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Strategies for Decreasing Employee Turnover in Retail Organizations

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Mathias Oni-Eseleh

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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University

2020

Abstract

Strategies for Decreasing Employee Turnover in Retail Organizations

by

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MS, Walden University, 2012

BA, University of Benin, 1986

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

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Abstract

High employee turnover in the retail sector affects organizations' financial sustainability across the United States, costing them billions of dollars annually. Because of the high cost of employee turnover, retail sector leaders need to develop strategies for decreasing employee turnover in their organizations. Grounded in job embeddedness theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies retail sector leaders used to decrease employee turnover. The participants consisted of 5 purposefully selected retail sector leaders in the upstate region of New York, who successfully implemented strategies for decreasing employee turnover in their organizations. Data were collected from semistructured participant interviews and the review of organizational documents. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Yin's 5-step process that resulted in the emergence of 3 main themes: competitive compensation and benefits, leadership communication, and training and advancement opportunities. A recommendation for retail sector leaders is to ensure a compensation and benefits strategy that delivers fair compensation based upon an employee's performance and a rewards and recognition program that provides for employees to feel valued and appreciated. Additionally, organizational leaders who develop an open-door policy and interact with their employees daily may see a decrease in their organizations' turnover. The implications for positive social change may include the development of new employment opportunities in communities. When more people in a community are employed, more taxes are created for local governments to create more opportunities for community members.

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Dedication

This doctoral study is dedicated to my wife and friend, Blessing Oni-Eseleh, who always made me believe that there is nothing I cannot achieve. We have been through many challenges over the past twenty-nine years, and we still are healthy. I could not do this without your love and encouragement, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything you have done for me and for sharing in every significant event in my life and for raising our children. To my children: Alexis, Mathias Jr., Marisa, and Shante, I did this program for you. I wanted to prove to you that you can carry out anything you wish. You can dream and reach for the stars. You all have limitless potential, and nothing can hold you back. I hope I have proved to you that dreams do come through, and I have been a good role model for you and taught you that education is an imperishable legacy. I believe you are all designed for great things. I could not have completed this program without your love and support. And finally, to the man, I have always come to call "Jonathan" (My Late Father). I miss you every day. Thank you for installing in me good morals and for believing in me even when no one did. May your soul continue to rest in peace.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Retail sector leaders must understand the strategies for decreasing employee turnover because employee turnover may weaken the financial stability of organizations (Heritage, Gilbert, & Roberts, 2016). The lack of understanding of strategies to decrease employee turnover could lead to high employee turnover, which can lead to low productivity (Aisha & Hardjomidjojo, 2013; Zhang, 2013). Retail organizations unable to develop strategies for decreasing employee turnover lack the ability to enhance their overall financial operations (Jehanzeb, Hamid, & Rasheed, 2015). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover.

Background of the Problem

Employee turnover is one of the most significant problems retail sector leaders contend with on a regular basis because of the costs associated with the replacement and training of new employees (Hur, 2013; The U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2015). Employee turnover in the retail industry is high in the United States, approximately 61% for regular full-time employees (Tang, Liu, Oh, & Weitz, 2014). Hathaway (2013) stated that there was an increase in employee turnover in the United States of 200,000 employee turnovers a month from 2001 to 2011. Employee turnover in the retail industry costs each employer in the United States about \$190,000 each year (Harrison & Gordan, 2014). Research on strategies for decreasing employee turnover may provide retail sector leaders with strategies on how to address this issue.

Problem Statement

Employee turnover is an expensive business problem faced by retail organizations in the United States (Woods, 2015). Turnover rates in the United States increased by 98% between 2012 and 2015 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2015). According to the BLS (2015), turnover

rates increased in the United States by over 130% between 2014 and 2015 alone. The general business problem was retail sector leaders continue to incur losses in revenue because of employee turnover (see Harrison & Gordon, 2014). The specific business problem was that some retail sector leaders lack the ability and/or the knowledge to implement strategies to decrease employee turnover.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies retail sector leaders from the Upstate region of New York use to decrease employee turnover. The findings from this study could contribute to social change by providing retail sector leaders with additional knowledge about how to decrease employee turnover. Decreasing employee turnover could positively benefit retail sector leaders' financial outcomes and promote the financial well-being of families and communities.

Nature of the Study

In this study, I employed a qualitative multiple case study approach to understand the strategies retail sector leaders used to decrease employee turnover. Researchers use qualitative research methods to understand behaviors among study participants (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011). Opsal et al. (2015) suggested that researchers use the qualitative method to explore and record human experiences and strategies used by leaders by utilizing observations and interviews to present their findings. Qualitative studies must demonstrate a level of trustworthiness, dependability, and reliability (Wahyuni, 2012).

Ruys (2013) stated that researchers use quantitative methods to examine and describe relationships and differences among variables through statistical analysis and surveys. The quantitative method was inappropriate for this study because the goal of this study was to

understand the strategies that retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover in their organizations rather than conducting statistical analyses or experiments. I did not consider the mixed method approach for this study because mixed methods include both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. A mixed method approach was not suitable because this study did not require the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods simultaneously.

I used the multiple case study design for this study. Yin (2014) noted that the case study design is effective when conducting an in-depth investigation into a phenomenon through multiple sources of information. Yin opined that case study researchers seek to understand *what* and *how* questions about a phenomenon and draw conclusions from multiple types of data. The case study design was appropriate for this study because it offered the ability to collect, interpret, and analyze data from retail sector leaders to determine the strategies they implemented to decrease employee turnover in their organizations.

I considered other qualitative designs for this study, including phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative inquiry. Robertson and Thompson (2014) stated that the phenomenological inquiry involves the study of human experience from the perspective of individuals living the phenomenon. The focus of this study was not on the experiences of people encountering a phenomenon; consequently, the phenomenological design did not meet the needs of this study. Ethnography is the study and observation of ethnic groups or societies and their culture (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Merriam, 2000). Ethnography was not appropriate for this study because observing cultural groups and their cultures were not the goals of the study.

Research Question

What strategies do retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies did you implement to decrease employee turnover in your organization?
2. How did you gather the information you used to decrease employee turnover?
3. What were some of the critical barriers your organization faced when implementing strategies for decreasing employee turnover?
4. How did you address the key barriers to implementing strategies to decrease employee turnover?
5. What strategies were not successful in decreasing employee turnover in your organization?
6. What strategies were most effective in decreasing employee turnover?
7. What other information would you like to share regarding strategies for decreasing employee turnover?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the theory of job embeddedness, which provides an explanation of why people stay in an organization (see Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001). Mitchell et al. (2001) originally articulated the job embeddedness theory, stating that job embeddedness focuses on two dimensions: organizational and community embeddedness. Lee, Mitchell, Sablinski, Burton, and Holtom (2004) connected decreases in employee turnover to organizational dimensions rather than community dimensions. The investigation of job embeddedness to organizational dimensions was the primary focus of this study.

The job embeddedness theory was appropriate to use as the conceptual framework for this study because it provides a precise and consistent explanation as to the reasons employees in the retail sector chose to remain with the employers rather than other frameworks (see Allen, Peltokorpi, & Rubenstein, 2016; Karatepe, 2016). Mitchell et al. (2001) suggested that characteristics of job embeddedness include related links that people have on the job, their fit with the jobs they perform, and what they would sacrifice if they left their jobs. Mitchell et al. developed the theory as a potential means for understanding strategies retail sector leaders use in understanding why employees remain with their employers (Holtom & O'Neill, 2004).

In this study, I used the job embeddedness theory as a lens through which to investigate how fit, links, and sacrifice in the workplace (i.e., on-the-job) relates to employee turnover in retail organizations (see Lee et al. 2014). The job embeddedness theory provides a basis for exploring the relationship between workplace embeddedness and retail sector turnover. Job embeddedness benefits employees in retail organizations through enhanced levels of employee productivity and decreased turnover (Allen et al. 2016; Heritage, Gilbert, & Roberts, 2016).

Operational Definitions

Employee turnover: The deliberate separation of workers leaving their present place of work (Kam & Meyer, 2015).

Employee job satisfaction: An individual's feelings, perceptions, and attitudes toward the job that affects the degree of fit within the organization (Bin Shmailan, 2016).

Job embeddedness: The degree an employee attaches to an organization or position with varying strengths of links to other personnel, the perception of compatibility or fit within the organization, and a measure of the perceived cost of leaving the job (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Turnover intent: Thoughts of the employee of leaving the current employer regardless of whether the employee acts upon the intent (Nelissen, Forrier, & Verbruggen, 2017).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions in a study are things the researcher believes are accurate and relevant to the study, but they cannot be validated (Lips-Wiersma & Mills, 2014). I made the following four assumptions in this study. The first assumption was that retail sector leaders would provide answers to interview questions on the strategies they used to decrease employee turnover in their organizations. Another assumption was that the findings of this study would add to the body of knowledge for retail sector leaders to use when developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover. I also assumed that retail sector leaders would voluntarily participate in this study. The final assumption was that job embeddedness theory was a suitable conceptual framework for this study.

Limitations

Henderson (2014) and Yeatman, Trinitapoli, and Hayford (2013) opined that limitations are weaknesses that occur in a study that are beyond the researcher's control. The first limitation of this study was the primary focus on strategies retail sector leaders used to decrease employee turnover. Connelly (2013) suggested that individuals sometimes distort past information and have difficulties remembering things that happened in the past. In this study, I relied on information from individuals' memories, which may also have served as a limitation. The second limitation was that I sought voluntary participation from individuals who identified themselves as sector leaders of retail organizations. Verification of the qualifications of study participants depended solely on the information and documents provided by these organizations. The final limitation

was that the data collected for the study were from interviews, which required the study participants to be honest. The reliability and honesty of the participants could affect the credibility of the study (Maskara, 2014).

Delimitations

Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) stated that delimitations are the conditions imposed on the study by the researcher to limit its scope. Brutus, Aguinis, and Wassmer (2012) found that researchers use delimitations to relate to geographical areas, data, and study participants. One delimitation of this study was that the target population included five retail sector leaders who successfully implemented strategies for decreasing employee turnover in their organizations. This target population may not represent all retail sector leaders. Yin (2018) suggested that qualitative researchers might use target population because of the limited time qualitative researchers have to conduct studies. Another delimitation was that this study focused on one specific geographical area in New York, and the findings might not be relevant to other parts of New York.

The Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

Decreasing employee turnover may increase organizations' business profitability and financial sustainability (Schaffner, Schiefele, & Ulferts, 2013). Companies that spend their resources on recruiting new employees because of high employee turnover are less likely to be profitable (Daskin & Tezer, 2012). The findings of this study may provide new information to retail sector leaders regarding how to develop strategies to reduce employee turnover and, thereby, increase profitability.

Implications for Social Change

Decreasing employee turnover could lead to higher community employment, an increase in the standard of living within the community, and provide communities the ability to generate more tax dollars for social and community programs. Identifying strategies for retail sector leaders to decrease employee turnover may improve organizational profitability, which would benefit employees, employees' families, and their communities. Furthermore, retail sector leaders who are cognizant of strategies for decreasing employee turnover may make meaningful contributions to social change initiatives in their communities by investing in community based activities. The findings from this study may contribute to social change by providing retail sector leaders with strategies to decrease employee turnover, leading to increased prosperity within communities.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover in retail organizations. In the literature review subsection, I provide critical analysis and synthesis of the extant literature related to strategies retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover in retail organizations. A literature review is a systematic method for identifying and synthesizing the existing body of studies completed by researchers and scholars (Archibald, Radil, Xiaozhou, & Hanson, 2015). Rowe (2014) stated that there a need for researchers to review the work on other research topics relevant to their study before data collection and analysis; consequently, the primary aim in completing this literature review was to present a critical analysis and synthesis of literature relevant to this study.

The review began with an evaluation of the theory of job embeddedness because it was the conceptual foundation of this study. Following the review of the theory, I explore research

related to this study of employee turnover, strategies for decreasing employee turnover, and the cost of employee turnover. This section also includes other theories considered for use in this study.

The literature review includes sources found in databases and search engines, including peer-reviewed articles, dissertations, and other articles of interest. The following databases and search engines were used as well as public websites: ABI/Inform Complete, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost), Emerald Management Journal, Google Scholar, and Thesis at Walden University. The 240 references cited in this literature review include 215 scholarly, peer-reviewed articles, representing 90% of the total sources; four government websites, representing 1% of the total; and 21 books and doctoral dissertation, representing 6.2% of the total. The total number of references published within the years 2015 to 2019 is 147, which is more than 85.1% of the total number of references cited.

Conceptual Framework

Job Embeddedness Theory

In this study, I used the theory of job embeddedness to help explain the factors effective in developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Lee et al. (2004) and Mitchell et al. (2001) found that job embeddedness predicted employee job satisfaction and decreased employee turnover. What an employee thinks of the employer and the work environment forms the basis for the job embeddedness theory (Charlier et al. 2016). The job embeddedness dimensions of fit and

sacrifice determine how embedded and satisfied employees are within the retail sector (Rajappan, Nair, Priyadarshini, & Sivakumar, 2017).

Job embeddedness theory includes an examination of an employee's intent to stay with an employer, as well as the reverse, an employee's attachment to the employer as it influences turnover rates (Mitchell et al., 2001). Some scholars indicated that job embeddedness decreases employee turnover in organizations (Marasi, Cox, & Bennett, 2016). Nicholas, Mensah, and Owusu (2016) indicated that the following three dimensions exist to entice an employee to remain with an organization and decrease employee turnover: fits, links, and sacrifice (Chhabra, 2015; Schmitt, Hartog, & Belschak, 2015; Word & Park, 2015).

Charlier, Guay, and Zimmerman (2016) found the theory of job embeddedness to be a determinate factor in employee turnover, job performance, and attendance. Using the job embeddedness theory as a lens to explore the strategies retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover provided a broad view of underlying themes applicable to relevant practices in business.

Dimensions of Job Embeddedness Theory

Mitchell et al. (2001) stated that the theory of job embeddedness consists of on-the-job and off-the-job factors that can result in employees leaving their organizations, thereby increasing turnover. Job embeddedness may decrease employees' desire to seek alternative employment (Kiazad, Holtom, Bhom, & Newman, 2015). Lee et al. (2014) found that researchers can learn much by studying the dimensions of job embeddedness and the impact of job embeddedness theory in decreasing employee turnover in organizations. In the following subsections, I explore how the dimensions of links, fit, and sacrifice may be valuable to retail sector leaders when developing strategies to decrease employee turnover in their organizations.

Links. Links refer to the formal and informal relationships that employees have with other employees within their organization, the organization, and the community (Allen et al., 2016). The more linked an employee is to the organization and the community, the higher the level of job embeddedness (Karatepe, 2016). Employees who participate in several committees within an organization relate positively to other employees within the organization who have family members in the community because these employees have higher levels of links, both to their organization and to the community (Burton, 2015). The work relationships employees have with their coworkers and the support they get from their families play a significant role in retail employees' job embeddedness (Karatepe, 2016).

As related to this study, recognition of the importance of the relationship retail employees have with their coworkers and their families could assist retail sector leaders in decreasing employee turnover in retail organizations. Links are important in employees' intentions to remain with their organization. For example, employees who have good relationships with their supervisors may value that relationship, influencing their intent to remain with the employer (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2017). When retail employees have positive relationships with their leaders, their families, and their communities, the employees become more productive (Halasagi & Jamuni, 2018).

Links, as a dimension of the job embeddedness theory, are significant in developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover in the retail sector (Darrat, Amyx, & Bennett, 2017). The relationships employees have both within and outside their organization play a significant role in decreasing employee turnover in organizations (Allen et al., 2016). The relationship younger employees in the workforce have with other employees in their organizations is of value to them, and these relationships extend beyond the work environment and affect their intentions

to remain with their organizations (Karatepe, 2016). Qazi, Khalid, and Shafique (2015) found that a positive relationship between employees in a workplace decreased employees' turnover. Nei, Snyder, and Litwiller (2015) analyzed 106 studies on nurses' inability to connect with others on the job, which led to increased nurse turnover. Lin and Kwantes (2015) found that employee interactions in the workplace were critical for decreasing employee turnover. Lin and Kwantes conducted a quantitative analysis of 34 participants and found that employees who participated in high levels of interaction with coworkers had a higher likelihood to have close relationships with other employees in the organization and, therefore, were less likely to leave their organizations. Porter, Woo, and Campion (2016) conducted a nationwide study with a sample of 266 U.S. employees to understand the relationship between job embeddedness and internal networking activities within the organization and found that links played a role in decreasing employee turnover. Lee and Yom (2015) found that among 244 South Korean nurses, job embeddedness positively aligned with organizational, supervisor, and colleagues' support. Therefore, retail sector leaders must provide opportunities for employee embeddedness to develop effective strategies for decreasing employee turnover.

Fit. When employees feel compatible and aligned to organizational goals and values they fit into the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). Nicholas et al. (2016) suggested that employees who fit into the mission and vision of their organizations become tied to the organization and have a lower probability to leave the employer. Job satisfaction and job embeddedness increase when employees feel that the people in the organization, they work for share their values, beliefs, and interests (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017).

Abbaspour and Noghreh (2015) suggested that the more strongly employees think they can apply their skills in their assigned jobs, the better the performance and the more they feel they

fit into their jobs and their organizations. Kalidass and Bahron (2015) found that support from organizational leaders and alignment to organizational goals decreased employee turnover in organizations. Employee job satisfaction and the relationships of employees with their immediate supervisors present a perception of fit and comfortability to employees, indicating that the theory of job embeddedness is significant in decreasing employee turnover (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017).

Retail sector leaders who find ways to make employees comfortable by ensuring that they have flexible work schedules, defining expectations, and identifying ways to align organizational goals with employees' values may develop effective strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Santhanam, Kamalanabhan, Dyaram, and Ziegler (2015) found that employees who identified positively with their organizations and aligned with the values and mission of their organizations had better work performance and higher job embeddedness. Luksyte, Zhou, Shi, and Wang (2015) found that in a sample of 224 workers, employees who did not fit into the organization exhibited negative behavior leading to poor work performance and productivity. In ensuring that retail employees align with the organizations and fit into their assigned tasks, retail sector leaders can effectively develop strategies for decreasing employee turnover (Zoltners, Sinha, & Lorimer, 2016).

Sacrifice. Mitchell et al. (2001) described the third dimension of embeddedness as sacrifice. Sacrifice is the measure of material and psychological costs associated with leaving a job and includes what the employee would give up when leaving the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). An employee's decision to stay or leave a job partially depends on the opportunities available to the employee and the opportunities that may be available to the employee if the employee leaves the present employer (Long, Ajafbe, & Kowang, 2014).

In the retail sector, employees value the flexibility of their schedules, portability within the industry, and the relationships they have with their customers (Lockard & Wolf, 2012).

Organizational leaders play significant roles in determining employees' perceptions of sacrifice and what they might lose if they were to leave the employer (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2017). Erkutlu and Chafra (2017) emphasized the importance of retail sector leaders developing and executing flexibility in employee schedules when developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover.

Job Embeddedness and Employee Turnover

There are several similarities between the theory of job embeddedness and many other turnover theories (Akgunuz & Sanli, 2017; Borah & Malakar, 2015). Employees who find many areas of links to organizations think of what they could sacrifice should they choose to seek employment elsewhere (Allen et al., 2016). Karatepe (2016) found that employees with high job embeddedness, despite the type of supervisors they had, stayed with their employers. Ghosh and Gurunathan (2015) reviewed 37 studies published between 2001 and 2011 and found that job embeddedness theory was significant in developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover in organizations. The theory of job embeddedness explains the significance of the relationship retail employees have with their employers, coworkers, and the community (Darrat et al., 2017).

Employees with high job embeddedness may be satisfied with their jobs, which may increase their job performance (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017). In the retail industry, high job embeddedness may lead to increased customer satisfaction and organizational financial viability (Afsar & Badir, 2016). Job embeddedness could have a negative impact on employee behavior as related to their intention to leave a negative work environment. Burton (2015) found that employees may not report bullying on the job for fear that they might lose their financial status and other benefits that the employer provides. Additionally, employees may choose to remain with their employer if there is a link between them and their coworkers despite the lack of support

from their immediate supervisors (Allen et al., 2016). The retail sector may face direct and indirect costs because of the behaviors of highly embedded employees, according to Ghosh and Gurunathan (2015). Retail sector leaders should develop effective strategies for enhancing job embeddedness and decreasing employee turnover by taking into consideration the impact job embeddedness could have on their employees.

Marasi et al. (2016) found that job embeddedness impacted the level of trust and behaviors of employees in the workplace. Employees with a high level of embeddedness and trust of their organizations included a higher probability of engaging in unacceptable behaviors because they believe they do not have to follow the same rules as other employees. Employees could also have increased negative workplace behaviors because they cannot leave their employer because of what they could sacrifice for leaving (Allen et al., 2016).

Job embeddedness could impact employee burnout. Employees linked to the organization may internally have a sense of organizational commitment that could lead to pressure to perform at a very high level (Tziner, Rabenu, Radomski, & Belkin, 2015). Gabel, Shenueli, Dolan, Suarez Ceretti, and Nunez del Prado (2015) found that high levels of job embeddedness led to turnover because the employee was burned-out. Moradi (2014) found increased customer complaints and employee turnover in organizations among employee with high levels of job embeddedness because of high burnout levels. In developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover in retail organizations, retail sector leaders should understand the impact of job embeddedness and the effectiveness of misusing embeddedness in the workplace because of the negative impact on the work environment.

Other Contrasting Theories

Expanding the conceptual foundation for this study was complemented by discussing contrasting theories (Reitz & Anderson, 2011). The job embeddedness theory focuses on the reason's employees choose to remain or leave their employer (Darrat et al., 2017). The purpose of this study was to explore strategies that retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover. Job embeddedness as a conceptual framework was more appropriate for a study on employee turnover in the retail industry. However, it was ideal to explore other theories relevant to developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover (Reitz & Anderson, 2011). Certain aspects of the theories are applicable to this study.

Herzberg Two-Factor Theory: Herzberg (1959) motivation-hygiene theory is also known as the two-factor theory of modification. As a psychologist, Herzberg used motivational hygiene theory in 1960 for selecting and training employees for AT&T. Herzberg (1974) explained factors that affect job attributes. According to Herzberg, the factors that determined employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction include a set of factors called motivators that cause happy feelings or job satisfaction. The satisfaction factors include recognition, achievement, growth, advancement, and responsibility. The other set of factors identified as hygiene factors remain relevant to employee dissatisfaction, and they include (a) interpersonal relations connected to salary, (b) supervisor, (c) subordinates, (d) peers; (e) company policy, and (f) working conditions (Herzberg et al., 1959).

Herzberg (1974) further suggested that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are different. The presence of hygiene factors does not necessarily guarantee employee satisfaction, as employees can feel dissatisfied with the presence of the five hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1959). Soodmand Afshar and Doosti (2016) noted that job satisfaction is not the opposite of job dissatisfaction and can both impact an employee's intention to stay or leave an organization.

Employee performance is different from hygiene and motivational factors. Herzberg (1959) suggested that two primary needs are essential: psychological and physiological. Herzberg (1974) suggested different employee outcomes exist with the motivation and hygiene factors. Accordingly, the hygiene factors provide employees with short-term performance outcomes or dissatisfaction. Herzberg also noted that the content of the job satisfies employees. Employees who are productive and feel valued think they make valuable contributions to the organization.

According to Herzberg (1974), the employee feels dissatisfied with his or her job when there are factors under the control of the organization. These factors include employer designed policy and procedures, employee wages and benefits, and overall working conditions. In examining the factors that lead to job satisfaction, Herzberg (1959) indicated that employee job satisfaction and performance focuses on factors such as an employee's performance achievement. Herzberg implied that high employee performance and positive behavior on the job indicates employee job satisfaction. Providing retail employees with satisfactory wages, benefits, and a supportive work environment could decrease employee turnover in the retail sector (Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015).

Solaja, Idowu, and James (2016) studied the employee turnover rate of customer service agents to identify the factors that contributed to increased employee turnover. Solaja et al. concluded that morale and employee compensation were essential in decreasing employee turnover in organizations. Besides, when organizational leaders support the employees and create a good working environment, the employees remain with the organization (Solaja & Ogunola, 2016). Exploring turnover using motivation and hygiene in the retail sector must focus on employee compensation. When wages are competitive with other sectors, retail employees tend to remain with their employer (Labrague, Gloe, McEnroe-Petite, Tsaras, & Colet, 2018).

Kushta (2017) used Herzberg's (1974) motivation-hygiene theory to explore the relationship between employee embeddedness, job satisfaction, and their impact on employee turnover. Kushta suggested that job embeddedness, job satisfaction, and motivation play a significant role in decreasing employee turnover. Thiranun (2016) used Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory to analyze the factors that affect talented employees in Thailand and China. Wages were essential to employees; employees wanted compensation for the work that they did, however in the long-term, employee interest was in the things that made them feel respected and recognized. Money was not the ultimate motivator; other factors motivate employees to perform, and many of these other factors drive quality performance from employees (Thiranun, 2016).

Atalic, Can, & Canturk, (2016) findings also remain consistent with Herzberg (1959) findings in that when work conditions, interpersonal relationships, organizational policies, and culture met the needs of the employee, job dissatisfaction decreased. However, when employees lacked a sense of belonging or experienced a negative work environment, the employees were dissatisfied with their jobs (Atalic et al.). Other scholars supported Herzberg's findings implying that when organizational leaders developed effective policies and followed the policies, employee turnover decreased (Siahaan, 2017). Kushta (2017) used Herzberg motivation-hygiene theory to explore the impact of motivation, job satisfaction, and employee turnover and found a positive relationship between job satisfaction, employee motivation, and turnover.

Mahzan and Abidin (2017) conducted a study on the effects of job satisfaction and motivation on employee turnover and found that motivation and job satisfaction are significant in developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Sankar (2015) indicated that researchers identified factors, such as job satisfaction and job embeddedness as significant in developing

strategies decreasing employee turnover. A relationship between job satisfaction and job embeddedness may exist (Rawashdeh, Al-Sarairh, & Obeidat, 2015). Using job embeddedness as a conceptual lens for this study includes factors that influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and how they impact an employee to remain or leave an organization.

The Herzberg (1959) two-factor theory helps to explore the significant components of employee commitment that retail sector leaders must address (Pryce, 2016). Using the motivation-hygiene theory during the research process helps to understand the cognitive and organizational factors affiliated with commitment (Ben Slimane, 2017). Herzberg's two-factor theory plays an essential role in examining business problems related to employee job satisfaction and commitment (Issa Eid, 2016). Sheikh Ahmed, Oyagi, and Tirimba (2015) defined motivation as an individual's willingness to apply increased levels of effort to achieve organizational goals. Fareed and Jan (2016) stated that Herzberg's two-factor theory continuously applied in employee commitment research was linked to employee motivation. Retail employees who feel unmotivated and committed to their organizations express the intent to leave their employer (Keiningham, Aksoy, Daly, Perrier, & Solom ,2006). Retail sector leaders must strive to build in motivational factors when developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover.

Ben and Slimane (2017) suggested that employers can influence worker turnover by utilizing the motivation-hygiene theory. Rukh, Choudhary, and Abbasi (2015) described salary as a fixed amount of money paid by employers to employees for work performed. Ben and Slimane also indicated that factors such as increased motivation, pay, and job satisfaction decreases employee turnover. Ali, Edwin, and Tirimba (2015) stated that promotions and wage increases were instrumental in increasing employee satisfaction levels, while absenteeism and employee turnover increased with job dissatisfaction. Rukh et al stated that low wages and noncompetitive

benefits packages were common reasons for decreased employee commitment. Ali et al. indicated that employees working in low wage professions tended to have less competitive benefits and displayed turnover intentions. Retail sector leaders who provided better wages and benefits to their employees decreased turnover at a higher rate than retail sector leaders who provided lesser wages and benefits (Lockard & Wolf, 2012). As related to this study, retail sector leaders should develop plans to ensure competitive wages for employees as part of their strategy for decreasing employee turnover in their organizations.

Maslow's Theory: Maslow (1943) ranked human needs from the bottom to the top of the hierarchy. Maslow outlined five primary motivational needs (a) safety, (b) social interaction, (c) self-esteem, (d) security, and (e) self-actualization. The need for people to fulfill basic needs will become stronger the longer the requirements become difficult to accomplish (Maslow, 1943). Maslow indicated that people must satisfy the lower level basic needs before progressing to the higher-level growth needs (Healy, 2016). Self-actualization is the ultimate level that one gets to after meeting other levels (Tims, Derks, & Bakker, 2016). Maslow opined that each need relates to the other and all needs are relevant to a person's self-actualization (as cited in D'Souza & Gurin, 2016). Using Maslow's theory as a conceptual framework to explore strategies for decreasing employee turnover remains consistent with strategies used by retail sector leaders in decreasing employee turnover in their organizations.

According to Maslow (1943), physiological needs are the basic needs that people require to survive. Everyone strives to attain a level of security and safety after attaining the basic needs (Maslow, 1943). Safety and security requirements, including competition, economic circumstances, law, and stability apply when individuals feel threatened by situations they cannot control (Maslow, 1943). Everyone needs love and intimacy; everyone needs to feel loved within

the group and that they contribute to the mission and vision of the group (Kim, 2015). People need to master their work, have a sense of achievement, self-respect, and respect for others (Ali, Shah, & Beh, 2016). Individuals feel good about themselves and their self-esteem when they feel respected and acknowledged (Sullivan, 2017). Self-esteem also increases when employees feel recognized and fulfilled (Maslow, 1943). Adiele and Abraham (2013) criticized Maslow's failure of the theory to consider cultural differences among people and how culture influences people's behaviors. The retail sector leader should strive to create an environment that fosters unity and security when developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover.

Maslow (1943) suggested that leaders should meet employees' physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs for employees to remain satisfied; leaders cannot progress to a higher level before reaching satisfaction (Thomas, 2017). Researchers interested in exploring factors that lead to employee job satisfaction should understand Maslow's theory (as cited in Barrick et al. 2015). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory provides a basis for developing effective strategies for decreasing employee turnover (as cited in Thibodeaux, Labat, M., Lee, & Labat, C., 2015). However, some scholars argued that Maslow's theory only provided a survival guide on basics needs essential for survival and not relevant for developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover (as cited in Cesario & Chambel, 2017; Siahaan, 2017). As related to the retail sector, leaders can utilize the principles of Maslow's theory in exploring strategies for decreasing employee turnover in their organizations (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016).

Taormina and Gao (2015) tested the notion of job satisfaction at a lower level of a hierarchical structure leads to a prediction of satisfaction as outlined by Maslow (1943). Tormina and Gao supported the importance of Maslow's theory, to employee job satisfaction. However, there have been mixed results in research about Maslow's theory as it relates to job satisfaction

(Roberts, Walter, & Miles, 2008). Vargas-Hernandez and Arreola-Enriquez (2017) found that Maslow's theory did not show job satisfaction and motivation at a high level as shown by the choice of "indifferent" in the administered questionnaire. Harrigan (2015) opined that the Maslow theory misses the essential elements of human behaviors, which could explain specific behaviors including why employees lack satisfaction with their employer. Employee job satisfaction, self-actualization, engagement, and motivation are important factors that contribute to the employee intention to leave or stay with the organization (Gatling, Kim, & Milliman, 2016).

Transformational Leadership Theory: The transformational leadership theory provides an alternative to the job embeddedness theory. Developed in 1978 by McGregor Burns, Bernard Bass extended the theory in 1985. Business leaders still study the original theory of transformational leadership (Paladan, 2015). The theory focuses primarily on the ability of a leader to motivate, inspire, and change employees to accept and become part of an organization. Gyensare, Anku-Tsede, Sanda, and Okpoti (2016) used the theory of transformational leadership to apply to a study about employee turnover and strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Using the principles of transformational leadership brings about positive change in organizations as the principles may expose the qualities of a good leader (Shin, Seo, Shapiro, & Taylor, 2015). The qualities of a retail sector leader play a significant role in the development of strategies that decrease employee turnover.

The behaviors of transformational leaders inspire and motivate their employees and provide them with opportunities to develop their skills and talents (Liu, Jing, & Gao, 2015). Transformational leadership style plays an important role in mitigating turnover intentions (Peachey, Burton, & Wells, 2014). However, there is a relationship between the transformational leadership behaviors and other organizational principles such as job satisfaction, employee

commitment, and the theory of job embeddedness as a framework for exploring strategies organizational leaders use in decreasing employee turnover in organizations. The transformational leadership theory is of use because of its ability to study how the behaviors of leaders affect the employee's performance and organizational commitment (Pohler & Schmidt, 2015). Through the principles of transformational leadership, retail sector leaders can provide a supportive environment that addresses professional growth and development (Paladan, 2015).

According to Cohen (2006), the theory of job embeddedness is significant when developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Additionally, Tharenou and Caulfield (2010) adapted Mitchell and Lee's (2001) explanation of why expatriates who served in other countries preferred to remain in the countries they served rather than returning home. Some expatriates became embedded in foreign countries and enjoyed the career options available to them while they fit the culture of the organizations abroad, according to Caulfield (2010). Therefore, retail sector leaders should develop strategies for enhancing employee turnover using the job embeddedness theory because of the effectiveness of the theory in other sectors.

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover is one of the most significant challenges faced by organizational leaders. Turnover occurs when an employee chooses to leave an organization voluntarily or involuntarily (Kloutsiniotis & Mihail, 2017). Involuntary turnover is when the employer decides to terminate the employment of the employee (Awang, Amir, Osman, & Mara, 2013). Other types of employee turnover in organizations include lay-off, injuries to employees and other issues that the employee or the employer has no control over.

Voluntary Turnover: Voluntary turnover occurs when the employees decide to leave the employer the employee's decision to leave the employer (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). The

employee thinks about what they dislike in the organization, seeks other employment opportunities, and finally decides to leave the organization (Tastan, 2014). Voluntary turnover could have a negative impact on an organization's financial stability (Stamp & Thoren, 2016). Therefore, retail sector leaders must strive to maintain employees in their status because of the knowledge and skills employees have about the organization's business (Islam, Hasan, & Rahman, 2015). Employees dedicated to their organization invest their energy and time into their job because they have a sense of meaning, pride, and belonging (Cahill, McNamara, Pitt-Catsouphes, & Valcour, 2015). Retail sector leaders should develop strategies for decreasing employee turnover in their organizations that take into consideration the value of each employee to the organization.

Consequences of Employee Turnover: Employee turnover has adverse effects for organizations (Stamp & Thoren, 2016). While there are several direct and indirect consequences, organizations lose billions of dollars annually because of employee turnover (McManus & Mosca, 2015). Replacing a departed employee can be expensive and management of organizations also deal with intangible losses because of the departed employee's talents (Stamp & Thoren, 2016). Employers faced the loss of organizational knowledge, distribution of workload, and in most cases employee morale when turnover occurs in organizations (Stamp & Thoren, 2016). Consequences of employee turnover are different in every business sector and examining the reasons for employee turnover in the retail industry as a stand-alone is essential to the success of organizational leaders in the industry (Gouviea, Milfont, & Guerra, 2014).

Employee Turnover in Retail Organizations: Retail sector leaders in the United States annually lose \$190,000 in employee turnover (Harrison & Gordon, 2014). Decreasing employee turnover in the U.S. retail industry remains a significant concern for retail sector leaders because

of the cost associated with turnover in the industry (Katsikea, Theodosiou, & Morgan, 2015). Therefore, developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover is critical for the industry (McManus & Mosca, 2015).

Focusing on strategies effective in decreasing employee turnover in the retail industry must be a priority for retail leaders (Kamalzaman, Zulkeflee, Hamid, Sahari, & Halim, 2015). According to Almeida (2015), a relationship exists between employee turnover in the retail organization and the financial sustainability of the organization because turnover has a direct impact on sales. Implementing strategies successfully in decreasing employee turnover in the retail industry continues to be a struggle for retail leaders in the United States (Alshanbri et al., 2015). While little research exists on employee turnover in the retail industry, researchers' interest in the phenomenon has increased since 2012 (Loliwe, 2016). According to BLS (2016), the retail industry was one of the business sectors with the highest employee turnover rate in 2015. Management in the retail industry in the United States has the capability of employing over 15 million workers (BLS, 2016). Because the number of individuals employed in the retail sector, researchers' interest in exploring strategies for decreasing employee turnover in the sector increased significantly (Loliwe, 2016), supporting the need for studies such as this.

Wang et al. (2015) argued that high employee turnover affects retail organizations productivity and ability to compete. According to Kamarulzaman et al., (2015), the workforce plays a critical role in the operations of a retail organization. Hence, it is essential for leaders in the retail sector to avoid high employee turnover. Employees in the retail industry have direct contact with the customers, and for retail organizations to be successful, it is essential to build and maintain a good working relationship between the employees and the customers (Tan & Waheed, 2011). The loyalty of customers depends on the relationship they have with the employees in a

retail setting. Customers rely on their relationship with employers, which then translates into sales. Retail sector leaders should strive to develop strategies to decrease employee turnover taking into consideration the relationship their employees have with their customers as this will provide employees the opportunity to fulfill some of their personal needs (Van Dierendonck, Lankester, Zmyslona, & Rothweiler, 2016).

The retail industry in the United States provides employment partly based on experience and level of education. Highly educated individuals may occupy management positions while people with less education occupy lower level positions (Labrague, et al.2018). Opportunities do exist, however, for lower level employees to advance to higher positions based on their level of dedication, skills and experience within the retail industry (Mitchell & Zatzick, 2015).

According to the BLS (2016), the retail industry has the capacity of employing over ranks among the highest employers in the United States. Zhang, Ni, and Xu (2013) suggested that the high rate of employee turnover in the retail industry could be because of a lack of advancement opportunities in the sector, inadequate training for employees, and reduced employee compensation packages. Ferreira and Almeida (2015) had a contrary opinion to Zhang et al.'s (2013) assertion. Ferreira and Amiodaron stated that there is no relationship between employee compensation and training and employee turnover. The inconsistency in the views expressed by these researchers is an indication of the complexities that exist in developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover in the retail sector. The retail sector does not retain qualified employees because of the high rate of employee turnover (Kamalzaman et al., 2015). Retail sector leaders must understand the strategies to decrease employee turnover in the retail sector supporting the need for further study.

Cost of Employee Turnover: Leaders of organizations may create a loss of millions of dollars when an employee leaves the company, especially with the loss of a skilled employee and one in a leadership position (Amankwaa & Anku-Tsedee, 2015). Leaders' reaction to employee turnover could lead to unemployment and slow the economy (Mehrnoosh & Jouzaryan, 2016). A sustainable and productive organization aligns with the relationship between employee retention and economic stabilization, in which an organization needs to attain a stable workforce (Zhang, 2016).

Employee turnover affecting organizational goals prevents organizations from maintaining their goals and objectives, as well as preventing them from maintaining their competitive edge (Chib, 2016; Kim & Hyun, 2017; Lin, Tsai, & Mahatma, 2017). Therefore, it is essential for organizational leaders to preserve their workforce by developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover (Hamid, Reihaneh, & Siroos, 2016; Lin et al. 2017; Parasız, Koç, Ilgar, & Şahin, 2017). The high cost of employee turnover appears in different faces such as advertisement, training, review of new employees, and productivity (Abid & Butt, 2017; Labrague, et al., 2018; Pirgaip, & Tasdemir 2017; Parasız et al. 2017; Wang et al. 2015). Employee turnover is one of the primary interests of practitioners, scholars and organizational leaders (Abid & Butt, 2017; Muqadas, Rehman, & Aslam, 2017). Practitioners must work collaboratively with retail organizational leaders to develop strategies for decreasing employee turnover in retail organizations; decreasing employee turnover could be essential to the economic sustainability of the sector.

Organizations could lose some of their seasoned employees as they leave the organization (Narayanan, 2016). Organizations with high levels of turnover rates for full-time employees also experience poor customer satisfaction ratings (Hurley, 2015). According to Şerban and Aceleanu

(2015), some retail sector leaders recognize the high cost of employee turnover as something that distracts them from their average daily functions. Increase in employee turnover reduces organizational profitability (Roche, Duffield, Homer, Buchan, & Dimitrelis, 2015). Some organizational leaders continue to struggle with the problem of employee turnover in their organizations (Șerban & Aceleanu, 2015). Providing avenues for organizational leaders to explore strategies effective in decreasing employee turnover in the retail industry may provide needed assistance to organizational leaders struggling with this phenomenon.

Because of the problems caused by employee turnover, some organizational leaders created a general outline of the specific cost associated with employee turnover in their organizations (Qazi et al., 2015). However, most of the research on employee turnover focused on retention strategies and the need for organizational leaders to increased employee wages, develops a more robust benefits package for employees; however, there have been fewer discussions on the need to develop internal controls while enhancing embeddedness on the job (Qazi et al., 2015). Qazi et al. (2015) further opined that it is essential to develop internal control measures that will focus on strategies that decrease the need for an employee to leave the employer because the cost of employee turnover could have a substantial impact on the profitability of an organization. There is a cost for training a new employee when an employee leaves an organization, and new employees make mistakes that could affect productivity (Crome, Shaw, & Baillie, 2016). Furthermore, retail sector leaders incur additional turnover costs when they revise and review the work completed by new employees (Crome et al., 2016). Developing strategies for employee turnover is essential to the sustainability and growth of an organization (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Pemberton-Jones, 2015). Understanding the factors that play a role in an employee's decision to leave an organization is essential to addressing the economic costs of turnover organization (Qazi & Shafique, 2015).

Employee turnover is costly and difficult for organizations (Pearlman & Schaffer, 2013; Perez & Mirabella, 2013). Employee turnover affects the ability of stakeholders and shareholders to meet their financial goals (Bauer, 2012) affecting the entire financial stability and sustainability of organizations (Selden, Schimmoeller, & Thompson, 2013). Developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover is essential because increased employee turnover is one of the primary causes of reduced sustainability for most organizations (Lee & Ha-Brookshire, 2017). Increased turnover can reduce organizational profits and organizational sustainability (Jang & Kandampully, 2017). Retail sector leaders have an incentive to exploit strategies that have been effective in decreasing employee turnover in organizations because of the need to enhance organizational profitability.

Pentareddy and Suganthi (2015) surmised that employee turnover is costly to organizations as turnover affects the operations of businesses in the retail sector. Gialuisi and Coetzer (2013) suggested that the cost of finding and training new employees could drain the resources of an organization. Maertz and Boyar (2012) noted that employee turnover leads to a loss of skills and knowledge in organizations and this could impact the financial sustainability of organizations. Ratna and Chawla (2012) also stated that the primary costs associated with employee turnover are in the areas of replacement, recruitment, training, and business continuity during the period when the employee voluntarily quits and when a replacement is in place in the organization. Gianluigi and Coetzer (2013) argued that employee turnover had a double-edged impact on organizations: turnover affects the cost and profitability of the organization and has a significant impact on the overall bottom-line of an organization, which James and Mathew (2012) called productivity and organizational sustainability. Organizational leaders interested in avoiding the high cost of employee turnover may benefit from an exploration of strategies effective in decreasing employee turnover in organizations.

Strategies for Decreasing Employee Turnover: Developing a simple strategy to decrease employee turnover is a first step (Deery & Jago, 2015). However, employee needs differ according to the industry (Deery & Jago, 2015). Strategies for decreasing employee turnover in the manufacturing industry could be very different from strategies that could be effective in the retail sector. Therefore, organizational leaders should involve their employees when developing the strategy within their organizations (Deery & Jago, 2015). When employees engage in organizational decisions, they feel they fit into the mission and vision of the organization, and they stay in the organization (Nicholas et al., 2016).

Developing strategies to decrease employee turnover is essential because organizational leaders can avoid the cost of training new employees, increase productivity, and maintain the culture in their organization (George, 2015). It is essential for organizational leaders to implement strategies successfully in decreasing employee turnover (Nelissen, Forrier, & Verbruggen, 2016). According to Mwanza (2017), reducing employee turnover is beneficial to both the leaders of organizations and them provides employees with a safe operational environment. George (2015) opined that creating a positive work environment where employees feel they fit into the organization seems to be one of the most effective strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Employees who have opportunities to work in positive environment fear what they might lose if they should leave the employer for another employer; therefore, they may choose to remain with the employer with which they are comfortable (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2017).

Bush (2017) suggested that organizational leaders should develop strategies for decreasing employee turnover that includes adequate training programs for employees so that they are competent in the performance of their duties. Patel and Hamlin (2015) found that organizational leaders who had open door policies and interacted with their employees' daily

decreased employee turnover in their organizations. Patel and Hamlin suggested effective communication between leaders and their employees. It is important to involve employees when developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover in organizations (Lu, Tu, Li, & Ho, 2016). Providing support for the goals set by employees within the organization is one-way organizational leaders can decrease turnover among their employees (Dubey, Gunasekaran, Altay, Childe, & Papadopoulos, 2016). According to Naim and Lenka (2017), most employees appreciate leaders who take the time to mentor them and teach them in the process.

Organizational leaders should offer flexible work schedules to their when their organization can provide this flexible schedule (George, 2015; Sweet, Pitt-Catsoupes, & James, 2017). Baumann (2015) suggested that stress in the workplace could be a result of the employee's schedule and could lead the employee to seek employment elsewhere, thereby increasing employee turnover in the retail sector. Therefore, retail sector leaders must strive to develop flexible schedules for employees in the retail sector supporting the need for additional study and research.

Bush (2017) suggested that one-way organizational leaders can decrease employee turnover is by providing employees training relevant to their jobs. Retail, corporate leaders failed to recognize the importance of training and development for many years (Damij, Levnajić, Skrt, & Suklan, 2015). Damij et al. (2015) believed leaders make assumptions about employee training and suggested that organizational leaders must ensure that employees receive training that is appropriate to their assigned jobs. Deery and Jago (2015) suggested that organizational leaders cannot ignore issues related to employee development and practice. When corporate leaders provide support and training to employees, the training helps give the positive effect on job embeddedness and may affect the employee's intention to leave the employer (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017).

Another useful strategy retail organizational leader may use to decrease employee turnover is having daily interactions with their employees seeking regular feedback from them on corporate decisions. Patel and Hamlin (2015) opined that leaders who had regular discussions with their employees decreased employee turnover more than leaders who did not have daily talks with their employees. Patel and Hamlin stated that effective communication between leaders and their employees is one of the most effective strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Employees comply at a higher rate when they are involved in all work and when the employer seeks their input in the decision-making process (Deery & Jago, 2015).

Lu et al. (2016) found that employees supported by their employers do not seek other opportunities when there is adequate compensation from the employers. Lu et al. examined the relationship between the support employees received from their leaders and employee turnover. Lu et al. concluded that leadership support was an effective strategy for decreasing employee turnover; leaders who support and providing regular feedback to their employees reduce turnover in their organizations. Supportive administrators reduce employees' stress by providing continuous guidance and feedback to their followers (Buzeti, Klun, & Stare, 2016). Employees wait to feel valued and have direct contact with their leaders on a regular basis through their opinions and contributions (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017).

One effective way retail sector leaders effectively decreased employee turnover in retail organizations was by developing simple conflict resolution strategies (Ko & Kim, 2016). Leadership involvement in resolving these conflicts is essential to the employee (Mayr, 2017; Siyanbola & Gilman, 2017). Retail sector leaders must strive to coach their employees through conflicts as part of the strategies for decreasing turnover in the retail sector.

Organizational leaders who rewarded their employees for good work and meeting targets also decreased employee turnover (Gigliotti & Ruben, 2017; Lu et al., 2016; Taneja, Sewell, & Odom, 2015). When organizational leaders reward employees for their skills and dedication, employee turnover can be decreased (Prouska, Psychogios, & Rexhepi, 2016; Siyanbola & Gilman, 2017). Employers who offered monetary rewards to their employees received a higher level of loyalty and commitment from the employees, and that resulted in decreased employee turnover (Alyuninnisa & Saptoto, 2015; Siyanbola & Gilman, 2017). Creating opportunities for employees to improve their skills, rewarding them for work performed, and for their dedication increases job embeddedness and decreased employee turnover in a business industry including the retail sector (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2015).

Leaders who developed strategies to support goals set by their employees also reduced employee turnover (Dubey et al., 2016). Employees feel connected to leaders who support them and who invest time and energy in their growth within the organization (Naim & Lenka, 2017). Organizational leaders who mentor their employees, provide them with positive feedback, and support their goals may decrease employee turnover in their organizations (Lee & Mao, 2015; Naim & Lenka, 2017). Inability to decrease employee turnover could lead to decreased productivity (Liu, Zhang, Du, & Hu, 2015). To decrease employee turnover, organizational leaders must develop strategies that reduce turnover while understanding strategies that have been effective in decreasing employee turnover in organizations supporting the need for further study.

Transition

Employees in most sectors, including the retail sector, value the relationship they have with their organizations and those around them (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017). Among the general expectations' employees have of their organizations are the desire to work in an environment that

is welcoming, with decent compensation, and excellent benefits (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017). A good relationship with managers, work-life balance, and organizational commitment to the employee are some of the factors that can be influential to employees' decisions to remain with the employer. Organizational leaders can implement strategies effective in decreasing employee turnover in organizations (Deery & Jago, 2015).

Section 1 of this study included an introduction to the background of the problem, a review of the background of the problem, problem and purpose statements, nature of the study, the primary research question, interview questions, conceptual framework for the study, definitions of terms, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study, significance of the study, contribution to business practice, implications for social change, and a review of the professional and academic literature. Section 2 includes the restatement of the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments, data collection technique, data organization technique, data analysis, and reliability and validity. Section 3 of this study includes the presentation of the findings, applications of the study to professional practice, implications for positive social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for future research, reflections, summary, and study conclusions.

Section 2: The Project

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies retail sector leaders from the Upstate region of New York use to decrease employee turnover. The findings from this study could contribute to social change by providing retail sector leaders with additional knowledge about how to decrease employee turnover. Decreasing employee turnover could positively benefit retail sector leaders' financial outcomes and promote the financial well-being of families and communities.

Role of the Researcher

Simon and Goes (2013) stated that the role of the researcher is to provide a precise and accurate data collection process while displaying ethical standards. My role in this study was to explore relevant literature and related information to the stated business problem of this study and conduct semistructured interviews. Abma and Stake (2014) suggested that the role of a researcher in a qualitative case study is to provide a detailed description and analysis of a problem based on one or multiple cases. Yin (2014) suggested that the researcher must maintain the objectivity and reliability of the research design. My relationship with this topic stemmed entirely from the perspective of a consumer observing the nature of turnover in the retail sector. As a close observer of the retail sector, I understand the impact employee turnover has on the day-to-day operations of the sector. The pattern of employee turnover in the retail sector drew my personal interest in investigating what retail leaders did to decrease employee turnover in their industry.

In this study, I followed the guidelines laid out in *The Belmont Report* (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1974), taking into consideration the beneficence and justice of all study participants (see

Kaufman et al., 2016). Adams and Miles (2013) indicated that the requirements of *The Belmont Report* are respect of persons, beneficence, and justice. I treated all study participants with respect and dignity, as outlined by *The Belmont Report*. Additionally, I met the research expectations of the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and completed the mandatory ethics training before beginning the research. Approval was obtained from the Walden University IRB prior to collecting data for this study.

One aspect of the role of a researcher is to reduce or eliminate bias within a study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In a qualitative study, the researcher is the primary data collector, and this strategy can lead to unintentional bias on the part of the researcher (Draper & Swift, 2011). Tuohy, Cooney, Dowling, Murphy, and Sixsmith (2013) stated that researchers can effectively use bracketing to set aside personal biases in studies. Overgaard (2015) agreed, indicating that a researcher could reduce bias by using a disciplined process called bracketing to avoid preconceived notions about the topic under investigation. I followed these suggestions and included the use of bracketing during the research and data analysis phase of this study. Because bracketing involves removing all personal experience, knowledge, or beliefs from the research topic (Marshall & Rossman, 2016), I performed bracketing before recording interviews with participants and documenting the results of the interviews in a journal. The journal included detailed notes of my biases and perceptions during data collection and data analysis.

In this study, I collected data through semistructured interviews using an interview protocol (see Appendix A) to ensure consistency across all participant interviews. Yin (2018) reported that an interview protocol contains information concerning data collection. The interview protocol used in this study includes the interview questions, the procedures, and the

general rules to follow during the interviews. According to Bond et al. (2014), researchers should use an interview protocol with all study participants to ensure consistency and credibility.

To ensure that the study is credible, I carried out member checking with the participants. Thomas (2017) suggested that member checking improves the credibility of qualitative research. I used member checking to reduce personal bias in this study by providing an opportunity to study participants to ensure that the interpretations, analysis, and the conclusions drawn from the interview data were accurate. Study participants had the opportunity to provide additional information to my interpretations of the data as part of member checking.

Participants

The participants for this study were retail sector leaders who implemented strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Teeuw et al. (2014) suggested that researchers need to identify and specify strategies that are effective when conducting research. Purposeful sampling was used in this study. Setia (2016) stated that purposeful sampling occurs when a researcher purposively selects participants to answer a research question. The purposeful sampling method allows qualitative researchers to select participants who meet the eligibility criteria for this study (Patton, 2015). Consequently, I intentionally recruited five retail organization leaders who successfully implemented strategies for decreasing employee turnover.

Englander (2012) suggested that researchers should select participants for a study before collecting data. Participants selected for this study had to meet the following criteria: (a) be an owner or hold the title of manager of a retail sector and (b) be a retail sector leader who successfully implemented strategies to decrease employee turnover. I contacted retail sector leaders in the Upstate region of New York whose names were publicly available on the Internet. The retail leaders contacted had provided oral evidence that they had successfully implemented

strategies for decreasing employee turnover. I provided the retail sector leaders who met the study criteria with information about the study along with an invitation to participate. Once retail sector leaders responded to my e-mail and agreed to participate in the study, we scheduled a mutually acceptable date and time for the telephone interviews. I explained the details to the participants and provided them with an opportunity to ask questions. Telephone interviews were conducted after the study participants signed and completed the consent form.

Jacob and Ferguson (2012) stressed the importance of the use of scripts, which can prevent researchers from omitting essential material when sharing information and asking questions of study participants. My goal was to develop and maintain a cordial relationship with all study participants during initial contact, before beginning the interviews, during the interview, and during the member checking process. I used talking points to introduce myself and to discuss all aspects of the study to participants. The talking points that were used during the study included the name of the study, the purpose of the study, the study population, and eligibility criteria for potential study participants. All study participants were volunteers.

Gibson, Benson, and Brand (2013) suggested that the relationship between the researchers and the participants is crucial to the success of any research. To maintain confidentiality in the study, I used fictional names (i.e., pseudonyms) for the retail sector leaders who participated in the study (see Thomas, 2015). I informed the study participants of their right to withdraw from the study at any time (see Gibson et al., 2013). All data collected for this study will remain stored on a password-protected, universal serial bus (USB) flash drive stored in a fireproof safe for 5 years to which only I have access. Data will be deleted from the USB flash drive after 5 years. I will also store all hard copies of data, including the signed informed

consents, for 5 years in a locked file cabinet to which only I have access. All hard copies will also be destroyed after 5 years.

Research Method and Design

Wohlin and Aurum (2015) found that when conducting research, it is essential for researchers to select research methods appropriate for investigating the identified problem. The three primary methods for conducting studies are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The qualitative method is focused on understanding specific issues regarding the experiences of study participants (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Bevan (2014) suggested that researchers can use qualitative methods to record and observe study participants in a natural setting; therefore, I used the qualitative approach in this study. By contrast, the quantitative method collects data used for testing hypotheses created from previous knowledge (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Shannon-Baker (2015) surmised that researchers use the mixed research method to answer complex questions that require both the qualitative and quantitative research methods.

I selected the multiple case study design instead of the phenomenological design because questions of *what*, *how*, and *why* receive clear and consistent answers with the use of a case study design (Yin, 2018). Stake (2013) articulated that using a multiple case study enables gathering more information about the phenomenon in a researcher's search of the commonality of the cases. The following subsections include the justification for the chosen method and design.

Research Method

I selected the qualitative research method to understand the strategies retail sector leaders used to decrease employee turnover. Bevan (2014) suggested that researchers can use qualitative methods to record and observe study participants in a setting they have chosen. The qualitative

method is an exploratory research method used by researchers to gain a proper understanding of a phenomenon (Hayward, Bungay, Wolff, & MacDonald, 2016). Karatepe (2016) used the qualitative method specifically to explore the impact of job embeddedness and employee turnover. To understand the current business problem and highlight the practices of retail sector leaders, I used the qualitative method to gain insight into the phenomenon from different perspectives (see Smit, 2017).

The quantitative method involves analysis of relationships among variables, which was not the focus of interest in this study (see Venkatesh, Brown, & Sullivan, 2016). Researchers use the quantitative method to test a hypothesis (Pindek, Kessler, & Spector, 2017). The intent of this study was not to analyze relationships among variables. Using the quantitative method could have provided information on the financial cost of employee turnover but might not have provided information on strategies that retail sector leaders used successfully in decreasing employee turnover in their organizations (see Kose, Argan, & Cimen, 2015; Šalkovska & Ogsta, 2014). The mixed method provides opportunities to validate data through including both quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Cylus, Glymour, & Avendano, 2015; Kose et al., 2015; Venkatesh et al., 2016).

Research Design

Four qualitative methodological designs are (a) case study, (b) phenomenology, (c) ethnography, and (d) grounded theory. In this study, I used a multiple case study design. A case study design includes an explanation of an existing or on-going phenomenon from an everyday context (Yin, 2018). The case study design involves several sources of evidence that relate to the phenomenon being explored by the researcher (Singh, 2014).

My considerations for this study included the use of the phenomenological and ethnographical research designs to explore the strategies retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover. Ingham-Broomfield (2014) and Roberts (2013) found that researchers use a phenomenological design to gain a comprehensive understanding of social realities that build on individual experiences and the meaning of the identified experiences. According to Ejimabo (2015), researchers use a phenomenological design to determine the meaning of interrelationships of a phenomenon based on information derived from interviews, observations, and shared stories from individuals. The phenomenological design was not suitable for this study because the purpose did not include the exploration of the interrelationships of a phenomenon. According to Knowles (2015), ethnography is the study of cultural groups over an extended length of time. The ethnographic design yields a rich overview of a phenomenon with a specific focus on demographic characteristics common to the group over time (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Templeton, 2016). An ethnographic design was not appropriate for this study because the central research question did not involve exploring a group in a cultural sharing setting. The grounded theory design is used to create new theories based on data collected from observations and interviews (Zarif, 2012). The focus of this study was not to create a new theory, so the grounded theory design was not appropriate.

Data saturation occurs when no new data or themes emerge from the data being collected (Siegle, Rubenstein, & Mitchell, 2014). Suri (2013) indicated that new information in research includes references, themes, or perspectives on the selected topic. I ensured data saturation by including the comparison of data and themes that emerged from the study until the process revealed no new patterns or themes. Interviews continued with study participants until data saturation was achieved.

Population and Sampling

Lucero et al. (2016) suggested that the population refers to a collection of people with similar characteristics. The population for this study were retail sector leaders who successfully implemented strategies to decrease employee turnover in their organizations. The study used purposeful sampling to recruit retail sector leaders. Elo et al. (2014) stated that the sampling method used by a researcher must align with the purpose of the study. Purposeful criterion sampling involves selecting cases in a study that meet some predetermined criterion of importance (Patton, 2001).

Purposeful criterion-based sampling was used to gather volunteered information from retail sector leaders whose names were derived from the internet. I used purposeful criterion-based sampling to ensure that the study's participants successfully implemented strategies to decrease employee turnover in their organizations. Hyett, Kenny, and Dickson-Swift (2014) suggested that researchers prefer purposeful criterion-based sampling to other sampling methods because they have the advantage of identifying participants who know the topic. Hyett et al. indicated that researchers who depend on participants and provide rich information for in-depth data analysis should use purposeful sampling.

This multiple case study focused on five retail sector leaders. Hyett et al. (2014) further suggested that one-way qualitative researchers explore problems for richer data and better understanding is by concentrating on a smaller number of study participants. It is essential that researchers consider the experiences of study participants when selecting a size. The knowledge and experiences of retail sector leaders was important in the selection of study participants. Gandy (2015) used a small sample of four to explore small business strategies leaders used to

promote company profitability and sustainability. I obtained data from five retail sector leaders to explore the strategies retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover in their organization.

Data saturation occurred when no new information arose from probing questions and when additional interviews produce no new information for this study (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Spillane, Larkin, Corcoran, Matvienko-Sikar, & Arensman, 2017). In qualitative studies, data saturation often occurs when the size of participants is less than 10, depending on the quality of interview questions (Robinson, 2014).

Participants were eligible for this study when they met the following criteria: (a) are retail sector leaders who agree to participate in this study and (b) have implemented successful strategies for decreasing employee turnover in their organization. Individuals who agree to participate in the study were informed of the study consent forms. Appointments were set with study participants to conduct the semistructured interviews. Retail sector leaders who do not meet the criteria were not be part of the study.

Marshall and Rossman (2016) suggested that participants' interviews should take place in a private setting and a time that is comfortable and familiar with the study participant. Interview sites should be quiet to ensure the quality of digital interviews (Gill, 2016). I asked study participants to identify locations and time suitable for them. I sent the study participants invitation to participate in a telephone interview.

Ethical Research

In obtaining this approval, Walden University requires all willing participants to sign a consent form before participating in this study. Participation in this study was voluntary;

participants could withdraw from the study without penalty at any time. I did not provide any physical or financial incentives for study participants.

The Walden University IRB requires researchers to understand the importance of respecting the privacy and rights of all study participants. Therefore, I masked names of all rental sector leaders who participated in this study to maintain their confidentiality and privacy during the research, analyzing data, and reporting the results. Furthermore, company labels included retail organizations names as YZ Company and participant names such as P1, and, P2 to ensure confidentiality and privacy.

All study participants completed the Walden University Consent Form for Adults. I reviewed the Walden University research confidentiality requirements with all participants to ensure that they are comfortable with the research process. Each participant completed the consent form and they were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Methods of withdrawing from the study included a hand-written, typed, or emailed statement of withdrawal from the participant or a verbal statement of withdrawal. I provided all participants with my Walden University e-mail address, a cell phone number, and a postal address for potential contact. All participants were provided a summary of the study findings and results upon completion of the study upon their request.

Every researcher must comply with ethical guidelines for the treatment of human participants in a study as outlined by the Walden University IRB. Abernethy et al. (2014) and Castleberry (2014) noted that researchers must keep information about study participants in a confidential and private place. The study complied with *The Belmont Report* criteria and ensure that all participants are respected and protected during the research study (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Yardley, Watts, Pearson, and Richardson (2014) indicated

that researchers must protect the data collected from studies. The study adhered to Walden University IRB guidelines, and I collected data until obtaining approval from the Walden University IRB. The final IRB approval number is 05-28-20-0222369. The soft copy, digital information will be stored on a USB and kept for 5 years until after the research project completes and then destroyed. In a locked facility where only I have access, the hard copy data will be kept for 5 years after the research project and then destroyed.

Data Collection Instruments

As the primary data collection instrument for this qualitative multiple case study, the study includes the use of semistructured interviews with an interview protocol (see Appendix A). Castillo-Montoya (2016) suggested that qualitative researchers should conduct interviews with interview protocols and observation notes when conducting studies. After receiving formal consent for participation from study participants, I conducted interviews at a time that was neutral and conducive to the participants (Martinus & Hedgcock, 2015; Yin, 2018). All study participants given a printed copy of the signed informed consent form with sample interview questions for the study and an explanation of the benefits of the study and participants' rights to withdraw from the study at any time (Ilyushin & Azbel, 2017).

Interview questions (see Appendix B) that are openended provide opportunities for study participants to express personal views when responding to questions (Castillo- Montoya, 2016; Martinus & Hedgcock, 2015). Observation notes were kept during the interview process to document and capture observations made during the interview process (Ponterotto, 2014). Yates and Leggett (2016) suggested that the qualitative researcher should be analytical during all phases of the study. Therefore, I developed codes for data analysis with the observational notes and

themes that emerge during the interview process. Study participants were asked to provide company data that could be relevant to strategies used to decrease employee turnover.

After the interviews, each interview was transcribed into a Microsoft Word document. Notes were made from themes derived from the literature and codes that emerged from collected data (Yin, 2018). Morse (2015) suggested that qualitative researchers prefer member checking because of providing maximum benefit for the reliability and validity of the study.

Data Collection Technique

In this qualitative multiple case study, I used a digital database as a key for organizing data and for quick referencing of all digital file structures (Yin, 2018). All interviews were recorded with the consent of all study participants, and digital audio files were generated from the recorded interviews. Following each interview, the audio files were downloaded onto a USB. All personal notes taken during the interview were scanned and uploaded into a safe Microsoft One Drive after conversion into portable document files. All paper documents will be maintained in a locked facility; the hard copy data will be kept for 5 years after the research project is complete and then destroyed.

Similarly, all audio files were deleted from the digital recorder after creating electronic audio files of all interviews. Anyan (2013) suggested that organizational techniques are appropriate in a study to maintain the integrity of the collected data. The standard naming convention for this study included (a) the participants number, (b) date of the interview, and (c) data type. All files will be maintained using a chronological naming convention for each participant interview. The information includes participant number, date of the interview, and the data type.

All audio interviews were transcribed into a Microsoft Word document after compiling the digital documents for the study. The naming convention was used as appropriate for the interview folder. The document was sent to the study participants via e-mail after (Harvey, 2015). Changes and recommendations made by study participants were updated in journal notes and reflected in the conclusion of the analysis of the study. After the study, participants in all digital notes were saved to the participant's digital file. Files were burned onto a USB for storage in a personal file lockbox that I assessed during the analysis process, stored for 5 years after the study is complete, and then destroyed.

The interview process of a study should align with the analysis of the data from the interview (Morse & Coulehan, 2015). I used a One Note electronic log to outline all emerging themes from the interviews and compare all notes to the previously transcribed and analyzed interviews. All requests for clarification of questions from study participants were tracked. All information was deleted after consolidation in a removable USB. During the 5-year storage, the data will be available to verified sources with a minimum of 3-day notification request to the researcher.

Laursen (2013) suggested that it is necessary for a researcher to secure and maintain research data for 5 years. I will lock all coding schemes, interview files, notes, password-protected electronic records, and hard copy documents in a secure location for 5 years after the completion of the study. After this 5-year period ends, all data will be destroyed.

Data Organization Technique

Qualitative researchers should use data organization techniques to organize collected data during research, during the data collection process, and the data analysis period of the study (Yin, 2018). Proper collection and organization of data results is essential for a rigorously conducted

study (Yin, 2018). In qualitative studies, researchers use journals and note pads to record information during the interview process (Ross, Mahal, Chinnapen, Kolar, & Woodman, 2014). A qualitative researcher may use any database to organize collected data during research. (Yin, 2018). Researchers must ensure that the confidential information about all study participants and the information they provide during the study are organized and confidential (Vance, 2015). Some qualitative researchers organize data through a filing system (Thomas, 2015), and use NVivo12 software as a data organization and coding application (Owen, 2014). The study used NVivo12 software to help to organize and analyze the data.

I conducted semistructured interviews with five retail sector leaders using the interview questions (see Appendix B). Researchers use research logs to record interviews to ensure appropriate documentation and organization of data (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). According to Thomas (2017), research logs could also enhance the effectiveness of the research process. A Sony Digital Flash Voice Recorder (ICD-PX312) was used to record the raw data, while everything related to the interview questions were written in a research log kept during the interview process. The data organization process for this study included cataloging the collected data and labeling the data by designated participant; to ensure privacy and confidentiality I assigned a unique participant code to each participant.

In this study, I encrypted all computer folders, and external flash drives that contain any information from study participants. A hard copy of the interpretations to the interviews will be filed. Interviews recorded through digital recordings were transcribed into NVivo 12 Plus software and uploaded into the audio files to NVivo. All the information from the study were stored and organized unto the NVivo platform, including reflective journal entries, organizational documents, and any further data. All documents were referenced by the name given to them by

retail sector leaders. All organizational documents collected will be in a locked facility; the hard copy data will be kept for 5 years after the research project is complete and then destroyed.

Collected data followed established protocols (Yin, 2018) to ensure to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all study participants (Thomas, 2017). All data collected from the interview process will be secured in a locked fireproof cabinet for 5 years; after 5 years, I will destroy all documents. Mitchell and Wellings (2013) and Yin (2018) recommended that researchers must destroy study data after 5 years.

Data Analysis

In qualitative studies, data analysis consists of deconstructing the organized data collected for the study (Yates & Leggett, 2016). Data analysis started during the data collection process and continued as themes emerge from the data collected (Morse & Coulehan, 2015). For this study, the emerging themes were used to outline matching patterns, and data triangulation was used to analyze the data (Yin, 2018). In this study, I used all participants' responses from the semistructured interviews, and member checking of themes that emerge from the will double check with observational notes taken during this interview process.

In this study, the five-step data analysis model recommended by Yin (2018) was used to analyze the data. The five steps are (a) compile the data, (b) deconstruct the data, (c) reassemble the data, (d) interpret the data, and (e) draw conclusions from the data. Furthermore, I used the interview protocol in Appendix A to ensure that the data collected and analyzed remains consistent with the research practices for analysis. The interview protocol cross-checked to ensure that each study participant received the same questions in the same order (Spillane, et al. 2017).

In compiling the data, the interviews were transcribed into new groupings. The second step in the process was the deconstruction of study data, including the pairing of the observation notes with the transcribed interviews. The number of groupings was narrowed at this stage to identify frequent themes and consolidate themes that are similar. According to Haines III and St-Onge (2015), during this process, the researcher places all data with the same coding category together and rearranges the data to match the identified categories. The fourth stage of the data analysis process included the checking of the main themes against the transcripts from the interviews to develop the main themes. The themes were coded and included comments from the notes taken during the interview process. The last stage of the process included the development of critical elements retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover in their organizations based on the emerging themes and patterns from the analysis (Zheng, Guo, Dong, & Owens, 2015). According to Haines and St-Onge, this process includes discussions on the data analysis findings.

The data analysis process of this study included themes that emerged from the data collection process. The conceptual theme of this preprocessed study guided the initial analysis and coding to include links, fit, and sacrifice (Mitchell et al., 2001; Yin, 2014). I continued to research literature relevant to the study to find new information that provides insight into themes for best practices by retail sector leaders as the information relates to strategies used to decrease employee turnover in their organizations into the data analysis process.

Yazan (2015) suggested that the researcher should ensure the conceptual framework of a study aligns with the methodology and the literature. The conceptual framework that forms the basis for this study was the job embeddedness theory. The study includes a discussion of the results of data analysis in the view of job embeddedness theory. I included the transcription,

review, and coding of all interviews. In reviewing and transcribing the data, it provided significant insight into the coding and data analysis process. Thomas (2017) suggested that researchers gain an in-depth description of a phenomenon through direct involvement in the data analysis process.

Analyzing data for this study provided an opportunity to explore the strategies that retail sector leaders use in decreasing employee turnover in their organizations through a clear representation of the views of study participants. Job embeddedness theory formed the framework for the analysis of the data in this study (Mitchell et al., 2001; Yin, 2018). Themes were developed through the dimensions of the job embeddedness theory that included links, fit, and sacrifice.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are standards used traditionally to judge the quality of research (Gringeri, Barusch, & Cambron, 2013). According to Frels and Onwuegbuzie (2013), the design and data of a research study should support the ability to ensure findings from the study.

Humphry and Heldsinger (2014) expressed the opinion that different methods could enhance the reliability of studies, including using software to analyze interviews, member checking, and the use of different sources of data. Morse (2015) suggested that researchers must address the dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability of qualitative studies to ensure reliability and validity.

Dependability

In qualitative studies, dependability refers to the consistency of the responses from the study participants regarding the phenomenon (Elo et al., 2014). Harvey (2015) suggested that

researchers should use dependability to ensure the reliability of qualitative research. Harvey suggested that using triangulation and additional data sources for research data interpretation provides dependable results. In this study, the standard interview protocol in Appendix A, member checking, and observational notes were used for reliability. Morse (2015) suggested that member checking is the preferred data validation method in a qualitative study. Yin (2018) recommended member checking as a method qualitative researcher should use for data validation over transcript review whenever possible. Member checking the data analysis enhanced the reliability of this study (Leung, 2015).

Notes taken during the interviews served as an additional source of information to reflect the body language and nonverbal cues expressed by the participants during the interview process (Gibbons, 2015). The standard interview process used in this study, included member checking, and the observational notes and they enhanced the validity and dependability of the findings of this study.

Creditability

Credibility in research refers to the level of trust other researchers and individuals have in the findings of a study (Nyhan, 2015). Singh (2014) suggested that researcher's bias in the findings of a study reduces when the study is credible. Morse (2015) recommended member checking as an appropriate method that researchers should use to ensure that the study participants believe the findings of the study. Member checking occurred after interviewing the study participants. Participants were provided the opportunity to review the statements they made, enduring the interviews to provide clarification and validation of the themes that emerge from the interviews. Following this process enhanced the credibility of the study.

Transferability

Transferability in research refers to the degree in which the findings of the research can be transferred or applied to other areas beyond the boundaries of the study (Boffa, Moules, Mayan, & Cowie, 2013). The provision of a detailed research context by researchers enhances the transferability of research findings (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Future researchers should be able to replicate the methods and findings of a study (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013).

Confirmability

Confidentiality refers to the degree to which the findings of a qualitative study is verifiable by other researchers (Moon, Brewer, Hanuchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). Confirmability in qualitative studies supports the validity and objectivity of the findings (Morse, 2015). Validity assures that the research is accurate and measures the appropriateness of the research questions (Singh, 2014). Maintaining objectivity, coupled with a consistent approach, keeps personal bias from study analysis (Moon et al., 2016). A combination of the interview data, member checking and a complete documentation process consistent with all study participants supports conformity (Harvey, 2015). In qualitative research, scholars use member checking to promote conformity (Fusch & Ness, 2015). This study results reflect the participant's viewpoints presented through a transparent and consistent process.

Data Saturation

Improving validity in qualitative research involves data saturation (Yin, 2018). Researchers can achieve data saturation by interviewing participants until engaged five participants in a detailed discussion on strategies retail sector leaders use in decreasing employee turnover in their organizations. Data saturation occurred when additional interviews of the initial

participants or data collection yielded no new information (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data saturation can occur when a researcher uses more than 10 or as few as two participants (Fusch & Ness, 2015). A population of five participants was used for this study. Interviews were conducted until no new information or theme emerged (Yin, 2014). Conducting member checking ensured that themes emerge for describing the current strategies used by retail sector leaders in decreasing employee turnover (Morse, 2015; Peake Andrasik et al., 2014).

Transition and Summary

Section 2 of this study contain the purpose statement and includes exploration of the roles, and relationships of the researcher. section 2 emphasized ethics and the data collection process. There was a discussion on the study participants, population. Furthermore, the section contained a detailed description of the data collection instrument, techniques, organization, and analysis of data with an explanation of the research process. An outline of the four aspects of reliability and validity as they apply to the study was be provided. In Section 3, the findings of the study will be presented with a detailed description of the analysis process. Section 3 includes discussion of the study results, as well as the application for professional practice and positive social change. Key findings of the study and recommendation for future research will also be presented in Section 3.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that some retail sector leaders in the Upstate region of New York use to decrease employee turnover. I gathered data by conducting semistructured, telephone interviews with five retail sector leaders. The interview questions were open ended. In addition to the interviews, I reviewed organization records provided by some of retail sector leaders to help achieve data triangulation. The interviews each lasted for from 50 to 60 minutes and were scheduled at a time preferred by the participants. During the telephone interviews, participants supplied ideas about and insights into strategies they have successfully used in decreasing employee turnover.

After conducting the interviews, I transcribed each of the interviews by paper and pen into a Microsoft Word document. Then, I uploaded the transcripts into NVivo v12 software to help me create codes, find themes, and analyze the data. The participants' identities were concealed by replacing their names in the transcript and analysis of data with P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5. For member checking, I prepared summaries of my interpretation of the participants' responses during the interviews and sent them to each of the participants to review to ensure the accuracy of my analysis. Section 3 includes the presentation of findings, applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, and recommendations for further research. I conclude Section 3 with my reflections and research study conclusions.

Presentation of the Findings

I conducted semistructured interviews to gain insight into the strategies retail sector leaders have successfully used in decreasing employee turnover in their organizations. To gain a

better understanding of strategies, I framed the study using Mitchell et al.'s (2001) job embeddedness theory. Based on analysis of the data gathered, the following four major themes emerged: (a) compensation; (b) leadership communication; (c) training; and (d) rewards, recognition, and praise.

Theme 1: Compensation

Compensation is vital in decreasing employee turnover (Syahreza, Lumbanraja, Dalimunthe, & Absah, 2017). All the participants noted that financial compensation is a factor in employee turnover. P2 highlighted that the duties and responsibilities of the retail sector leader have become more challenging and demanding with COVID-19. P2 stated, "while the wages I pay my employees are comparable with those within the retail sector, the wages are also higher than those offered for less stressful duties and nonessential positions." All five participants interviewed for this study noted that compensation helps employees to be happy and committed to their organizations. According to Pouramini and Fayyazi (2015), when employees do not receive wages they consider being fair, their motivation and commitment to their employer decrease.

As a theme in this study, compensation aligns with Mitchell et al.'s (2001) job embeddedness theory in that the perceived compatibility between employees' characteristics and the conditions of their work environment affects employees' willingness to remain in an organization. P3 stated that retail employees stay with their store because of the income generated to meet their financial obligations. According to P4 Some employees take positions within the retail sector because of the wages and not because they want to work in the retail sector. Retail employees sometimes leave their employers because of wages (Kossivi, Xu, & Kalgora, 2016). P1 stated, "I pay all my employees very well. Good compensation makes them remain here, and

they give their very best to my company. I go far and above what other stores do.” P1 further reported that “one way to decrease employee turnover is to offer the employees the pay that is above what the next retail outlet is paying. Pay them well, and they will stay with you for a long time.” P2 reported that “employees are looking for a package that comes with some basic benefits that translates into some form of compensation.” P1 and P2 both agreed that employees would stay with the employer if they had a compensation package that was not comparable to those retail stores in their store’s vicinity.

P4 reported that it is impossible to pay their employees what they are worth because they go above the call of duty when dealing with customers. P4 stated, “Without their relationship with customers, COVID-19 would have closed us down.” According to P4, “I continue to do everything to make sure my employees are well taken care of because they are like my family members.”

The strategies mentioned by P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 are in agreement with the views of Labrague et al. (2018) that employees tend to stay with their employers when wages are competitive. Barrick et al. (2015) supported this view as well stating that supplying excellent and competitive wages plays a significant role in decreasing employee turnover in retail organizations. According to P4, management tries to aid employees in any way possible. For example, employees who need quick cash can receive money before their payday. P5 reported that some of the store’s employees receive credit from the store to buy things that they need. P1, P2, and P3 said that sometimes they provide lunch for their employees who do not have money to buy lunch, especially on off pay period weeks as their employees get paid every 2 weeks. P2 noted that “it is all part of the wage and compensation unwritten package.”

Exit interviews are essential to P4. They are conducted whenever an employee leaves the employment of the store. Based on the exit interviews conducted, P4 reported that more than half of the employees that quit the organization leave because a retail organization adjacent to their company is paying more. According to P4, “pay has a significant role in an employee’s decision to leave an organization.” P5 noted that “Giving employees competitive wages and incentives can boost their morale and make them want to give the employer everything they have.” P1 further reported,

The retail sector is very competitive, and you need to be smart with the decisions on how you pay your employees. I am always trying to find out what the next person is paying so I can match them. I also use all methods to supply other benefits to my employees. They stay with me because of the money and helps them get from me. However, sometimes, I lose them to other retail store owners. I always ask them what they want and try to motivate them in many ways. I try to find out what they like and try to provide better incentives based on what they like.

Providing retail employees with satisfactory wages, benefits, and a supportive work environment could decrease employee turnover in organizations (Barrick et al. 2015). All participants mentioned pay as an incentive for retention of employees and stressed the need to develop strategies for decreasing employee turnover with wage enhancement as a critical part but not the most desired. All participants reported that they implemented different approaches that included supplying other financial incentives like a holiday bonus, birthday bonus, and years of service bonus to keep their employees. Retail sector leaders whose organizations are financially viable should use a variety of compensation strategies to decrease employee turnover.

Theme 2: Leadership Communication

Communication by organizational leaders plays a crucial role in decreasing employee turnover in organizations (Syahreza, Lumbanraja, Dalimunthe, & Absah, 2017). P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 reported that they used leadership communication to decrease employee turnover. P1 and P2 said “if the communication is coming from you as the leader of the team, everyone takes it seriously, and they appreciate you for communicating with them.” P4 and P5 reported that they had used an open-door policy to enhance open communication in their organizations. P4 noted that “it does not cost you too much to communicate, but everyone feels comfortable and accepted when you let them know what is going on and when you define your expectations by communicating them.” According to Vladuteseu (2015), communication from an organizational leader could supply clues for employee turnover and assist leaders in developing strategies that could decrease employee turnover. All participants noted the importance of having an open dialogue with employees. P1 stated that “I meet with my employees daily, of course with social distancing.” P2 indicated that,

because I communicate with all my employees every day, I have a good and personal relationship with them, and I know how they feel. The problems they might be having, and they remain with me because of that relationship. Having a good relationship with your employees is important.

Adil and Awais (2016) said that interpersonal relationships with employees could help decrease employee turnover, which is consistent with Patel and Hamlin’s (2015) recommendation for organizational leaders to develop enhanced open-door policies when it comes to communicating with employees. P4 and P5 noted that providing clear directions to employees could help make the employee feel comfortable and valued by the organization. P2 has a written

policy on face-to-face communication and noted that the written policy has been very effective in decreasing employee turnover in our organization. P2 further added,

Even with computers and social media, I talk to my employees. I sit down with them at least once a week, and we discuss issues about their work. Sometimes we discuss other things away from work; I like doing that because employees sometimes have problems that they would like to speak to discuss.

P3 noted that there is a system in place at the organization where employees can anonymously leave feedback on the operations of the organization. P4 stated, "I treat them like members of my family and allow them to discuss issues with me privately without their names mentioned. I address the work-related issues with everyone in public." P5 reported that there are policies and procedures on communication expectations, and the policy and procedures are shared with every employee. P5 shared that all conversations with employees are documented, explaining:

I keep notes during my conversation with my employees. Sometimes, I make it very formal, and I share those notes with them to make sure we are all on the same page. My employees stay with me because they know I am straight forward with my communication.

P1 stated, "I spend a lot of time communicating with employees and that the communication starts from the beginning of the day. The communication has produced significant results by making the organization a place that employees enjoy." P1 noted that one of the strategies the organization has used over the years to decrease employee turnover has been to have open and communication that is effective with the employees. P3 postulated that communication is not only between employees and leaders of the organization but that the

discussion is also encouraged between employees. P3 holds weekly staff meetings and goes around the room, asking employees questions, adding that:

I use the opportunity of a general staff meeting to get input from all the employees and to get to know them. Sometimes you get to know employees with the type of questions they ask during staff meetings. Some of them are good, and they are interested in the organization.

P4 and P5 reported that effective leadership communication could decrease employee turnover if communication is done promptly and honestly. P4 noted that “employees know when you are not honest, they look at you funny.” P5 reported that “you have to be real and tell them what you need to tell them looking at their faces.” P4 went on to state that “I do not hide behind the e-mail, I come on the floor and work with everyone, and I communicate with them while on the floor.”

Patel and Hamlin (2015) advocated effective communication between leaders and their employees. They found that organizational leaders who had open-door policies and interacted with their employees daily decreased employee turnover in their organizations. Supporting Patel and Hamlin's findings, Lu et al.'s (2016) results showed it is essential to involve employees when developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover in organizations. Communicating organizational goals and objectives to employees is one way that organizational leaders can decrease turnover among their employees (Dubey et al., 2016). Ineffective communication from an organizational leader could result in feelings of diminished organizational trust, which are precursors to instances of employee turnover (Marasi et al., 2016). When organizational leaders communicate effectively with their employees, they get ideas from employees and the views and

ideas they receive from employees could positively affect the organization (Van De Voorde & Beijer, 2014).

Theme 2 of leadership communication aligns with the fit, link, and sacrifice of job embeddedness theory. Communication promotes a level of connection between an employee and the organization and enhances the relationship between the leader and their employees. Effective communication between leaders and their employees is one of the most effective strategies for decreasing employee turnover (Lu et al., 2016). Employees comply at a higher rate when they are involved in all work and when the employer seeks their input in the decision-making process (Deery & Jago, 2015). All the participants agreed that leadership communication is essential in developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover. All study participants indicated that they developed a better relationship with their employees when they had an open-door communication policy. Organizational leaders may enhance trust and transparency among their employees by supplying transparent and effective communication (Qazi et al., 2015).

Relationship between employees and their supervisors enhances the effectiveness of an employee's link to an organization (Marasi et al., 2016). The formal and informal relationships that employees have with other employees within their organization are essential in developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover (Allen et al., 2016). The participants in this study communicated the organizational goals to employees regularly. Nicholas et al. (2016) suggested that employees who fit into the mission and vision of their organizations become tied to the organization and have a lower probability of leaving the employer. Additionally, all study participants indicated that the employees felt comfortable with management when the communication came from the leaders of the organization. Organizational leaders play significant

roles in determining employees' perceptions of sacrifice and what they might lose if they were to leave the employer (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2017).

Theme 3. Training and Advancement Opportunities

The third theme that appeared from the data collected was training and advancement opportunities. Bush (2017) suggested that one-way organizational leaders can decrease employee turnover is by providing employees training relevant to their jobs. P1 reported:

We have what we call Training Tuesday. It supplies us the opportunity to provide all our employees training that is relevant to their work. We have been able to reduce employee turnover because of the comprehensive training that is provided by our organization. Everyone could move up if they are trained.

P2 noted that training starts as soon as the employee is hired and further stressed "without training, the employee does not know better." P3 pointed out that the organization spent the past 3 weeks supplying training to all employees as the new norm requires curbside pickup. P2 and P3 contended that training employees has been effective in decreasing employee turnover in their organization and has given employees advancement opportunities. The literature discussed in Section 1 supports this. For instance, Zhang et al. (2013) suggested that the high rate of employee turnover in the organizations could be because of a lack of advancement opportunities in the sector, inadequate training for employees, and reduced employee compensation packages. P4 noted that training enhances skills and develops employees. P4 further noted,

We are in a new world; things must change, and we must change the retail sector with all the changes around us. You cannot survive the changes if you do not bring your

employees with you, and your competitors know your employees. Customers appreciate a knowledgeable workforce. We must provide training for our employees.

P5 noted that there are many advantages to training new employees. The organization ensures that all employees have a training manual, and the employees receive training weekly. All new employees receive before they start work. P5 reported that the organization has a comprehensive new employee training program that covers organizational policies, mission, and vision. A review of available organizational documents indicated that the organization provides a 2-week orientation program for all new employees. P5 further reported, "Sometimes, I bring people from the other organizations to come here and conduct training because sometimes it is better for them to hear from others than my training staff." According to P5, the organization invests in training because training present staff costs less than to train new employees. The information provided by P5 is consistent with the literature in Section 1. There is a cost for training a new employee when an employee leaves an organization, and new employees make mistakes that could affect productivity (Crome, Shaw, & Baillie, 2016).

All the participants noted that training employees lead to skill enhancement and job satisfaction. According to P5, "We provide training to all our employees, including managers, and we make sure it begins from the day they are employed." P5 noted that the organization keeps a training grid, and every employee must complete a certain number of training hours a year. Annual performance reviews are tied to employee training because the organization focuses on a well-trained workforce. P5 further noted that "a workforce that is not trained is a time bomb waiting to explode." P3, P4, and P5 all stressed the importance of training and educating retail employees and the concept of employee professional growth within the retail sector, which had effectively decreased employee turnover. P4 noted,

We instituted a comprehensive onboarding system a few years back, and that system has become very useful in the last few months. The onboarding system was based on a specific computer program that makes all employees take the training online at their own time, and they get paid for the training. The flexibility of employee training has been effective in decreasing employee turnover.

The views expressed by P4 are supported by Jang, Kim, and Yoo (2017) who said that having training opportunities for improvement not only helps employees to be competitive, but it also helps to decrease employee turnover. P1, P2, P3, P4, P5 mentioned that they conduct in-house training for all their employees. P1 reported, "another Senior Manager or I do this training, and they provide opportunities for skill development and prepare our employees for challenges ahead in the industry like we just had." P2 and P3 noted that in-house training has been beneficial. According to P3, the organization also provides online training through a portal for some of its employees. P1 and P2 said that the on-the-job training as one way to decrease employee turnover in their organization because the training serves as a means of empowerment to their employees. A review of P3's organizational documents revealed that the organization has a well-organized training program with curriculum and models. All employees sign a sheet after all training. P3 noted that the training was mandatory, and all employees need to attend all sessions.

P5 reported that the organization developed a program called The Rising Star Training Program for employees interested in advancing in the organization. According to P5, many employees come into the organization; they take advantage of the training opportunities offered and are promoted to higher positions within the organization. P5 stated, "We provide all our employees with training and career advancement, and they remain with us." According to P5, the

organization developed a tuition reimbursement program that enables employees to enhance their skills in many areas by taking college classes. After the college classes, the employees stay with the organization for a specified period. P1, P2, P3, and P4 all emphasized the importance of employee training and workplace professional advancement in decreasing employee turnover. P1 stated, “we develop our employees so that they can be future leaders of our organization.” P2 stated, “A workforce that is trained is a workforce that stays with the organization.” P3 stated, “when you train your employees, they grow with you, and they are attached to your organization.” The literature in Section 1 supports this idea. For example, Xu (2013) suggested that the high rate of employee turnover in the organizations could be because of a lack of advancement opportunities in the sector, inadequate training for employees, and reduced employee compensation packages.

The theory of job embeddedness aligns with the responses of all the participants about training and advancement opportunities. Embedded employees may have a chance to develop the skills they need to advance professionally within an organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). An employee with a job fit may have better opportunities to develop their skills through the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). Employee training and advancement strategies have been effective in decreasing employee turnover in retail organizations.

Theme 4: Reward and Recognition

The interview revealed that P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 used giving rewards as a strategy for decreasing employee turnover. As discussed in Section 1, employers who offered monetary rewards to their employees received a higher level of loyalty and commitment from the employees, and this resulted in decreased employee turnover (Alyuninnisa & Saptoto, 2015). Gallus and Frey (2016) postulated that formal and informal reward programs are essential in

developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Organizational leaders who rewarded their employees for good work and meeting targets also decreased employee turnover (Gigliotti & Ruben, 2017). P1 views the role as an organizer and believes leaders should pay managers who should reward employees for good work at all times. P1 implemented an employee of the month program in the organization. The employee of the month program is a program that recognizes employees for the excellent work they do. According to P1, the employees of the month get a gift card and a certificate on the wall for everyone to see, including the customers. P1 further stated, “I found this simple system to be very rewarding, the employees love it, and we have a formal ceremony here at the organization to recognize them.” P1 shared that other employees choose the employee of the month through a vote, and the picture of the employee is taken and put up on the wall of the entrance to the organization. P1 stated the importance of recognizing people that do a good job. P1 further noted

Some of the employees are young just graduated from college, and this is their first real job, so they need to be recognized when they do a good job. They see their picture on the wall and think of that when they think of leaving the organization.

P2 highlighted the importance of rewarding and recognizing retail sector employees. P2 noted, “I recognize my employees every day, and they come out every day to work for the organization. As essential employees during these difficult times, they come out to work, and I thank them every day.” P2 acknowledged that working in the retail sector could be stressful, especially when dealing with customers. P2 stressed that retail sector leaders must make it a duty to thank their employees. P2 emphasized that employees should be acknowledged for the excellent work that they do, and they should be rewarded in different ways.

P3 reported that working in the retail sector sometimes feels like a thankless job because of the nature of the sector. Finding simple ways to say *thank you* to employees is important. P3 further reported, “It does not cost you money to say it. Look at them in the face and say, *thank you*.” P3 added that sometimes, I would call the employees on their cell phone after work and express my thanks to them for the excellent work they did during the day. P3 reported, I started a program at my organization 10 years ago called Gratitude Thursday. Gratitude Thursday is when all the top leaders of the organization walk around and express gratitude to all employees; and one employee is recognized during this one-hour ceremony. Other employees can acknowledge and thank fellow employees who helped them fulfill their goals for the week. P3 stated,

Sometimes, it is the recognition employees get from their colleagues that is more important to the employees, but the recognition from their manager means a lot to them. Employees want to feel appreciated and recognized all the time. You must give it to them because they deserve it.

P4 contended that employees expect to be recognized and rewarded by their leaders “it is essential to them.” According to P4, recognition and reward have been effective in decreasing employee turnover in their organization. Employees appreciate you when you reward them P4 noted.

P5 reported that employees need to be motivated, and recognition and rewards motivate employees to work hard and remain with an organization. P5 said that different ways to recognize employees are essential. P5 said, “the organization has a suggestion box for customers to leave messages, and there is a toll-free number for customers to call to leave remarks about services they have received from their employees.” Employees that get written recommendations from customers sometimes get rewarded with money, gift cards, a day off with pay. P5 finds that

employees are very grateful when they are recognized and want to continue doing good things. P5 said, “employees leave early, and I pay them for the entire shift as a reward.” P5 reported, “sometimes, they will perform extraordinary duties, and they will ask the customer to call management to tell management what they did so that they will be recognized and rewarded.” P5 touted the recognition program in the organization and stressed that the program has been effective in decreasing employee turnover in the organization. A review of organizational documents reveals that the organization has a written recognition and reward program that is left to leadership discretion.

As discussed in Section 1, when organizational leaders reward employees for their skills and dedication, employee turnover can be decreased (Prouska, Psychogios, & Rexhepi, 2016; Siyanbola & Gilman, 2017). Employers who offer monetary rewards to their employees received a higher level of loyalty and commitment from the employees, and that results in decreased employee turnover (Ayuninnisa & Saptoto, 2015). Retail organizational leaders may decrease employee turnover in their organization by developing strategies that reward and recognize employee performance and accomplishments.

Theme 4 supports the three dimensions of the job embeddedness theory. Organizational leaders may create a positive environment in their organization by developing rewards and recognition programs and creating an environment that recognizes employee performance through recognition and awards. Employees may feel more positive, appreciated, and productive in a work environment that understands their work and rewards them. Kossivi and Kalgora (2016) postulated that the more valued and appreciated employees feel, the more likely they will set up their link to a perceived sacrifice, which may lead to employee embeddedness.

Theme 4 supports the dimensions of job embeddedness. Retail organizational leaders may use employee recognition and appreciation programs to create a positive and productive work environment. When employees feel valued, the more likely they will feel linked to the organization (Kossivi, Xu, & Kalgora, 2016).

Applications to Professional Practice

The application of this study to professional practice includes offering retail sector leaders with strategies that have been effective in decreasing employee turnover. There is a need for retail sector leaders to understand the strategies that have been effective in decreasing employee turnover. Employee turnover is one of the significant problems retail sector leaders contend with regularly because of the cost associated with the replacement and training of new employees (Hur, 2013). Mekraz and Raghava (2016) postulated that an increase in employee turnover affects the retail sector leaders in delivering quality services.

Findings from this study add to the existing body of knowledge detailing the importance of developing policies that enhance the factors that contribute to decreasing employee turnover. Additionally, consistent with the findings of Qazi et al. (2015), organizational leaders need to develop internal control measures that will focus on strategies that decrease the need for an employee to leave the employer. Consistent with the Lu et al.'s (2016) proposal, findings from this study reveal the need for organizational leaders to support their employees by providing growth and reward opportunities, including adequate compensation. Furthermore, the results of this study are consistent with Labrague et al. (2018) research where findings show that reward is a crucial component in developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Like the results presented in this study, Patel and Hamlin (2015) found that organizational leaders who had open-door policies and interacted with their employees' daily decreased employee turnover in their

organizations. Brewster and Brauer (2016) was of the opinion effective communication depends on two people talking to one another, organizational leaders should engage their employees to maximize flow of communication. Tanius, Pheng, Kasim, and Yulia (2017) reported that when organizational leaders supply feedback to their employees, they are engaging them in positive communication strategies.

Furthermore, findings from this study add to the existing body of knowledge because it relates to the significance of developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover in organizations. Akunda, Chen, and Gikiri's (2018) postulated that carefully designed policies that are aimed at decreasing turnover in organizations are effective in decreasing turnover in organizations. De Vito, Brown, Bannister, Cianci, and Mujtaba (2018) emphasized the importance of communication between organizational leaders and their employees in the development of strategies for decreasing employee turnover. Furthermore, consistent with Antoni, Baeten, Perkins, Shaw, and Vartiainen's (2017) research, this study shows that appreciating employees is one of the critical components in developing strategies for employee turnover.

Retail sector leaders who develop training and advancement programs may decrease turnover, which is consistent with the findings of this study. Bush (2017) suggested that one-way organizational leaders can decrease employee turnover is by providing employees training relevant to their jobs. The significance of training and advancement opportunities, as reflected by comments from study participants, is consistent and may assist retail sector professionals as a strategy for decreasing turnover in their organizations.

Although this study focused on a small number of retail organizational leaders in Upstate New York, findings related to strategies to decrease employee turnover in the retail sector may be

transferable. This study's professional implication is to provide retail sector leaders with strategies they may use to use actionable strategies for decreasing employee turnover and increase productivity and financial sustainability.

Implications for Social Change

The retail sector plays an essential role in economic development, the social and economic welfare of communities, and new employment opportunities in communities. This is due, in part, to the development of strategies that decrease employee turnover in the retail sector. Decreasing employee turnover is a fundamental part of the retail sector that affects the financial sustainability of the sector. This qualitative multiple case study is focused on retail sector leaders who have developed strategies for decreasing employee turnover. This studies implications for positive social change may include higher community employment, increases in the standard of living within the community, and supply communities the ability to generate more tax dollars for social and community programs.

Retail sector organizations supply employment in communities. Community members with sustainable employment may be able to live a more financially secure and stable life, increasing their standard of living. Additionally, the continued operation of retail organizations in communities generates more tax dollars that contribute to the growth of the local economy. Local government authorities may use tax revenue received from retail organizations to supply services to communities and improve community facilities.

Organizational leaders across the retail sector may employ the strategies named in this study to decrease employee turnover in their organizations. For example, compensating employees more for the work they do may allow them to afford the basic needs of their families. Mehmoosh and Jouzaryan (2016) postulated that leaders' reactions to employee turnover could

lead to unemployment and slow the economy. The knowledge of strategies for decreasing employee turnover in retail organizations may help retail sector leaders to support social change initiatives in their communities.

Recommendations for Action

The findings and recommendations from this inquiry may supply leaders of the retail sector the knowledge and ability to implement strategies to decrease employee turnover. By applying the procedures shared by the participants, other retail sector leaders may be able to decrease employee turnover, which might improve their productivity and sustainability and enhance their financial viability. I have four recommendations for actions that may help retail sector leaders reduce employee turnover: (a) competitive compensation and benefits, (b) leadership communication, (c) training and advancement opportunities, and (d) reward and recognition.

Compensation and Benefits

Retail sector organizational leaders should motivate their employees by offering a compensation package that may enhance their satisfaction and enhance employee loyalty to the organization. Solaja et al. (2016) postulated that morale and employee compensation were essential in decreasing employee turnover in organizations. When wages are competitive with other sectors, retail employees tend to remain with their employers (Labrague et al., 2018). Wages are essential to employees; employees want compensation for the work that they do; however, in the long term, employees are more interested in the things that help them feel respected and recognized. When an employee is happy with their compensation package, their tendency to leave the employer is low.

Enhancing the Flow of Communication

Patel and Hamlin (2015) found that organizational leaders who had open-door policies and interacted with their employees daily decreased employee turnover in their organizations. Patel and Hamlin suggested leaders and their employee's need effective communication between them. Retail sector leaders should implement leadership communication practices that will enhance the flow of communication between leaders and their employees to decrease employee turnover. Supportive administrators reduce employees' stress by supplying continuous guidance and feedback to their followers (Buzeti, Klun, & Stare, 2016). Effective communication provides leaders the opportunity to guide employees relative to the organizational goals, set basis expectations to the employees, and enforce organizational policies.

Training and Advancement Opportunities

Training and advancement opportunities may help employees understand their duties and leadership expectations. Retail sector organization leaders should develop training and advancement opportunities for their employees that focus on skill enhancement. Retail sector leaders should try to understand their employees' skill needs, especially for professional advancement. Bush (2017) suggested that organizational leaders should develop strategies that include providing adequate training programs for employees so that they are competent in performing their duties for decreasing employee turnover.

Designing a Reward and Recognition

Retail sector leaders should implement employee rewards and recognition programs. Showing employees that they are appreciated and valued using intrinsic and extrinsic means is an investment that leaders should make for their employees that may decrease employee turnover. Rewarding employees for their performance may lead to a boost in morale and increase organizational performance and productivity. Organizational leaders who rewarded their employees for good work and meeting organizational goals also decreased employee turnover (Gigliotti & Ruben, 2017; Lu et al., 2016; Taneja, Sewell, & Odom, 2015). When organizational leaders reward employees for their skills and dedication, employee turnover can be decreased (Prouska, Psychogios, & Rexhepi, 2016; Siyanbola & Gilman, 2017). All the participants in this study implemented different reward programs based on situations unique to their employees. Retail sector leaders should use all the means available to them and their organizations to develop a reward and recognition program that is culturally appropriate for their organization.

To promote the distribution of the findings of this study, the dissemination of this research will occur through several methods. This study will be available through the ProQuest/UMI dissertation database for future scholars and others. I will discuss the findings of

this study with other business leaders in business forums, organizational training programs, and other leadership forums. I will also write articles for publication in entrepreneurial magazines.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore strategies retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover. The study's findings shed light on some of the measures the participants have used to address employee turnover issues. This study included three principle limitations: the first limitation of this study is that the study primarily focused on strategies that only retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover. The second limitation is that I sought voluntary participation from individuals who identified themselves as sector leaders of retail organizations. The third limitation was that the data collected for the study came from interviews, which required honesty from the study participants. From these limitations, further research could be conducted in other industries, random selection of leaders, and adding into the data collection could be observations of the workplace. Decreasing employee turnover is a critical part of financial sustainability in retail organizations. Further research may extend to the impact of employee turnover in profit-making, the cost of onboarding new employees, and the impact of turnover on organizational productivity. Additionally, further research could focus on organizational documents, selection of participants based on recommendations from organizations, and a different method of data collection.

Reflections

The Walden University Doctor of Business Administration Program has been very challenging but has been an exciting experience in many ways. This process pushed me to the limits, and at times, I do not know how I completed the journey. During the program, I had the opportunity to study under the direction of many experienced scholars, one of whom was Dr.

Kate Andrews, my committee chair. Having the opportunity to work with Dr. Andrews is an experience that will remain with me forever. Dr. Andrews was committed to my success and did whatever it took to pull me along, even when it was difficult to do so. My initial driving force for pursuing a doctoral degree was to be an example to my children and to show them that even at my age, everything was still possible and that if I can finish anything I set my mind to do, they too can be like me. I chose to research the strategies that retail sector leaders used to decrease employee turnover in their organizations to understand the operations in retail organizations. Participants of this multiple qualitative study supplied knowledge and understanding of the strategies they have successfully used in their organizations to decrease employee turnover. It was initially difficult to find retail sector leaders who were willing to take part in this study, but I continued to seek participants. I appreciate those who volunteered to take part in this study.

During the program, I attended two academic residences and had the opportunity to visit Paris during one of the residences with my family. I met with some professionals and colleagues, some of whom are still my friends to date and will remain my friends forever. The weekly discussions during the program provided me an opportunity to share my view on a variety of issues and to network with colleagues around the world.

Despite the variety of views shared by the participants on the phenomenon, the findings of the study reveal that there are similarities in methods used to decrease employee turnover. Thus, developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover in the retail sector is essential for business sustainability. My understanding of strategies for decreasing employee turnover in the retail sector will help me address the issues I face in leadership positions.

Conclusion

Employee turnover has adverse effects on organizations (Stamp & Thoren, 2016). While there are several direct and indirect consequences, organizations lose billions of dollars annually because of employee turnover (McManus & Mosca, 2015). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies retail sector leaders from the Upstate region of New York in the United States use to decrease employee turnover. I formed my argument on the job embeddedness theory. I used the theory to explore why retail employees remain in their organization and how retail sector leaders decrease employee turnover. Retail sector leaders shared with me the strategies they have successfully used in decreasing turnover. As the retail sector is an essential sector that is mostly community-based and people-centered, findings from this study confirm the need for retail organizational leaders to implement policies and procedures that ensure that the organization's requirements are aligned with the priorities of the organization. The findings from this study show the need for a diversified approach to developing strategies for decreasing employee turnover with compensation, leadership communication, training, and advancement opportunities.

Employee turnover is an essential function of business operations. Still, leaders must look to understand the reasons for turnover and develop strategies for decreasing turnover to ensure the financial stability of their organizations. Retail sector leaders must develop strategies that decrease employee turnover. Developing and implementing strategies for decreasing employee turnover may not only decrease employee turnover but may also boost the financial viability of retail organizations.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Introducing the Interview

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. I appreciate the fact that you signed the Informed Consent Form that was given to you. During the process, please feel free to ask me any questions. Take your time to clarify any issue that you feel needs clarification. This interview will take 1 hour, and I will focus primarily on the questions.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore strategies retail sector leaders use to decrease employee turnover. The population for this study will consist of five retail sector leaders from retail organizations in the Upstate region of New York. These retail stores' leaders demonstrated successful experience in reducing employee turnover. The findings from this study could contribute to social change by providing retail sector leaders with additional knowledge about how to decrease employee turnover. Decreasing employee turnover could positively benefit retail leaders' financial outcomes and promote financial well-being for families and communities.

Interview Questions

1. What strategies did you implement to decrease employee turnover in your organization?
2. How did you gather the information you used to decrease employee turnover?
3. What were some of the critical barriers your organization faced when implementing strategies for decreasing employee turnover?
4. How did you address the key barriers to implementing strategies to decrease employee turnover?

5. What strategies were not successful in decreasing employee turnover in your organization?
6. What strategies were most effective in decreasing employee turnover?
7. What other information would you like to share regarding strategies for decreasing employee turnover?

Wrap Up Interview

This concludes the interview process. Thank you again for your participation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail at Mathias.Oni-Eseleh@Waldenu.edu I will be in contact with you shortly regarding a follow-up to this interview. I will provide you with a summary of the interview for your review, to ensure I have recorded your responses appropriately and accurately. Our follow-up conversation will allow you to clarify any information and add any additional information you may consider to be relevant to the interview.

Request Secondary Documents

Before finalizing our meeting today, are you able to produce any documents from your company? Documents that could be useful include, mission and vision statements, employee policy and procedure handbook, training manual, meeting minutes, or any other document pertaining to employee turnover. These documents will be used for secondary data.