or forced to participate in a research study (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects and Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1978; Patton, 2015). Participant information was not compromised; the information gathered during the study, will remain with the research documentation for the agreed-upon 5-years and destroyed at the end of the designated time. There were no incentives for participating in this study, which could have been viewed as coercion, thereby affecting the study's validity.

The participants' confidentiality and rights were protected as outlined in the Belmont Report Ethical Guidelines (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects and Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1978). To maintain participant confidentiality, I assigned each participant a two-letter, one number formatted identification code. There were no physical copies of the participant's name or organization on any of the documents or consent forms. I have the only record of the code, stored with the documents in a non-disclosed locked safe for 5 years. Data and consent forms are stored on a flash drive and maintained in the same undisclosed locked safe for 5-years to protect participants' rights. After 5-years, the documents and flash

drive will be shredded and destroyed. The guidelines outlined in Walden University's research handbook were followed. Potential participants were not contacted regarding this study, nor was data collected until approval from Walden IRB and the Approval Number were received. The IRB approval number for this research is 02-28-20-0675177.

Data Collection Instruments

As the researcher of this qualitative multiple case study, I was the primary data collection instrument. A researcher could serve as the primary data collection instrument when using face-to-face semistructured interviews (Palinkas et al., 2015). Semistructured interviews of four nonprofit social service leaders were used for this study. Drew (2014) determined that researchers conducting semistructured interviews could explore the participants' experiences while detecting their body language. The semistructured interview is a commonly used and successful data collection method for qualitative studies (Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016). The primary objective was to conduct face-to-face interviews with the participants. Yin (2018) determined that qualitative researchers often use interviews to collect data in a case study. The researcher can also identify participant nonverbal communication when conducting face-to-face interviews (Onwuegbuzie & Byer, 2014).

In addition to acquiring consent from the participants, I asked for and received secondary documents, such as organizational charts, employee job descriptions, employee handbooks, organizational goals and plans, and other documents the participants shared, to prepare for the interview. Researchers examine sources such as handbooks, office memos, and correspondences to make for a case study (Yin, 2018). I

assessed data consisting of organizational documents before the interviewing process and use the assessment to prepare for the interviewing process. The use of the documents was valuable to the researcher, lending knowledge to specific terminology and methods used within the workplace.

I met each of the participants at the agreed time, each with a comfortable, relaxed setting, with little to no distractions. We met for approximately 45 minutes to an hour, and I recorded each of the interviews and took notes. Researchers use a semistructured interview to capture the participant's perspective by observation (Borger, Van Hoof, & Sanders, 2016). I used the semistructured interview to obtain the participant's perspective by verbal response and observation. Each interview consisted of eight semistructured, open-ended questions. Upon conclusion of the interview, I reminded the participant of the confidentiality of the study and the member checking process. The participant and I scheduled a time to evaluate the results to ensure accuracy.

I used the triangulation methodology of data sources provided by the participants and reviewed the transcript summary to reduce bias, validate the themes, and enhance the study's reliability. Renz, Carrington, and Badger (2018) defined triangulation as a means to assure the validity of a research topic. Upon completion of the audio transcripts, the participants reviewed a copy of my summary of the interview to identify potential errors or misunderstandings with my interpretation.

Data Collection Technique

The primary data collection technique I selected for this study was face-to-face, semistructured interviews that were audio recorded. McIntosh and Morse (2015)

determined that the semistructured interview ascertains the participant's responses regarding a specific situation or phenomenon they have experienced or personal knowledge. One of the semistructured interviews' characteristics is that each of the participants is asked the same question, in order, and the data is collected in a comparable manner (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The development and use of a qualitative semistructured interview contribute to the study's reliability, reducing bias (Kallio et al., 2016).

One of the advantages of a recorded semistructured individual interview is that the interviewer asks the participants the same questions. The participants can respond in their own words, elaborating at will (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Ilyushin & Azbel, 2017). The interviewer can also develop a professional rapport with the participants encouraging additional questions prompted by a specific response or body language (Groth, Bergner, & Burgess, 2016; Miller, 2016; Yin, 2018). Divergence from the initial questions can be a disadvantage of semistructured face-to-face interviews, causing bias (Groth et al., 2016; Yin, 2018). Researchers also have to be careful to avoid influencing the participant's response when conducting semistructured interviews, resulting in bias (Himmelheber, 2014).

The strategy for gaining access to participants was to send letters of invitation, via email or the postal services (if necessary) to nonprofit social service organizations in the Washington, D.C. area, obtained from the Directory of DC Area Nonprofit Organizations (2018). Yin (2018) suggested gaining access to participants; the researcher should approach potential participants through personal communication, such as telephone calls,

emails, or personal visits. Upon IRB approval, an email, including the Participant Letter of Invitation and the Consent Form, including sample questions, were sent to prospective participants. The invitation letter included an introduction to the researcher, a description of the study, and the researcher's contact information. The participants were asked to indicate their interest by emailing "I Consent" to me.

I spoke with the individual participants to answer questions regarding the consent forms, the study, confidentiality, the interview questions, and the member checking process. The researcher's ability to establish an honest, working relationship with the participant is essential to conducting a qualitative study (Islam, 2014; Yin, 2018). I explained the interview process and the time requirements for the interview and the follow-up meeting. We then scheduled the date, time, and location for the interview and a tentative date and time to review the summary. The follow-up review was restricted to no more than 30 minutes via face-to-face meetings, skype, or a phone call.

In addition to acquiring consent from the participants, I asked the participants if there were any organizational documents they may be willing to share related to their successful retention strategies. Documents included organizational charts, employee job descriptions, employee handbooks, organizational goals, and plans related to employee retention strategies Queiros, Faria, and Ameida, (2017) posited that the use of documents in an interview-based study could provide background information for research. By reviewing existing employee retention documents, in combination with the interviews, I was able to gain a better understanding of the results of my data analysis. In addition to

resources as a secondary source for the study, the organizational documents can corroborate the interview data or refute the results Queirós, Almeida, & Faria, 2017).

I collected data by interviewing individual participants and by reviewing existing organizational and employee retention related documents offered by the participants. I followed the interview protocol (See Appendix) for each participant interview. The researcher should use the same interview protocol for each participant (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). During each interview, I recorded the interview using my iPhone recorder, a secondary audio recording device, and a cassette recorder as a backup in technical problems. After each interview, I asked the participant if there were anything they would like to add that I did not address. I offered my thanks for their time and participation, and confirmed the arrangement for the follow-up meeting to review my summary of the interviews.

The advantages of using the member checking tool are (a) the participants have an opportunity to correct errors or misconceptions (b) lessens the risk of participants reporting the researcher misunderstood their statements, and (c) provides the participant the opportunity to clarify the themes revealed during the interview (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016; Yin, 2018). Participants can also volunteer additional information, ensuring the responses are correct, preventing false information from entering the study as reliable (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The demand for the participant's time and commitment to the study can be a disadvantage. The researcher also has to be careful to recognize that the participant may say what they think the researcher wants to hear (Birt et al., 2016; Yin, 2018).

I used member checking to confirm my interpretation of the interview with each participant by providing a synopsis for review and discussion to ensure the participants' responses. The iPhone recording was used to transcribe the interview, the second and third recordings were used to confirm the transcripts and my interpretation of the interviews. A summary of the interview responses and the documents (if provided) were used to prepare a synopsis of the interview to share with the appropriate participant. As the researcher, I had to be consistent and careful to ask each participant if there were additional information. In the event, there was, the process would have to be amended because each participant would have to be asked the same questions, which could have affected data saturation. There was no additional information offered by the participants.

Data Organization Technique

The researcher must develop strategies to collect, organize, and maintain and store data to protect the researcher, the participants, and the organizations' privacy. Valid data organization strategies are crucial factors in the research process (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The benefit of the reflexive journal is to assist the research with answering questions that occur while conducting qualitative interviews during a study (Meyer & Willis, 2018). During each interview, I used the reflective journal to make notes, document details of the interview the environment, and reflect on the participant's demeanor.

Throughout the research process, I stored the participants' files, and records in a locked, password-protected safe. Electronic correspondences and documents are filed in a password-protected locked safe in a non-disclosed area. I am the only person to have

access to confidential files and documents. Upon completing of the interviews, I transcribed the recorded data, then personally compared and reviewed the transcripts with the recordings to ensure accuracy. At the scheduled follow-up meeting, some via skype and others via face-to-face, the participants and I briefly reviewed the summaries of the findings from each interview, thereby applying the transcript review tool.

To maintain participant confidentiality, I assigned each participant a two-letter, one number formatted identification code. There are no physical copies of the participant's name or organization on any of the documents or consent forms. The formatted identification code are stored with the documents in a password protected locked safe for 5 years. Data and electronic documents are stored on a flash drive and locked in the password-protected safe for 5-years to protect participants' rights. After 5-years, the documents and flash drive will be shredded and destroyed. The research and data analysis guidelines outlined in Walden University's research handbook will be adhered to for this study.

Data Analysis

There are four types of triangulation: (a) data triangulation, (b) investigator triangulation, (c) theory triangulation, and (d) methodological triangulation (Anney, 2014; Yin, 2018). Researchers in a qualitative case study most commonly use methodological triangulation. Methodological triangulation involves using various writings to support a phenomenon to obtain detailed information regarding a research topic (Abdalla, Oliveira, Azevedo, & Gonzalez, 2018; Yin, 2018). I used methodological triangulation as the data analysis technique for this study. For this qualitative case study, I

applied the semistructured approach by using six open-ended questions. The data

collected from the interviews and an analysis of the documents provided by the

participants met methodological triangulation requirements.

I used the five-step analysis model of Yin's (2018) model to focus on the key

themes; correlate the key themes with the literature and the conceptual framework. In the

data analysis phase, the themes identified from the data were dissected and organized

according to the conceptual framework's tenets. The five steps are to (a) compile the data,

(b) deconstruct the data, (c) reassemble the data, (d) interpret the data, and (e) conclude

the data. The interview protocol used ensured each participant was asked the same

questions, in the same order, with the same clarifications and emphases (Spiliane, Larkin,

Corcoran, Matvienko-Sikar, & Arensman, 2017).

The data analysis process started with compiling the data resulting from the

interviews and secondary documents. Following transcribing the recordings and member

checking, data transcriptions was transferred to NVivo 12 software to analyze and

identify the themes by detecting word frequency. The NVivo 12 software is used in

qualitative research to analyze and detect word frequency and themes (Hutchinson,

Johnston, & Breckon, 2010). Step two of the process was to deconstruct or disassemble

the information in a manner that does not affect the data in a controlled manner. Step

three of the process was to reassemble the data by coding and grouping. The themes

materialized as the data were reassembled through common descriptions of the themes

resulting from the responses. Steps four and five of the process, the researcher clarified

and interpreted the data, thereby making a conclusion based on the interpretation of the findings from the data.

The intent of data analysis is to describe the strategies leaders of nonprofit social service organizations use to retain employees and the relationship of the conceptual framework. I used Herzberg's two-factor motivational theory to frame my analysis of the data (Herzberg et al., 1959; Yin, 2018). I examined the categories and sub-categories of extrinsic motivators and intrinsic motivators to develop the codes, themes, and mapping.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability is a concept that refers to the dependability of the research, resulting in the consistency of reproducing the project. The ability to reproduce the results of a study concerns the dependability of the study results (Tang, Castle, & Choong, 2015). To ensure dependability in this study, I used triangulation, member checking, and interview protocol. To meet data triangulation, researchers should provide secondary resources such as employee handbooks, organizational charts, or employer documents provided by the participants (Jentoft & Olsen, 2019). Abdalla et al. (2018) argued that researchers who use various sources to support a phenomenon reduce personal bias and increase the likelihood of reducibility. Member checking allows the researcher and participants to review responses and detect materializing themes (Harvey, 2015).

Validity

Validity concerns the accuracy of concept measurement (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Cassell and Symon (2004) said validity refers to the credibility, transferability,

and confirmability of the finds. The participants in a qualitative research study are the

only ones who can challenge the of the study credibility (Cuervo-Cazurra, 2016).

Marshall and Rossman (2016) said bias within an interview could threaten the validity of

results. To lessen bias throughout the study, I held to Walden University IRB research

guidelines and handbook. The validity, dependability of the findings can be threatened by

bias within an interview (Malone, Nicholl, & Tracey, 2014). Bengtsson (2016) argued

that credibility consists of building up the results of a believable research study. To avoid

bias, the results were reported uncompromised, without manipulating or exaggerating the

results. I used methodological triangulation to address the credibility of the study. To

ensure triangulation, a researcher should have a secondary tool to aid various data sources

in a qualitative study (Wilson, 2014). I made a comparison between interview questions

and the information retrieved from secondary sources to validate any similarities or

differences in the information collected from the participants.

     Credibility. Strengthening credibility decreases the potential for researcher bias

to distort findings (Singh, 2016). The results of the study must be credible or believable

from the perspective of the participants, suggesting member checking as an appropriate

method to maintain creditability (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Researchers embrace the

opportunity to challenge credibility by duplicating a particular study under the exact

methods (Birt, et al., 2016). As the researcher, I had no prior relationship with the

participants' or the organizations, though I understand the nonprofit culture due to

personal and professional experience with nonprofit organizations. Bengtsson (2016) said

researchers guarantee the findings when they have a credible study, and the outcomes,

clarifications, and ending results are accurate. Member checking validates that information captured is accurate and aligns with the data analysis process (Harvey, 2015).

Transferability. As the researcher, to enable the sovereignty of transferability in this study, I held to the data collection and analysis techniques outlined in the interview protocol, member checking, triangulation, and data saturation. Transferability is the consistency of the described procedures when a future researcher conducts another study (Baillie, 2015; Tran, 2016). Transferability is the ability of future researchers to replicate the methods and findings of a study (Houghton, Murphy, Shaw, & Casey, 2015). Using a consistent process allows potential researchers to replicate the results of this study with supplementary samples. I thoroughly documented each step throughout the entire research and data collection process. The responsibility of demonstrating the transferability of established research findings to another set belongs to a different researcher, not the original researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The transferability of this study can benefit future researchers as evidence of semistructured work used for future research to improve retention strategies used by nonprofit social service leaders. Leaders of nonprofit social service organizations could use this research study's transferability to help implement strategies to retain qualified and experienced personnel.

Confirmability. Nelson (2017) stated researchers establish validity in the case study research by demonstrating credible and confirmable research findings. Confirmability involves thorough methodological triangulation of various sources of data such as interviews, company documents, and member checking. The steps and decisions made during the study should be audited with precision to enhance confirmability (Kihn

& Ihantola, 2015). In qualitative research, confirmability supports the validity of the results as objective measures. The steps I used ensured the study results reflect the participant perspectives presented through an objective research process. I used the NVivo software to audit the steps I took in the data collection process. Remaining objective and using a systematic approach to case study analysis kept analysis results free from personal bias (Moon, Brewer, Hanuchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). Confirmability involves thorough methodological triangulation of various sources of data such as interviews, company documents, and member checking. Combining the interview with data, observations, member checking, and alignment with a thorough documentation process for all interviews support confirmability (Harvey, 2015).

Data saturation. I collected, analyzed, and coded data from each interview until I reached data saturation. Collecting data until there were no new themes assured data saturation. Conducting member checking confirmed that the researcher captured all developing themes for describing the current practices nonprofit social service leaders use to increase employee retention (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Marshall and Rossman (2016) proposed that collecting adequate data to investigate a research problem is provisional to data saturation with a purposeful sample of any size. Researchers achieve data saturation when no new information or themes occur from data collection (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I covered the researcher's role, the participants, the research method and design, the study population and sampling, ethical research, data collection, and the

data analysis technique. I concluded Section 2 with an analogy of the reliability and validity of this study ensuring dependability, credibility, and data saturation.

After IRB approval, I conducted the research outlined in the proposal and presented the findings in Section 3. The completion of Section 3 consisted of the restatement of the purpose statement, applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, and recommendations for further research, my reflections, and the conclusion.

In the reflections, I discussed my thoughts and preconceived ideas of employee retention and nonprofit organizations after completing the study. In the conclusion, I provided a summary of the study and discussed how this study could benefit nonprofit social service business leaders in addition to business leaders in other industries.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies nonprofit social service business leaders use to retain employees. I conducted four semistructured interviews with business leaders from four nonprofit social service organizations in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The participants shared their experience with employee retention strategies used within their organization. The findings of this study were consistent with strategies and methods nonprofit social service business leaders used to implement employee retention. Three major themes emerged from the study: (a) recognition for achievements, (b) growth and advancement, and (c) benefits and compensations. In Section 3, I present an analysis of the findings from this study in the context of the conceptual framework and the literature review. I also use the findings to suggest applications to professional practice and to describe implications for social change.

Presentation of the Findings

The research question for this study was the following: What strategies do business leaders of nonprofit social service organizations use to retain employees? The conceptual framework for this study was Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation (Herzberg et al., 1959), also referred to as the hygiene-motivation theory. I used Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation, including hygiene and motivational factors, to analyze what leadership strategies were effective in maintaining employee retention. To answer the research question, I interviewed four nonprofit social service organization

leaders with a minimum of 2 years of experience who had successfully implemented strategies to retain employees.

I assigned a unique reference code for each of the participating nonprofit organizational leaders (SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, and SP5). SP4 opted out of the study due to the COVID-19 pandemic and commitment to clients. For the integrity of the documentation process, I chose not to adjust the participant reference codes.

Documents Received

I asked the participants to provide company documents such as employee handbooks, training manuals, memos, and any other documents related to their employee retention policies. I received, reviewed, and analyzed the employee handbooks, which included organization goals and missions, training manuals, and additional documents such as organizational charts, copies of the employee payroll receipt template, and descriptions of insurance and retirement plans. The employee handbooks included an overview of the company, policies and procedures, employee benefits, and workplace safety guidelines that identified local, state, and federal requirements and methods for filing grievances and employee exits.

Several of the documents shared by the participants were unique to their organization and their operational guidelines. SP1, SP2, and SP5 shared copies of the work assessments that the employees complete at designated times of the year to assess the employees' level of satisfaction with the organization, in addition to affording leadership the opportunity to determine the employees' progress. SP3 shared a copy of the pathway plan, a document prepared by the employee and their manager to set goals

for their professional development. SP2 and SP3 shared copies of the exit interviews used when an employee leaves the organization. Though the documents were unique to the organizations, there were similarities to the documents and the purpose of the documents.

To avoid bias, I reported the results without influencing, overstating, or overestimating the results. I used methodological triangulation to ensure the study's credibility by including secondary documents provided by the participants. To ensure triangulation, a researcher should have a secondary tool to supplement primary data sources in a qualitative study (Wilson, 2014). I compared the responses to the interview questions and the data obtained from the secondary sources to identify similarities or differences in the data collected from the participants. The emerging themes and subthemes resulted from the analysis of the interviews and documents provided by the participants.

Emerging Themes

After completing the coding and data analysis from the interviews and secondary documents, the following three retention themes emerged from the study: (a) recognition for achievement, (b) growth and advancement opportunities, and (c) benefits and compensations. In the sections below, I evaluate the themes and their connection to the conceptual framework and the literature review. Constructs affecting an employee's job satisfaction are categorized as motivators (intrinsic factors) and hygiene demotivators (extrinsic factors) that indicate an employee's level of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction affecting employee retention (Herzberg et al., 1959; Singh, 2016). Table 2 presents a summary of the themes and constructs.

Table 2

Emerging Themes and Constructs

Theme #	Theme	Construct
Theme 1	Recognition for Achievement • Quality of Leadership • Communication	Intrinsic - Motivator (Job Satisfaction)
Theme 2	Growth and Advancement • Training and Development	Intrinsic - Motivator (Job Satisfaction)
Theme 3	Benefits and Compensations • Job Security	Extrinsic – Hygiene Motivator (Job Dissatisfaction)

Theme 1: Recognition for Achievement

Recognition for achievement emerged as the first theme from the data analysis. SP2 reported that by recognizing employees for their achievements and spending less time on failures, leadership gains employees' trust, especially long-term employees. Achievement and recognition are intrinsic motivators that yield job satisfiers, improving factors increasing job satisfaction (Daramola, 2019; Herzberg et al., 1959). SP2 said

> By recognizing our employees for their achievements and spending less time on what many consider failures, we have gained the trust of our employees, especially our long term employees; the ones who have been with us for more than 10 years. With an open line of communication, our employees have a strong and positive opinion of management and leadership and themselves.

Employees could portray a strong and positive opinion of management and leadership when there is open communication and the focus relates to achievements.

Each participant acknowledged that some implemented strategies were unsuccessful. Employee input and employer modifications were eventually successful. Motivation could be a result of achievement, not a cause of the approach or strategy; no theory or strategy will work every time with every employee under all conditions (Bartz & Kritsonis, 2019). SP3 stated

> We show our employees gratitude for what some might consider the small things; we complement and recognize employees for regular attendance, for arriving to work on time, and for good customer services. Normally unsatisfied employees will speak up less, they will not show up for work on-time, for some, not at all.

The quality of the employee's work can be an indicator of the employee's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the organization.

Organizational leaders who employ strategies to increase employee satisfaction tend to attract and retain employees who offer exceptional service to the communities they serve (Alshmemri, Shahwan-Akl, & Maude, 2017; Lu & Gursoy, 2016). The current study participants noted that dissatisfied employees will not come to work on time, nor will they be team players; most importantly, their quality of work will indicate their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the organization and leadership. The advantage of employee satisfaction includes better job performance, high organizational commitment, low absenteeism, and little intention to quit and turnover (Yousef, 2017). The current study participants acknowledged that absenteeism and turnover are low, which is attributed to the opportunities offered to the employees.

SP5 affirmed that management used annual employee reviews to identify employee achievements and to detect areas where employees were not satisfied. The employer's willingness to recognize their employees' achievements can improve work quality and productivity (Warrick, 2017). SP1 and SP5 conduct 30-day and 90-day evaluations for new employees, and conduct anonymous semiannual and annual reviews with ongoing employees. SP5 said "there are different measures used with all new hires and ongoing employees. We conduct 30- and 90-day evaluations for new hires and semi- and annual reviews for ongoing employees." According to SP5, the evaluations are used to determine the employee's satisfaction with the organization. The employee's satisfaction with their job, schedule, coworkers, and supervisors are also revealed in the evaluations. SP5's management uses the assessments to determine the employee's level of satisfaction with the work, their schedule, employee engagement, team members, the organization, and their supervisors.

The impact of leadership's ability to influence employee performance, engagement, and satisfaction can increase employee retention (Warrick, 2017). SP1 described an anonymous survey used by employers to encourage employees to rate leadership by "telling us how we are doing." SP1 provided an electronic copy of the survey generically labeled employee assessment survey, which consisted of 20 open-ended questions. According to SP1, the employees are asked to complete the surveys online and submit by a designated deadline. The results are prepared in a report and are sent to the director for review. SP5 based their communication and relationship with their employees on the ability to have open-ended conversations with their employees.

Porter, Riesenmy, and Fields (2016) determined that the strength of the leader's motivational relationship with employees can vary, as can the leader's ability to recognize employee achievement. The findings of this study revealed that not all organizations have formal recognition processes or policies for staff recognition. Instead of a formal recognition program, SP1 performs annual reviews that encourage staff and management to discuss issues they may have and to reward employees for their work quality. When the budget permits, SP1 recognizes staff at general staff meetings to show appreciation. The senior staff know when the staff do well and praise good work when achieved. SP1 acknowledged that more than 75% of their operational budget relies on grants. Due to lack of funds, management and staff provide benefits such as potluck luncheons at the office's annual general staff meetings as a means to reward staff. According to SP1, the employees are dedicated to their work and appreciate the efforts made to show appreciation for their work and dedication.

Employee bonuses and rewards represent staff appreciation and recognition. Macke and Genari (2019) argued that staff appreciation and recognition programs should be fair and objective; most importantly, they should be meaningful to the people receiving the award. Some organizations show appreciation by acknowledging hard work and accomplishments in the presence of their peers. SP2 uses staff engagement meetings as a means to reward their employees routinely. Each department head nominates someone from their department based on their improved numbers due to employee retention, production, and dedication. All of SP2's awards relate to the goals and

missions as a means to show the employees that their work helps support the organization's objectives.

Cote (2019) supported Herzberg's two-factor theory and theories of motivation by identifying the employees' need to be recognized for achievement. According to Cote, recognition can be as humble or forthright as "thank-you." All four of the participants in the current study acknowledged the need to show employees appreciation for their services and dedication. SP3 stated

> Due to limited funds because of shifting tax laws for nonprofit organizations, we are required to cut back to avoid laying off employees. We want our employees to understand their importance and at no time should they feel their work and dedication is without appreciation. Sometimes saying thank-you and not laying off is all we can do.

Cote discussed the importance for all employees, regardless of age or the industry, to recognize the benefits of intrinsic rewards as related to job satisfaction. SP2 creates a professional environment that shows the employees the organization's appreciation for dedication and achievement, thereby encouraging employee satisfaction.

Herzberg (1974), Herzberg et al. (1959), and Maslow (1943) supported the association between satisfaction and self-actualization. The findings of the current study suggested that employees have a greater sense of achievement when they are recognized. SP2 said "a satisfied employee has an air of accomplishment and pride when they speak of their organization because they know the work they do is appreciated." Maslow and Cote (2019) agreed with Herzberg that there is a relationship between satisfaction, self-

fulfillment, and motivation. When asked if they would like to add anything at the end of the interview, SP2 stated "our organization has not only survived but thrived because we treat employees with respect and acknowledgment for the good they give."

Quality of leadership and communication. Quality of leadership and communication are intrinsic motivators that are subthemes for Theme 1: recognition for achievement. Karadag (2015) theorized that combinations of hygiene factors and motivator factors could lead to situations in which employees are motivated and comparatively complaint free or may become apathetic complainers. Organizational plans and policies are indicators of leadership's communication with the employees and display their quality of leadership.

The current study participants indicated that communication is vital to the success of their organization. Open communication is an indication of the quality of leadership (Davenport, 2020). SP1 operates the organization on the theory that open communication enables the employees to know what is happening within the organization and gives senior staff insight within the staff. SP2 stated, "Communication is an indication of the staff's trust in their employer." SP3 indicated, "We conduct quarterly surveys to measure our employees' happiness with our company and the role they play in the company. Their responses are usually direct and seems to be honest." SP3 said that department managers use the results to discuss the department's operations.

The quality of leadership and the employee's failure to form a professional relationship with the organization could be demotivators and determining factors for employee retention (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959). The ability to understand

how the employee feels about the organization and their leaders is important for leaders

to recognize small problems before they become big problems. SP5 relies on the

perspective that when leadership does not have a pulse on the organization, there is no

communication. According to Porter et al. (2016), employee assessments of the work

environment could have a significant role in defining an employee's motivation,

suggesting that an organization's leadership evaluation may depend on various leadership

practices. Promotions that reflect growth and advancement are relevant to employees as

they strive to improve at their jobs and as their employers provide clear directions for job

advancement to promote employee growth (Roddy, 2019). Recognizing employee

satisfaction and leadership's ability to communicate with employees are motivating

factors that increase job satisfaction and employee stability within the organization.

　　　　As referred to in the literature review, Karadag (2015) argued that combinations

of hygiene factors and motivator factors could lead to a situation in which employees are

motivated and comparatively complaint-free or may become apathetic complainers.

Hygiene factors should be resolved before moving on to the motivator factors (Herzberg,

1966). Internal motivation drives behavior and can influence positive attitudes by

providing the basis for work ethic and persistence amid employee challenges and crises

(Fischer, Malycha, & Schafmann, 2019). Zopiatis, Theocharous, and Constanti (2017)

argued that though extrinsic features of a job are significant, an employee's intrinsic

value of their work has a more significant impact on employee retention because the

inherent value increases.

Theme 2: Growth and Advancement Opportunities

The second theme that emerged from the study's findings is growth and advancement opportunities, which correlates as an intrinsic construct. SP1 and SP5 observed that employees offered the opportunity to enhance their talents and abilities could advance within that organization. A confident and reassuring attitude offers employees a satisfied and content outlook regarding their skills and professional choices, reducing the employee turnover rate and increasing employee retention (Stater & Stater, 2019). As a result, the employees prepare for advancement within their organization or with other organizations. SP5 stressed the importance of preparing their employees for opportunities to advance, "Our job training program is a big part of the strategies we use to retain employees." As SP5's employees complete training programs, the employees are allowed to advance within the organization, and be qualified for positions in other nonprofit organizations, for-profit organizations, and government agencies.

According to SP5, the positive aspect of offering training that is competitive in different fields is that the employees have a positive opinion of their skills and qualifications. For this reason, the employees are satisfied and content with their choices. Chiat and Panatik (2019) determined that dissatisfied employees tend to opt-out on opportunities for overtime or extra hours, when given a chance, choosing to go at the end of their workday. SP5 discovered that employees tend to stay with their organization even though feeling confident that they are qualified for other positions, "employees choosing promotions instead of leaving when provided the opportunity is an example of a well-trained and satisfied employee." Dissatisfied employees produce low-quality work and

try to avoid the workplace when possible. Motivated employees with concerns of dissatisfaction in their job tend to spend less time on the job or make no effort to contribute to their jobs (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). SP3 discovered that a dissatisfied employee will not elect to participate in overtime, training programs, or take the opportunity to grow or advance within the organization.

Sawaneh and Kamara (2019) determined that employee training was a crucial factor in the development of organizational success by retaining talented and skilled employees. SP2 offers off-site training and online training for their employees, including tuition assistance, as part of the career development program. Employers and employees use training for advancement programs as a means for promotion and growth SP3 referred to their pathways training plan as a means to encourage employee retention.

The supervisor and human resource agent use the pathways plan to map the employee's career and training goals. Employees are given the opportunity to enroll in the plan to direct their career options to grow within the organization and enhance their ability to work in other organizations. Employers use the pathway plan to develop a process that indicates what the employee likes about his job, where he or she wants to go in their career, and what he or she wants to improve. The supervisor creates a plan for the employee; then, the supervisor and the employee agree on the proposed plan of action. SP3 explained that the pathway plan supports employees' professional development to increase skills and motivation within the organization. Retaining talented and skilled employees can produce satisfied and engaged employees who are motivated to do their jobs tirelessly (Sawaneh & Kamara, 2019). SP1 said, "Employees have to feel good about

you and should trust you have their best interest in mind, which is why you as a leader offer your best."

Motivated employees are more creative and produce high-quality works, thus outperforming unmotivated employees (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). Motivated employees are more willing to stay with organizations that supports the employees' creativity (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). SP1 stated his organization offers a specific job-training program that encourages and sponsors their employees' attendance to be local and national workshops and conferences that support the services provided by their organization. Furthermore, SP1 sponsors their employees annually to participate in training programs offered in Washington, D.C., to enhance educational and information enrichment. SP1 provides an outline of job-training and employee improvement opportunities in the employee handbook. In addition to college courses, training, and workshops, the organization will pay for books, materials, and online courses, when the funding is available, which contributes to employees' growth and advancement.

As stated in Theme 1, recognition for advancement and strong staff reviews could result in employees rewarded with advancements, promotions, and awards for good reviews. The employee benefits offered could include pay increases and bonuses, in addition to receiving annual salary increases. All four participants recognized how encouragement from leadership affects employees as they take advantage of the opportunity to grow personally and professionally. The four participants concluded that employees would work hard to move ahead and thrive in the organization that encourages their employees to succeed. SP3 and SP5 referred to the need for employees to see

themselves in higher positions are consistent with professional growth. SP3 said that

more than 90% of the employees remain with the organization after achieving their goal.

Personal development links professional growth; therefore, if one wants to progress, one

must first develop personally (Crotty, Farren, & Kilboy, 2019).

When motivators are a part of an employee's work-life, the factors will serve as

motivation to advance, giving a sense of accomplishment, but failure to grow or improve,

employees may be dissatisfied (Herzberg, 1966; Herzberg et al., 1959; Lee, Mullins, &

Cho, 2017). The findings of the study indicate that leaders accomplish their goals when

their leadership provides guidance that supports the employees' goals. SP1 expressed that

leadership has completed their job when the employees become a part of the organization

in a way they no longer view themselves as a subordinate. SP1, SP2, SP3, and SP5

credited fair and supportive relationships with the staff; stressing the human quality of

relationships is essential and includes how one treats people, understands their concerns,

and encourages employees to be their best.

The findings of this study supported the concept that growth and advancement are

vital for both the employer and the employee. Ueno and Krause (2018) argued that low

work satisfaction can be credited to under-education or lack of training, which can

contribute to low retention and productivity. Each of the organizations in this study has

high employee retention rates, with some employees having more than 10 years with their

present organizations and 15+ years working in the nonprofit sector. SP3 stressed the

importance of including employees in the growth and development of the organization.

SP3 also stressed that their strategy could work with any organization that is willing to

address its employees' skills and desires. SP3 noted that all employees are included in their semi-annual budget and planning meetings to give the employees an opportunity to contribute to the organization's operations. SP1 added that as employees grow, the organization expands, and as leaders grow and embrace the employees with the changes, employee retention will play a crucial role as the quality of the staff increases. SP1 concluded, "Leaders cannot be afraid to help employees advance and move forward." Growth and advancement are consistent with the intrinsic factors, which are related to Herzberg's hygiene construct.

Azeez, Fapohunda, and Jayeoba (2019) posited that employee intrinsic motivation could be the result of work-life balance, employee growth and development, involvement, and health and safety. Herzberg (1966) and Herzberg et al. (1959) stressed the importance of work-life motivators and the combination of hygiene factors and motivator factors. In contrast, hygiene factors must be resolved before moving on to the motivator factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Internal motivation drives behavior and can influence positive attitudes by providing the basis for work ethics, persistence, and employee challenges and crises (Fischer et al., 2019). According to the findings of this study, growth and advancement, intrinsic motivators, are factors in employee retention.

The job title and job description for jobs are specific to the organization, describing the type of position and duties related to the organizational chart and mission (Macke & Genari, 2019). For example, the operations manager makes managerial and departmental decisions, an operations manager in one organization may have more administrative responsibilities and fewer managerial duties than another organization.

According to the findings of this study, organizations that offer professional growth, training, and development for their employees can be intrinsic motivators, encouraging job satisfaction. All of the participants provided training and development for their employees.

SP5 summarized, "Our job training program is a big part of the strategies we use to retain our employees." As SP5's employees complete training programs, the employees are encouraged to advance within the organization and be qualified for positions in other nonprofit organizations, for-profit organizations, and government agencies. SP5 added that the benefit of offering competitive training in different fields is that the employees have a favorable opinion of their skills and qualifications. With the help of a committed, competent, skilled, and result-oriented workforce, especially true of frontline employees, a high-performance work culture could emerge (Riaz, Jamal, & Latif, 2019).

Intrinsic motivators occur after extrinsic hygiene factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Maslow (1943) posited that for motivation to advance, the previous stage must be satisfied. Applying the analogy of Herzberg's two-factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, extrinsic hygiene factors are the prerequisite for intrinsic motivators. The third theme for this study is benefits and compensations, identifying extrinsic hygiene factors.

Theme 3: Benefits and Compensations

The third theme correlates with the extrinsic hygiene motivator tenet of Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation. Improving extrinsic hygiene motivator factors can decrease job dissatisfaction but may not necessarily increase job satisfaction

(Soodmand Afshar & Doosti, 2016). The absence of hygiene motivators can de-motivate; but hygiene motivators do not motivate (Soodmand Afshar, & Doosti, 2016). The employee handbooks analysis revealed that all organizations offer employee compensation such as health care benefits, life insurance, paid time off, and training and the opportunity to improve their status within the organization. SP1 stated, "I believe our compensation package is a deal-breaker for many of our employees. We can't pay the same salary as the government and private companies, but we have managed to give our employees a good employee package."

The findings of this study suggested that rewards and incentives in the workplace are hygiene factors that drive the behavior of the employee to continue to be productive. The existence of motivational factors could play an essential role in productivity; for better productivity and sustainability of an organization, managers should apply motivation and hygiene factors (Shaikh, Shaikh, & Shaikh, 2019). Extrinsic motivators include status, job security, salary, and fringe benefits and compensations; not providing the expected extrinsic motivators will create dissatisfaction and decrease motivation (Herzberg, 1974).

Extrinsic motivation is a reward-driven behavior and, as such, is an external factor. The reward-driven behavior is categorically distinct from intrinsic factor incentives, such as paid workshops, conferences, training, and career pathways, which can be motivators when applied with specific organizational actions, such as growth and advancement opportunities. Herzberg et al. (1959) suggested there is a need to resolve extrinsic hygiene factors before addressing intrinsic motivators. Based on Herzberg's

two-factor theory of motivation, the findings of the study indicated that in some cases, extrinsic motivators many need to be addressed before accepting intrinsic factors such as growth, advancement, achievement, and recognition. When asked, how do you reward or recognize employees for outstanding contributions to the organization to support retention? SP5 responded, "We have a good incentive program for our employees that we offer after they pass the probation period. Meanwhile the employees are offer insurance, extend at least 8 hours of emergency leave, and other benefits immediately."

SP1, SP2, and SP5 defined their benefit programs as ways [strategies] used to encourage employee retention. SP1 described their benefits program, stating,

> There is an employee benefit program, which is tied to a quality health insurance plan, the cafeteria plan, and we provide paid time off (PTO), along with the district and federal holidays. Employees depend on benefits as much as they do their salary.

Employee benefits program, policies specified by the participants tie to bonuses, salary increases, quality health insurance plan, the cafeteria plan, and paid time off (PTO).

Additional employee benefits included life insurance, disability insurance, retirement plans, social security, unemployment compensation, workers compensation, paid vacations, pensions, and gratuities are examples of employee benefits, monetary and non-monetary. Rahman, Fatema, and Ali (2019) defined extrinsic factors as factors that employees place significant value in selecting a job and maintaining a relationship with an organization. Employee compensation comprised of four categories: hourly, salary,

commission, and bonuses. SP3 offers its employees PTO, a 401K Plan, health insurance, life insurance, and employees receiving federal and district holidays.

Shaikh et al. (2019) maintained that the two-factor theory indicated that employees are motivated by intrinsic because the hygiene factors do not motivate them; instead, the elements eliminate dissatisfaction for enhanced performance. Daramola (2019) emphasized that increasing employee retention can be the result of organizational productivity due to the relationship between employee encouragement and compensation. People have different reasons for exerting themselves, especially in today's economic environment, compensation has become an essential motivational factor, if for no other reason than for basic needs and wants (Daramola, 2019).

The common contributing qualities throughout this study were communication and the quality of leadership. However, the unexpected finding from this study was job security, implicated by the employee's reasons for not leaving an organization. Employees trust their position in the organization and the leaders' ability to communicate the employee's importance. SP3 stressed that his ability to be true and honest with his employees was why he has a good relationship with his employees and why they remain with the organization. Effective communication and effective leadership intertwine; leaders need to be skilled communicators as communication is a core leadership function (Davenport, 2020). Each of the four organizations had clear and specific exit procedures.

SP1 and SP3 use questionnaires in addition to exit interviews for employees leaving the organizations. All participants said they have exit interview policies and meet with employees leaving their organization to determine if there are areas for

improvement. SP1 noted that they lay-off or furlough employees when there is a lack of funds. SP1 reasons employees leave the organization at no fault of the employee, such as the lack of funding, due to tax laws requiring cutbacks on programs and staffing. All of the organizations expressed the need for senior staff to be open, honest, and positive about why changes and decisions are not random, emotional, or without valid reasons. They also concluded it is crucial to make sure the employees understand that leadership makes decisions with much thought.

According to SP2, "it is important to conduct evaluations of the outgoing employees using open-ended conversation to see how they engaged on the job before leaving." The exit interview provides the organization with the opportunity to meet with the employee to get open-ended and candid feedback (Heathfield, 2019). The common reasons for leaving were (a) better or higher-paying jobs, generally, in government or for-profit organizations, (b) changing jobs or leaving the workforce for family or personal reasons, and (c) relocating, moving to another city or state. SP1 said, "Our employees never complained about being dissatisfied with the organization; most said it was just time to move on." SP3 stated that, "rarely if ever did anyone say no specific reason or that they were unhappy or did not like us."

None of the four organizational leaders interviewed said that exiting employees complained of the quality of leadership or communication problems within the organizations. Heathfield (2019) asserted that when trust exists between the interviewing manager and the existing employee, the exit feedback is beneficial for organizational improvement and development. One can credit the organizational leaders' employee

retention strategies to approve the quality of leadership and the level of employer-employee communication.

Conclusion of Findings

The findings of this study were consistent with strategies nonprofit social service organizational leaders use to retain employees effectively align with the literature on sound business practices. For nonprofit social service organizations, increased job satisfaction, and decreased job dissatisfaction can encourage employee retention. Chiat and Panatik (2019) explained that the organization's most valuable assets are the employees, and the cost of replacing employees with exceptionally skilled employees, can hurt the organizational productivity and finances.

Herzberg et al. (1959) argued that intrinsic factors and extrinsic hygiene factors influence employees when comparing intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The participants of this study identified their employee satisfaction was tied to (a) recognition and appreciation for their work, (b) the opportunity to advance by receiving promotions, and (c) leaders providing opportunities for personal and professional growth. Fulfilling the maintenance and hygiene needs among employees can enhance satisfaction and prevent discontent (Zhang, 2019). Extrinsic factors, such as compensations and benefits, are significant but not determining factors affecting employee retention. In contrast, intrinsic factors have the potential to increase job performance and employee retention. The perception of employee retention aligned with Herzberg's two-factor theory, inferring that satisfiers and satisfier tenets affect employee sentiment (Zhang, 2019).

Bercu and Onofrei (2017) researched factors affecting motivation and the effects on job satisfaction using the Maslow-Herzberg combined model. The goal was to determine why some factors enhance employee motivation, while others are not as effective. Theme 2, growth and advancement opportunities refer to the employee's desire to know their goals are achievable. In comparison, the third tier of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is self-actualization; the desire to become the most that one can be is the need for self-fulfillment (Maslow, 1943). Self-actualization, achieving one's full potential, is met after the first, second, third, and fourth tiers, representing one's basic needs and psychological needs (Maslow, 1943). The findings of the study indicated that Maslow's hierarchy of needs correlates with Herzberg's theory of motivation derived from one's sense of connection and self-esteem.

The results of this study supported that achievement, recognition, professional growth, and compensation affect employee satisfaction and performance. Ueno and Krause (2018) stated that job satisfaction would impact organizational performance the quality of the employee's performance. Arfah and Putra (2019) theorized that extrinsic motivators such as compensations and incentives could determine the relationship between job satisfaction and performance, thereby becoming drivers of job satisfaction, increasing employee retention. Organizational commitment requires employees and organizations to maintain a working relationship (Haerani, Hakim, & Putra, 2020; Yousef, 2017). Employees with a healthy relationship and commitment to their organization will have confidence and a high sense of loyalty to the organization and leadership, increasing the desire to remain with the organization (Haerani et al., 2020).

Leadership with the commitment and confidence of their employees are satisfied with their organizational relationship, which could lead to employee retention.

Applications to Professional Practice

The primary objective for this study was to explore strategies nonprofit social service leaders use to retain employees. The findings of this study could apply to professional business practice for nonprofit social service organizations by providing practical strategies to reduce employee turnover and potentially increasing employee retention. The findings of this study could be used to contribute to effective professional business practice by defining successful strategies and implementing processes to reduce turnover and the cost of recruiting and training new hires. Employee retention is a problem in the workforce, resulting in low productivity and the failure to maintain qualified employees (Phillips & Hernandez, 2018). The relationship between employee involvement and job satisfaction can relate to job satisfaction and employee involvement (Bayraktar, Araci, Karacay, & Calisir, 2017). According to Herzberg's two-factor theory, job satisfaction is an intrinsic motivator; the employee's behavior driven by internal rewards.

The findings of this study aligned with specific intrinsic factors (a) recognition for achievement and (b) growth and advancement opportunities that encourage job satisfaction. Intrinsic motivators are inherently those factors that affect the employee's behavior motivated by an internal desire for self that affects the employee's professional practice. Benefits and compensations, the third theme is an extrinsic hygiene motivator.

The presence of hygiene motivators can be the determining factor encouraging an employee to do their best instead of an adequate performance on the job.

Nonprofit organizational leaders could use this study's findings to develop strategies to increase employee retention, increase productivity, and maintain experienced qualified employees to maximize the quality of life for the organization and the surrounding communities. The results of this study could potentially reduce stress for workers by increasing employment stability.

Recognition for Achievement

The implementation of intrinsic motivating factors promotes employee retention by improving business practices and effective social change. The quality of work, staff recognition, staff appreciation, praise from the staff and clients, and staff rewards are verbal actions identified by the participants as ways to recognize employees for achievement. The leaders' responsibility is to maintain employee satisfaction by ensuring that employees do not feel overlooked. Upadhyay and Awasthi (2020) argued that the leader's task is to recognize achievement by concentrating on accomplishments instead of focusing on what is incorrect.

Intrinsic motivating factors can increase job satisfaction; it is important to know that dissatisfaction is not the opposite of satisfaction; instead, it is not satisfied with the result of an employee who does not display satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). Employers can measure job performance by the employee's level of satisfaction (Herzberg, 1974). Upadhyay and Awasthi (2020) argued that job satisfaction influences the degree employees perform their duties. Employers can enhance their organization's

professional culture by improving factors that increase job satisfaction, resulting in satisfied and motivated employees.

Growth and Advancement

SP3 stressed, "Any organization whose goal is to succeed must be willing to acknowledge and address the skills and talents of their employees." The best-trained and most skilled employees cannot perform well when they are not motivated, which is why employee recognition has to be a part of the organization's culture (Warrick, 2017). Offering the opportunity for growth and advancement by providing advanced training and skills perfection could enhance the organization's professional culture, leading to increased productivity and employee retention. It is vital to ensure that employers select the best individuals for the correct position. When this does not happen, satisfaction and performance will suffer, thereby affecting the organization's professional culture (Upadhyay & Awasthi, 2020). SP3 suggested that the staff-to-staff relationship is the quality of the organization, as the staff-to-client is essential. SP3 said, "Our staff is the pulse of [the] organization." Organizational leaders that maintain a viable relationship with staff can be foreseen inconsistencies and conflict within the organization.

Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic hygiene factors can be associated with work-family conflicts that affect job performance and job satisfaction. Workplace issues can have significant consequences for an employee's work, family, and social life (Riaz et al., 2019). Nonprofit leaders could use the findings of this study to create and implement strategies to enhance employee retention and to provide a positive workplace climate that stimulates employee satisfaction and productivity.

Benefits and Compensations

Hygiene factors such as working conditions, coworker relations, and base wages and salary can influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Employee benefits and compensations, de-motivators, and hygiene factors can determine factors between job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1966). Employers offer benefits and compensations to the employee as economic security instead of an additional salary. Mabaso and Dlamini (2017) determined that employees perform better when the employer demonstrates a high level of commitment to the employee affecting organizational productivity and competitiveness. Benefits include medical insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, and retirement plans, provided as incentives, in addition to monetary awards paid as bonuses and commissions or rewarded in the form of paid vacations for performing additional on the job duties. Benefits and compensations, such as monetary or non-monetary extrinsic rewards, are essential to employers and employees to attract, retain, and motivate employees (Hoole & Hotz, 2016; Mabaso & Dlamini, 2017). SP1, SP2, SP3, and SP5 committed their organizations to benefits and compensations for their employees to pay employees for their services.

To continue to increase economic stability, economic growth, and to provide charitable services to the community, nonprofit organizational leaders have to be competitive with for-profit and private organizations, and government agencies for employees. Nonprofit organizational leadership must offer benefits and compensations to offset salary and wages to be competitive with for-profit organizations (Walk, Stewart, & Kuenzi, 2019). SP5 said that they offer enrichment plans and professional development

by offering the pathway plan; the organizational leaders view the plan as an incentive, and a benefit and compensations for working with their organization.

At the end of the interview, SP1 said, our employees are working with people who need to feel good about themselves due to their circumstances. SP1 also said each of our employees has faced similar circumstances or maybe live one-step from being in that situation; the opportunity to give back is the best reward. SP1 has more than 24 years with the organization, which can be attributed to his passion for the nonprofit organization and his leadership skills. SP1 stated, "Much of my dedication has been due to my ability to recognize that my role as a leader and my love of the organization makes a valuable contribution to the organization."

Implications for Social Change

The findings of this study could be used to contribute to positive social change in nonprofit social service organizations and increase employee retention. The tangible improvements to individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, or societies could occur from the themes identified in this study; recognition for achievement, growth and advancement opportunities, and benefits and compensations. Policies and strategies implemented to recognize employee accomplishments, growth and advancement opportunities, and benefits and compensations could motivate employee retention. Contributing to the retention of qualified and experienced employees could increase funding opportunities for benefiting communities (Maier et al., 2016). Retaining qualified and experienced employees in nonprofit organizations could lead to increased community

benefits from the potential increase in funding and contributions, leading to improved economic stability, economic growth, and reliable charitable.

The transformation of behaviors, thoughts, structure, and relationships to create beneficial outcomes for people, organizations and society define social change (Stephan, Patterson, Kelly, & Mair, 2016). The findings of this study could potentially influence nonprofit social service organizational leaders to use the results of this study to effect positive social change by implementing intrinsic motivators and extrinsic hygienic indicators to increase employee retention and to benefit the community served. A positive work environment and culture within the organization decreases job dissatisfaction, thereby increasing employee efficiency (Al-Ali, Ameen, Isaac, Khalifa, & Shibami, 2019). Organizational commitment supports employee retention; in so doing, improving the organizational culture and commitment to the community they serve (Vincent & Marmo, 2018).

Recommendations for Action

Employees are the most valuable assets for an organization, and replacing employees with an increased cost can affect employee productivity and performance (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). The results of this study could be useful to leaders in nonprofit organizations, and for-profit organizations and businesses. The framework for this study was used to emphasize strategies nonprofit social service organizations used to retain employees. Nonprofit organizations employed more than 12.3 million workers, representing 10.2% of the United States' private workforce in 2016 (Salamon & Newhouse, 2019). By implementing the strategies found in this study, managers, leaders,

and professionals in nonprofit and for-profit organizations, private businesses, and governmental agencies could improve retention within their organizations, and the communities served. Based on the results of this study and the themes revealed, I would make two recommendations for action to ensure productive use of the strategies identified in this study:

Recommendation 1

Organizational leaders could strive to incorporate a program that combines intrinsic motivators and extrinsic hygiene factors to balance the employee's personal and professional needs. Chiat and Panatik (2019) determined that an organization should demonstrate and balance motivational factors and hygiene factors to avoid job dissatisfaction and to increase job satisfaction, thereby increasing employee productivity and performance. Employees experience problems such as low job satisfaction, high-stress levels, and absenteeism due to an imbalance in their personal and professional life, thereby affecting their physical, emotional, and social well-being (Alshathry et al., 2017). Organizational leaders could implement programs combining intrinsic motivators and extrinsic hygiene factors such as training, personal and professional development programs, recognition and rewards for achievements, improved employee benefits, and the opportunity to grow personally and professionally.

Recommendation 2

Business and organizational leaders could develop evaluations of their employees, including job performance and skill assessments of the employee from a personal and professional perspective. Bartz and Kritsonis (2019) determined that leaders should

explore their employees' motivators routinely to encourage and maintain their productivity and motivation to their best. Employees have emotional waves and use them to maximize productivity because motivation is not constant. Instead, motivation often comes in waves (Bartz & Kritsonis, 2019).

Organizational retention strategies could include nonprofit and for-profit organizations. Business leaders can use the results of this study to improve employee retention to implement activities and policies that promote a positive culture within their organization. Business leaders may also use the results to align the organizational priorities and objectives to encourage their employees to use their knowledge and experience to help the organization expand. The findings could help increase organizational productivity.

I encourage business leaders to review the results of this study to incorporate strategies to improve employee retention by improving employee job satisfaction and reducing job dissatisfaction. Throughout the study, the overlying message of this study relates to leadership communication and leadership quality. I will prepare and forward a two-page summary of the study findings to all participants and to those who expressed interest. I plan to host conferences, workshops, and training sessions with nonprofit organizational leaders via video conferencing and in-person to share my findings on strategies to increase employee retention and employee satisfaction. My goal is to conduct a more extensive study on the topic of employee retention for future publication.

Recommendations for Further Research

Nonprofit organizations throughout the United States are facing increased stress in the areas of finances, employment, wages, and volunteering due to the lack of timely information related to economic realities affecting nonprofit organizations (Salamon & Newhouse, 2019). Recommendations for further research related to employee retention in nonprofit social service organizations include expanding the study to different geographical locations. The targeted population was organizational leaders in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area with 2 years of experience. Employee retention strategies may differ from nonprofit organizations in the Washington, D.C. metro area compared to organizations in less populated areas. Expanding the study to nonprofit organizations outside of Washington, D.C. may produce additional opinions and views regarding successful and unsuccessful strategies.

Finally, I recommend conducting a study to research employee retention strategies implemented related to upcoming generations in the workforce such as the Millennials and Generations Y and Z. According to Grella (2017), by 2020, Millennials now make up more than 50% of the workforce, are driven by compensation, and less likely to commit to a position for no more than 3 to 5years. The research question could explore strategies business leaders use to extend employee commitment creating sustainability for the business and employee longevity.

Reflections

The Walden DBA Doctoral Study has been a challenge, rewarding, and humbling. The DBA experience has not been solely about academic development. I entered the

DBA program, to add to my knowledge of nonprofit organizations. Instead, I discovered that I still had a lot to learn.

I completed the interviews during the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, which was difficult because it was uncomfortable asking people to help me when they were faced with an unknown virus and no idea how anyone would be affected. However, all of the participants insisted on completing what they started. The participants' commitment to completing this study was an indication of the character one has to have to be a part of the nonprofit industry. After earning the doctorate degree, the next chapter is to revisit the participants of this study to follow up with the organizational leaders to document the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that nonprofit social service business leaders use to retain employees. Successful leaders have strategies in place to achieve and maintain organizational employee retention. In 2016, 12.3 million U.S. paid workers represented nonprofit organizations, which made up 10.2% of the U.S. workforce (Salamon & Newhouse, 2019). I used a semistructured interview technique and asked open-ended interviews with nonprofit social service organizational leaders from four different organizations located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The eight open-ended questions were used to determine the scope and strategies used by leaders to achieve employee retention within each organization. I used organizational documents provided to enhance the understanding of each company's employee retention strategy. The results of this study aligned with the conceptual

framework for this study, Herzberg's two-factor theory, also referred to as Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. The three themes that emerged from the study were (a) recognition for achievement, (b) growth and advancement opportunities, and (c) benefits and compensation (not limited to financial), which expresses the relationship between intrinsic motivators and extrinsic motivator-hygiene and employee retention. I concluded that the overall themes revealed from the study are directly related to the leader's quality of leadership and level of communication. In addition to nonprofit social service leaders, nonprofit and for-profit leaders can use the strategies identified in this study to implement policies to increase employee satisfaction within the organization, thereby increasing employee retention leading to increased productivity.

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Appendix: Interview Protocol

Interview Title: Strategies Used by Nonprofit Social Service Business Leaders to Retain Employees

The interview:

- Greet the participant upon arrival.

- Explain the interview process: the recording devices (2 recorders and 1 cell phone), and I will be recording and taking notes during the entire interview.

- Review the consent form, documentation process, and the member checking process.

- Explain that if at any time the participant would like to stop the interview, they may do so without explanation and with no questions asked.

- Answer any questions the participant may have.

- Secure the participant's permission to begin.

- Turn on the recording devices and introduce the participant by referring to their assigned identification code.

- Ask the prepared interview questions and follow-up with questions if applicable. Note the questions are open-ended, which could lead to additional questions. Be careful to avoid identifying the participant and their organization.

- The interview will be restricted to 45 – 60 minutes for responses, in addition to follow-up questions and responses.

- At the end of the interview, ask if there is anything else they would like to add about nonprofit retention strategies that were not addressed during the interview.

- Secure any documents the participants brought to share, make sure there is no identifying information on the documents.

- Inform the participants that I will make a summary of the transcribed interview available to them via email to ensure appropriate interpretation of their responses.

- The follow-up review will be restricted to no more than 30 minutes via face-to-face meetings, Skype, or phone calls. (Note: The follow-up review is not to re-

interview the participant, but to verify the interviewer's interpretation of the responses).

- Thank the participant for the interview and for participating in the study.
- Shut off the recording devices