2021

Strategies for Mitigating Voluntary Employee Turnover in Small Businesses

Eric Regneco Gant
Walden University

<u>Walden University</u>

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Eric R. Gant

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Laura Thompson, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Matthew Knight, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. William Stokes, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2021

Abstract

Strategies for Mitigating Voluntary Employee Turnover in Small Businesses

by

Eric R. Gant

MS, Strayer University, 2018

BBA, African Methodist Episcopal University, 2005

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

October 2021

Abstract

Voluntary employee turnover costs businesses significant resources in training and recruitment. An employee's voluntary turnover could cost small business owners $3,000 to $10,000 in training and recruitment costs and reduce company performance, profitability, and competitive advantage. Grounded in Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation, the purpose of this multiple case study was to explore strategies that owners of small businesses in the eastern United States use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. Data were collected from semistructured telephone interviews with five small business owners with at least three years of experience mitigating voluntary employee turnover. Data were analyzed using Yin's five-step approach. Three themes emerged: (a) training and development, (b) open communication, and (c) compensation and rewards. A key recommendation is for owners of small businesses to implement monetary and nonmonetary compensation programs to attract and retain employees. Positive social change implications include contributing to local communities' financial stability by providing jobs, community development projects, and economic support for families and community dwellers.

Strategies for Mitigating Voluntary Employee Turnover in Small Businesses

by

Eric R. Gant

MS, Strayer University, 2018

BBA, African Methodist Episcopal University, 2005

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

October 2021

Dedication

I am dedicating this study to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who granted me the fortitude and wisdom to complete this milestone. I also want to dedicate this study to my darling wife, Evelyn M. C. Gant, who has been my inspiration and biggest fan. I also want to dedicate this study to my children, Reglisa, Regneco, and Raabi, who often understood my absence from the family to complete an assignment or to travel for residencies. I would not have made it without the support of family members and friends who encouraged me to keep pressing forward.

Acknowledgments

Completing a doctoral degree is a journey that is accomplished with the help of many actors. First, I would like to thank my wife and children for allowing me to embark on this journey. I also thank Walden University for the quality education I received over the years. Specifically, I want to acknowledge my chair, Dr. Laura Thompson, for her steadfast, critical, and unwavering supports throughout this journey. I would also like to thank my second committee member, Dr. Matthew Knight, for his scholarly reviews and feedback, which helped me improve and accomplish my goal. I want to thank Dr. William Stokes, my university research reviewer, for his dedication and commitment. I am also grateful to my cohort for all their constructive criticism and encouragement. Lastly, I would like to thank all the participants who participated in this study.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Businesses and organizations continue to struggle with voluntary employee turnover. Sun and Wang (2017) found that transformational leaders play a significant role in reducing voluntary employee turnover and increasing employees' embeddedness. Schlechter et al. (2016) posited that leaders could predict voluntary employee turnover by looking at an employee's years of service, age, and performance history. Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) concluded that voluntary employee turnover adversely affects businesses and organizations and could affect performance and revenue. Reducing voluntary employee turnover could increase business profitability and performance.

Background of the Problem

Business owners spend significant resources on recruitment and training because of voluntary employee turnover (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). The voluntary departure of an employee from a business or organization could affect the remaining staff's morale throughout the organization (T. W. Lee et al., 2017). Voluntary employee turnover is a global phenomenon that poses significant challenges to businesses and organizations (Schlechter et al., 2016). According to Schlechter et al. (2016), retaining employees in any organization is critical to enhancing organization stability and maintaining competitive advantage. Therefore, there is a need for business owners to develop strategies that attract and retain employees in organizations.

Problem Statement

Hiring and training new employees cost small businesses significant resources because of voluntary employee turnover (Mahadi et al., 2020). The annual voluntary employee turnover in the United States rose for 7 consecutive years, in which 36.1 million employees voluntarily left their jobs in 2016 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). The general business problem is that voluntary employee turnover affects business performance. The specific business problem is that some business owners lack strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover in small businesses.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that owners of small businesses use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. The targeted population of this study consisted of five owners of small businesses in the eastern region of the United States who have successfully used strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. The implications for positive social change in mitigating voluntary employee turnover include providing stable jobs for communities' residents and improving local economies.

Nature of the Study

The three research methods are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Panda et al., 2018). Researchers use the qualitative research method to understand participants' experiences and answer critical questions specific to the research (Yin, 2018). I chose the qualitative research method for this study. The qualitative research method was suitable for this research to explore leadership strategies by asking open-ended questions. Johnson et al. (2017) explained that qualitative research enables researchers to gather information using document reviews, interviews, and observation in exploring and understanding a phenomenon. Researchers use the quantitative research methodology to collect and analyze data to explain the relationships among variables through statistical analysis of the research's findings and results (Zyphur & Pierides, 2019). The quantitative methodology was not suitable for this research because I was not testing a hypothesis or using a systematic experiment to understand a phenomenon; instead, I intended to explore a phenomenon not well understood to answer the research question. The mixed method combines qualitative and quantitative methods that enable a researcher to answer the research question using inductive and deductive reasoning (Shannonhouse et al., 2017). The mixed method was inappropriate to address the research question in this study given the method's quantitative dimensions.

There are multiple research designs, including case studies, ethnography, and phenomenology, that researchers can use in qualitative research (Cook & Cook, 2016). I chose the multiple case study design to collect multiple types of data from different cases to explore the similarities and differences among cases to understand a phenomenon. The single case study design provides a researcher with a depth of insight into a phenomenon, asking what and how questions within a single firm (Yin, 2018). Using a multiple case study design enables researchers to identify similar or varying themes among different businesses to understand a phenomenon (Yin, 2018). The focus of my study was to collect data from multiple small businesses by conducting interviews and reviewing source documents to understand a phenomenon. The single case design was not suitable for this study. The phenomenological design is a qualitative research design that researchers use to understand individuals' meaning, structure, and lived experiences (Larkin et al., 2018). The phenomenological design was not appropriate for this study because I did not intend to study individuals' subjective lived experiences to understand a phenomenon. The ethnographic design involves the interaction and close observation of a selected group of people's social and cultural behaviors over time (Hassan, 2019). The ethnographic design was unsuitable for this study, given its nature and protracted time requirement for observation and interaction.

Research Question

What strategies do owners of small businesses use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover?

Interview Questions

1. What key strategies did you use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover?
2. What key barriers did you encounter in developing and implementing the strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover in your organization?
3. How did you overcome the critical barriers in developing and implementing the strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover in your organization?
4. How did your organization assess the effectiveness of the strategies for mitigating voluntary employee turnover?
5. What key strategies did you find least effective in mitigating voluntary employee turnover in your organization, and why?
6. What, if any, changes have you seen since the implementation of these strategies?
7. What impact did these strategies have on retention rates?
8. What additional information would you like to share regarding mitigating voluntary employee turnover in your organization?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that guided this study was the expectancy theory of motivation. Vroom (1964) developed the expectancy theory using motivation to predict individual cognitive behavior of a desirable outcome. Vroom identified three constructs that govern the expectancy theory: (a) expectancy, (b) instrumentality, and (c) valence. Vroom's expectancy theory is based on an individual's expected effort to accomplish a given task, depending on the clarity of performance goals and self-esteem. Expectancy is the probability that an increase in efforts eventually leads to an increase in performance. Instrumentality is an individual's perception that a given performance outcome yields an anticipated reward for work done. Valence is a degree of preference for an outcome, which could be favorable or unfavorable. Vroom explained that favorable results are the desired outcomes the individual expects, and unfavorable outcomes are those an employee tries to avoid.

Operational Definitions

Employee engagement: The physical and emotional commitment associated with employee cognition and dedication to achieve the organization's goals (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018).

Organizational commitment: A desirable outcome of improving an organization's response to employee satisfaction, motivation, and embeddedness (Allen et al., 2018).

Voluntary employee turnover: The deliberate self-withdrawal of individuals from their occupation without pressure (T. W. Lee et al., 2017).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are unconfirmed facts accepted by a researcher as accurate (Poucher et al., 2019). The first assumption in this study was that the participants would honestly answer the interview questions. The second assumption was that the company's documentation would be accurate and up to date. The third assumption was that all participants in the study would respond to all interview questions. The fourth assumption was that semistructured telephone interviews would allow participants to provide rich texture data and minimize researcher bias.

Limitations

Limitations refer to the potential weaknesses and gaps found within a study out of a researcher's control (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). One limitation of this study was in transferability; the research findings might not apply to other industries. Another limitation was that the participants' responses might not truly reflect the views of all owners of small businesses. The results of this study were limited by the honesty and thoroughness of the participants' responses.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the boundaries that a researcher puts in place to narrow the scope of the research (Preston & Barnes, 2018). The first delimitation for this study was the geographical location of the eastern United States. The second delimitation was the qualification of participants being owners of small businesses who have successfully used strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

One reason for voluntary employee turnover is job dissatisfaction, resulting from multiple factors, including work–life schedule imbalance. Haider et al. (2018) posited that employees who have stable work–life balance are satisfied with their jobs and have more family time. Work–life balance contributes to employees' engagement, improves job satisfaction and performance, and increases organizational productivity (Haider et al., 2018). Owners of small businesses might use this study to implement strategies that could reduce voluntary employee turnover in their businesses.

Implications for Social Change

The findings in this study could contribute to social change by providing owners of small businesses with a better understanding of employee retention strategies. Small businesses could give local communities financial stability through jobs, community development projects, and economic support for families. Communities and societies could benefit from multiple derivative organization donations. The mitigation of voluntary employee turnover could improve local communities' economies and provide families with needed finances for healthcare, education, and improved living conditions.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

This literature review is comprised of peer-reviewed articles, published dissertations, books, and journals found using Google Scholar, ProQuest, Crossref, Walden University library, and other databases. The purpose of this multiple case qualitative study was to explore strategies that owners of small businesses use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. The literature review is composed of synthesis and analysis of literature that supports the conceptual framework of my study. This review contains a total of 218 articles, 87.2% of which were published between 2017 and 2021 from peer-reviewed sources. I used keywords and search terms like *voluntary employee turnover*, *retention strategies, job satisfaction, employee embeddedness, compensation and rewards, cost of turnover*, and *organizational culture* to identify relevant literature.

Expectancy Theory of Motivation

The conceptual framework for this study was Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation. Vroom (1964) explained that an employee's motivation to perform a job assumes a reward for completed work. Vroom used the expectancy theory of motivation to understand employees' cognitive behavior and attitude in the expectation of rewards. Vroom sought to bridge the research gap on employee motivation that was lacking the performance and reward dynamics. Vroom asserted that the expectancy theory provides a lens for researchers to understand employee behavior and decision-making processes in the context of expectation and desired rewards. The expectancy theory of motivation has three constructs: (a) expectancy, (b) instrumentality, and (c) valence. Vroom explained that individuals evaluate the likelihood that their behavior has a positive outcome (expectancy) and a reward (instrumentality), which impacts the preference of the subjective value (valence).

Researchers have used the expectancy theory of motivation as a framework to explore employees' behavior in the context of commitment, using rewards as an antecedent of motivation. Baumann and Bonner (2017) explained that leaders could use the expectancy theory to predict employee decision-making processes and how these processes affect group coordination, influencing individual behavior and motivation. The expectancy theory provides a lens for researchers to understand employee behavior and decision making in the context of expectation and reward. Vroom's expectancy theory is focused on the performance and reward relationship, stressing that an individuals' decision to achieve desired outcomes is based on expected rewards.

Researchers have used the expectancy theory as a lens to understand factors that influence voluntary employee turnover. Researchers have used Vroom's expectancy theory as a framework for exploring and understanding strategies that owners of small businesses use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. The expectancy theory reinforces performance management in public and private institutions. The expectancy theory accounts for some voluntary employee turnover because of the lack of reward used as a motivating factor (H. W. Lee, 2019). Leaders could use the three constructs of the expectancy theory to increase employee engagement and performance by using reward as a motivation (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Hackman and Porter (1968) and Lawler and Suttle (1973) criticized Vroom's expectancy theory for its simplicity, focus on rewards, and lack of motivational values.

Supporting Theories

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg, an American psychologist, coined the two-factor motivation theory to understand employee motivation and job satisfaction in the workplace (Herzberg et al., 1959). Researchers have used the two-factor motivation theory as a lens to help managers in an organization determine factors that affect employee job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The two-factor motivation theory by Herzberg et al. (1959) is influenced by two factors: motivators and hygiene. Herzberg asserted that the motivator factors are achievement, promotion, recognition, increasing employee job satisfaction, and influencing commitment, embeddedness, and engagement. The hygiene factors are those factors related to the context of the job organization culture, working environment, and management policies, which could lead to job dissatisfaction and voluntary employee turnover (Herzberg, 1974). Herzberg's two-factor theory provides the platforms (motivation and hygiene) that leaders could use to assess employees' satisfaction or dissatisfaction. An analysis of Herzberg's two-factor theory revealed that the hygiene factors, such as pay, benefit, and job security, affect employees' satisfaction more than the motivational factors: achievement, self-worth, and promotions.

Many researchers have used Herzberg's two-factor motivation theory to understand employee behavior in the context of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and how each factor produces different outcomes. Aquino (2020) and Khanna (2017) found that hygiene, motivators, job satisfaction, and job performance positively correlate to job satisfaction and affect employee retention. The intrinsic influence (motivation) and the external influence (hygiene) are essential tools used by leaders to measure or predict employee behavior and intention to leave or stay with an organization (Herzberg, 1974). Herzberg et al. (1959) and Vroom (1964) expressed similar opinions on employees' behavior and cognition as influenced or enhanced by several factors that predict their level of motivation and attitude toward their job performance.

Maslow's Motivational Theory

Maslow's (1943) motivational theory is also known as the theory of human motivation and laid the foundation for understanding the organization of human needs and the sequence in which these needs are arranged based on satisfaction. The psychological and emotional behavior of a person's satisfaction might be analyzed using Maslow's motivational theory as a litmus test. In contrast to Herzberg's two-factor theory and Vroom's expectancy theory, Maslow's theory of motivation emphasizes employees' need for hierarchy as a psychological ladder of achievement, satisfaction, and self-actualization.

Fey (2005) and Wahba and Bridwell (1976) supported Maslow's hierarchy of need theory and affirmed that employees are motivated when needs are satisfied in order of importance. However, Acevedo (2018) criticized Maslow's theory for its superficial nature that reduces an individual personality to needs as the basis for satisfaction. Maslow's five-tier hierarchy of needs are physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization exhibited by all individuals. Maslow's philosophy about the hierarchy of needs is that individual needs are satisfied in order of importance and until the first need is satisfied, the second cannot be satisfied (Maslow, 1943). Leaders in small businesses could use Maslow's motivation theory to understand employees' needs and satisfy those needs. Maslow's motivation theory provides a framework that leaders can use to meet employees' needs and reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Voluntary Employee Turnover

Employees are an essential part of any organization and are critical to that organization's success and development. Voluntary employee turnover affects business and organization operations and could cost significant resources in recruiting and training new employees (Hermans, 2019). According to An (2019), several factors could promote voluntary employee turnover: (a) salary and wages, (b) organization culture, and (c) career development. Employees leave organizations all the time, either voluntarily or involuntarily. Rubenstein et al. (2018) and Sun and Wang (2017) concluded that it could negatively impact the organization when an employee leaves an organization voluntarily without pressure or coercion from management or coworkers.

Organizations and businesses strive to develop and maintain a productive workforce that increases performance and productivity (Sun & Wang, 2017). Voluntary employee turnover presents a significant challenge to organizations and businesses, affecting customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, productivity, and knowledge management. T. W. Lee et al. (2017) found that job scarcity significantly influences employee turnover and not necessarily performance in job complexity. According to Schlechter et al. (2016), employers can predict voluntary employee turnover using an organization's job and environmental conditions. Schlechter et al. further explained that these variables, even though subjective, could provide employers with information on employees' intention to leave an organization.

Factors Influencing Voluntary Employee Turnover

Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) explained that many factors could be responsible for voluntary employee turnover in an organization, including compensation, working environment, succession plan, and career development. As explained in Maslow’s motivational theory, employees have needs to be satisfied to reach self-actualization (achievement). Mo and Shi (2017) posited that leaders play a pivotal role in developing and training employees, serve as role models and mentors in their performance, and contribute to retention. Organizations could reduce voluntary employee turnover by adopting strategies and creating a flexible work–life balance for employees to avoid burnout, fatigue, and mistakes because of long working hours (Stavrou & Ierodiakonou, 2016). Travis et al. (2016) found that employees who work long hours could experience job fatigue, burnout, and health-related problems, leading to turnover. Likewise, Hermans (2019) found that employees leave organizations that continually change processes, procedures, and job performance measurements. Creating a stress-free working environment could influence employee behavior.

Organizations with stressful working environments that do not consider employees’ well-being, happiness, and social life could experience high voluntary turnover (Travis et al., 2016). Tiwari (2017) also found that organizations with high voluntary turnover have a high-paced working environment consistent with those described by Travis et al. (2016). Gao et al. (2019) suggested that human resources personnel should pay attention to employees’ characteristics, responses, and job history during the recruitment process, which could predict voluntary employee turnover.

Job Satisfaction and Turnover

Many small and medium multinational businesses require long and stressful working hours to increase performance and productivity (Gede, 2019). Employees who are stressed out and overworked tend to lose motivation, leading to emotional stress and the intention to leave an organization for other jobs. Creating a working environment that respects employees' emotions could influence job satisfaction and increase embeddedness in businesses and organizations (Cho et al., 2016). Researchers have tried to understand which factors influence employees' decisions to leave an organization (Gede, 2019).

The level of satisfaction that an individual experiences from work translates into performance, attitude, morale, and willingness to continue working in that organization (Dugan et al., 2019). Haque et al. (2019) concluded that leaders who provide motivation, career development, and training programs could influence an employee's intention to leave an organization. Job satisfaction is an essential construct in organization management that, if not addressed, could lead to a high rate of employee turnover (Rutherford et al., 2019). Establishing a favorable working environment for employees could influence job satisfaction and increase commitment to an organization.

According to Soriano et al. (2018), the work environment can impact employees' health and well-being, especially those working long hours and working in challenging or high-paced organizations. Soriano et al. also found that dissatisfied employees usually give excuses, miss work and have low morale and poor performance. Kang and Sung (2019) came to a similar conclusion but further noted that organizational justice and employee engagement are significant factors influencing employee intention to leave an organization.

Organizational Leadership and Commitment

According to Schuetz (2017), organizational leaders provide strategic direction for implementing projects, programs, and the performance of the organization's mission. Schuetz posited that organizations with exemplary leadership strategies are more likely to succeed and achieve their goals as employees know the mission and objectives. Cho et al. (2019) agreed with Schuetz (2017) but pointed out that it was difficult to say which leadership style is most beneficial because the leadership style adopted is contingent on the organization's culture, mission, and vision.

Organizations using different leadership styles would experience different productivity, performance, and employee engagement outcomes (Cho et al., 2019). Liggans et al. (2019) found that using specific human resource strategies in selecting, compensation, performance appraisal, training, and development could reduce voluntary employee turnover. Although Haque et al. (2019) suggested that organizational commitment is a dynamic approach to developing employee engagement, Kose and Pehlivanoglu (2020) recommended that employees regularly participate in organization communication and decision-making processes. Many researchers have theorized organizational commitment as an effective retention strategy and model for employee engagement and embeddedness (Liggans et al., 2019). The three organizational leadership styles discussed in this study are servant, transformational, and transactional leadership.

Servant leadership is a practical leadership style that supports and emphasizes employee well-being and development and embraces social and cultural diversity (Jang & Kandampully, 2018). Jang and Kandampully's (2018) findings on servant leadership using the social exchange theory were consistent with the assertions by Linuesa-Langreo et al. (2018) that servant leaders serve as role models, using ethics and values to improve employee interaction. Liu (2019) explained that servant leaders demonstrate a high level of selflessness, putting employees' needs first to grow and develop an organization.

Servant leaders lead by serving others, creating a healthy working environment that responds to others' needs, and changing the traditional leadership pyramid (Lumpkin & Achen, 2018). Hoch et al. (2018) found that servant leaders provide a platform for employees to explore their potential. Likewise, Sousa and van Dierendonck (2017) found that servant leaders develop employees by deviating from the ordinary leadership hierarchy. Siyal and Peng (2018) explained that the turnover phenomenon is a continuing problem for businesses and organizations, and organizations that use the servant leadership style could reduce voluntary employee turnover in organizations. However, Lu et al. (2019) cautioned that servant leadership could affect decision-making and reduce leaders' influence on employees.

Sousa and van Dierendonck (2017) found that servant leaders create an enabling working environment that allows employees to reach their maximum potential without compromising ethical standards. Wu et al. (2021) noted that servant leaders are considered unique because their focus is on developing their followers to reach their highest potential. Rahman et al. (2017) suggested that leaders in organizations should be sensitive to employees’ needs as employee motivation varies among employees. Liao et al. (2020) argued that servant leaders often suffer from exhaustion because they invest in their followers daily. Employees relied heavily on leaders’ direction to accomplish tasks, develop a career path, and provide the kind of leadership that enables them to succeed (Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2018).

Transformational leaders work with employees, developing and inspiring them to achieve self-actualization, which increases retention rates. Ariyabuddhiphongs and Kahn (2017) found that supervisors and managers play a significant role in employees’ intention to leave an organization. Every organization’s goal is to maintain a vibrant and productive workforce that contributes to an organization’s success and competitive advantage (Sun & Wang, 2017). Drawing from Maslow’s motivational theory, Siyal and Peng (2018) noted that transformational leaders motivate employees with a change mechanism ideology of self-esteem, minimizing employees’ turnover intention.

Burns’s (1978) transformational leadership theory provided a framework that explains the relationship among leaders and employees in an organization. Burns noted five key constructs that described leadership characteristics towards employees and organizational goals: (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) inspirational motivation, and (e) individualized consideration. Burns asserted that the idealized attribute focuses on self-esteem, pride, and charisma, influencing employee behavior. Idealized behavior relates to the need for change and the development of a commitment to achieve results. Intellectual stimulation is concerned with employees’ creativity and innovation in the workplace. Inspirational motivation is an optimistic approach to future achievement and self-actualization (Saleem & Mahmood, 2019). Individualized consideration develops character and attitude, which could promote innovation in employees.

Transformational leaders inspire employees and develop a clear vision of fulfillment for employees by allowing them to grow and experience change at various levels (Peesker et al., 2019). Afsar et al. (2017) explained that researchers compared transformational leadership and transactional leadership in the context of influence, motivation, and employees’ development and productivity. Transactional leadership is a leadership style criticized by many researchers and leaders for its relentless focus on employees’ growth and development, using reward and punishment as the motivating factors (Kark et al., 2018). Leaders that practice the transformational leadership style receive admiration among coworkers and employees for the standards and policies on accountability (Caillier & Sa, 2017). On the other hand, organizations with transactional leadership styles have higher voluntary employee turnover than companies with transformational leadership styles (Bian et al., 2019).

Leaders play an essential role in training and developing employees to achieve quality performance and productivity. Weber (1947) developed the transactional leadership theory because employees should follow the direction of leaders. The underlying constructs that make up the transactional leadership theory are (a) contingent reward, (b) active management by exception, (c) passive management by exception, and (d) laissez-faire. Weber explained that a contingent reward is an approach in which the leaders and employees agree to set goals to accomplish, and the leaders provide rewards or punishment for success or failure. Using active management by exception allows the leader to closely monitor and control the work processes and take corrective measures to eliminate mistakes (Willis et al., 2017). Passive management is used when leaders determine a shortfall in the standards (Willis et al., 2017). Using the laissez-faire approach allows the employees to make some decisions without leader intervention.

One significant similarity among transformational leaders, transactional leaders, and servant leaders is the desire to develop employees or followers to become productive and achieve personal growth and organization goals (Andersen, 2018). Paksoy et al. (2019) noted that one significant difference between transformational, transactional, and servant leadership styles is each leader’s approach to motivate employees to accomplish organizational goals. Transactional leaders establish parameters intended to develop employees’ character to become future leaders with discipline and commitment to their mission and goals (Xu & Wang, 2019). Yang et al. (2019) and Suwinci (2020) concluded that organizational climate positively affects employee engagement. Providing quality leadership in a business or organization could have a significant influence on employees’ decision making.

Employee Retention Strategies

Organizations and businesses continue to struggle with retaining highly skilled employees. Internal marketing is a retention strategy that promotes employees’ value and importance to the organization (Melhem & Ozgit, 2019). Melhem and Ozgit (2019) and Salah et al. (2019) found that recognizing employee’s values, training, and internal marketing strategy served as retention strategies. Aman (2019) found that internal marketing is a complex operation and could sometimes cost an organization a significant amount of resources in bonuses. Conversely, Salah et al. reported that organizations used an internal marketing strategy as a value creation strategy to develop employees' commitment and relationships with the organization. Developing effective employee strategies could help leaders retain skilled workers.

Sawaneh and Kamara (2019) found that organizations with effective strategies could attract and retain skillful employees. Likewise, Pareek et al. (2019) suggested that organizations should focus on employee engagement, affecting employee retention. Pareek et al. noted that leaders should give employees a manageable workload to accomplish and increase their embeddedness. Succession planning is an organizational strategy intended to produce a pool of skilled and talented employees ready and willing to lead in the event of a vacancy (Ali et al., 2019). Training employees at all levels ensures the distribution of knowledge throughout the organization, promotes continuity, and eliminates single points of failure (Ali et al., 2019). Retaining qualified employees has become more competitive, and organizations must be creative and innovative in selling their brands.

Employer branding is a retention strategy that psychologically impacts current and future employees to boost the organization's image and retain talented employees (Kashive et al., 2020). Wardani and Oktafiansyah (2020) found that employer branding is directly proportional to employee engagement. Likewise, Kihuro et al. (2018) noted that implementing employee retention strategies in an organization using employer branding could attract and retained skilled employees. Kashive et al. (2020) noted that communicating employer brand with employees throughout the organization could attract current and potential employees. Improving the retention rates through branding and mentorship could be a positive sign of excellent leadership and development.

The relationship between employee recruitment and mentorship shows a dynamic pattern that, if managed well, could yield a high level of employee retention and improve performance (Koskey & Njoroge, 2019). Leaders in organizations and businesses could use mentorship to develop competent skills required for business performance.

The current employment workforce has three different groups, baby boomer (1946–1960), Generation X (1961–1980), and Generation Y (1980–2000s). Bejtkovsky (2016) found that the combination of different generations in the workforce with different ideologies and motivations could challenge employers. Bejtkovsky found that baby boomers are hard workers and are primarily concerned with earning a paycheck, medical insurance, and retirement. Generation X employees are hard workers with a sense of commitment and loyalty, making them essential in the working environment (Mohsen, 2016). Generation X employees balance the baby boomers and Generation Y employees in an organization and promote commitment, performance, and the workforce's highest retention rates. Naim and Lenka (2017) found that Generation Y or millennial employees are new to the workplace and exhibit different work ethics, posing new challenges for employers. Generation Y employees are fast-paced employees motivated by technology and may leave an organization with modern technological capabilities.

Compared to the other two generations, Generation Y employees are fast learners, energetic, and more receptive to technology and change but lack experience and are more likely to leave an organization (Naim & Lenka, 2017). Bussin et al. (2019) solidified the assertions made by Naim and Lenka (2017) that Generation Y employees have unique sets of skills, and employers need a different set of strategies to attract and retain Generation Y employees. Gertsson et al. (2018) described Generation Y employees as having self-confidence, ambition, and innovation, improving organization performance and productivity. Gertsson et al. explained that Generation Y employees are more motivated by incentives than the workplace environment and exhibit a lower retention rate than the other two generations.

Organizational leaders play a significant role in reducing voluntary employee turnover. Retaining employees in any organization is a challenge, and leaders must be innovative and creative in motivating employees’ embeddedness and commitment (Covella et al., 2017). Establishing open communication between leaders and employees could strengthen employee embeddedness and ownership and reduce turnover intentions (Lai et al., 2019). Organization leaders who allow employees to fill out surveys and suggestions could benefit from new ideas, criticism, and practical planning.

Employee Engagement and Embeddedness

The working environment in an organization could influence employees’ commitment and performance. Vermooten et al. (2019) noted that employee engagement is a cognitive approach, and employees react to the working environment positively or negatively. Similarly, Steffens et al. (2018) found that employee engagement served as a factor of organization success and employee retention. Vermooten et al. expanded the conversation of employee engagement and embeddedness by explaining the correlation between job demand resources theory and employee perception of job satisfaction. Vermooten et al. found that employees who exhibit positive personalities are likely to experience higher job engagement and embeddedness than employees with negative attitudes and perceptions.

Steffens et al. (2018) explained that employees' sense of belonging to an organization could reduce voluntary turnover and increase job engagement and embeddedness. Many factors affect employee engagement, job burnout, job dissatisfaction, working environment, and organization's commitment to employee welfare (Steffens et al., 2018). Leaders and researchers have tried to conceptualize employee engagement using different theories and methods to fully understand how this phenomenon affects organizational performance (Kim, 2017). Kim's (2017) findings reinforced the assertion made by Vermooten et al. (2019) that researchers could use job demand resource theory to understand employees' engagement and dependency on organizations' resources to accomplish a given task.

The term employee engagement has varying meanings for researchers and leaders. Kahn (1990) described employee engagement as a managerial construct that builds organizations' competitive advantage. Improving employees' engagement and embeddedness should be a significant activity for every organization because engaged employees have lower turnover intentions (Kim, 2017).

Leaders in organizations should strive to improve working conditions that are flexible and accommodate diversity and innovation. Smith et al. (2018) noted that some organizations conduct an organizational climate change survey to understand employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Organizational climate change is a shared perception of the organization's culture that could affect employee engagement and voluntary turnover. Understanding employee's cognition and what satisfies them could be significant for organizations and businesses.

Job satisfaction directly influences employee engagement and affects employee performance and productivity (Moore et al., 2019). Employees' engagement may be a successful business phenomenon that could contribute to organizational success and competitive advantage. Employee retention is essential for an organization to increase profit and improve sustainability.

For organizations to thrive and achieve their strategic objectives, retaining committed and skilled employees are necessary (Naidoo et al., 2019). Litwin and Eaton (2018) explained that leaders in organizations should develop a professional relationship with employees that encourages openness and shared values, promoting employee engagement and retention. The underlying factors that support employees' commitment require organizations to develop strategies that empower employees and increase retention rates (Litwin & Eaton, 2018).

Employee Training and Development

Enhancing employees' capacity through training could have a direct impact on an organization's performance and productivity. Employee training has become essential in 21st-century economies by introducing new technologies and growing competition from similar firms (Ocen et al., 2017). Organization leaders must be strategic in developing training that makes employees productive and self-sufficient to perform their jobs (T. W.

Lee et al., 2017). Training helps employees become efficient at their jobs and could increase job satisfaction and retention.

Employee training is a fundamental part of a human resource development strategy that seeks to change behaviors and increase performance (Vrchota & Rehor, 2019). Vrchota and Rehor (2019) found that human resource management helps organizational development by mediating employees’ responses to sustainability goals. Greer et al. (2017) further noted that developing employees’ capacity through training could create loyalty and increase employee commitment. Investing in employee development through training increases organizational efficiency and improves job performance proficiency (Mumtaz et al., 2016). Mumtaz et al. (2016) found employee training as a job satisfaction strategy that contributes significantly to employees’ work engagement and increases retention rates in an organization.

Organizations could measure employees’ performance using training as a tool for improvement. Kodwani (2017) explored how employees transfer training to the job and increase work quality and found that the importance of training was to give information to improve the quality of work and expand employees’ capacity to deliver. Likewise, Ben Mansour et al. (2017) found that recruiting skilled and already trained employees reduced the cost associated with training as employee training could cost an organization a significant amount of resources, depending on the training level and the expected outcome.

Junaid Khan and Iqbal (2020) suggested that organizations could show their commitment to employees by providing training, which would help them acquire new skills and increase organizational productivity. Providing employees with the proper training and development opportunities creates an environment where employees can grow professionally and contribute significantly to an organization (Chaudhry et al., 2017). Organizational leaders must develop training programs that target specific skills to enable employees to thrive and deliver quality work performance. Multiple researchers found that training continues to play a significant role in employees' job satisfaction. Riley et al. (2017) described employees as essential stakeholders in any organization who could, in turn, increase the organization's productivity and revenue. In addition, organizations provide quality customer service and become competitive using their human resources capacity.

Organizations spend a significant number of resources on employee training expecting a return in performance and productivity. Lacerenza et al. (2017) explored this concept in the context of behavior change and the transfer of knowledge that should impact performance. Lacerenza et al. cautioned business leaders to conduct a needs assessment to identify employees' specific training needs that could affect change in an organization. Lacerenza et al. believed that employee training could affect employees' behavior in approaching work, engagement, and meeting the organization's goals; therefore, investing in a training program could directly impact employee development and profitability.

Employee development and training continues to be an essential contribution to organizational success. Technology and globalization have changed the way businesses and organizations operate, increasing the need for businesses and organizations to continue developing human capital to remain competitive (Hannola et al., 2018). Building employees' capacity could increase performance and solidify training outcomes (An et al., 2018).

Employee Work–Life Balance

Employee work–life balance continues to be a significant organizational problem of employee engagement (Capnary et al., 2018). Employee work–life balance is an organizational approach that invests in an employee's personal and professional lives (Stavrou & Ierodiakonou, 2016). Organizations with a flexible working schedule and mandatory annual leave and time off policies could increase employee work–life balance and retention rates (Stavrou & Ierodiakonou, 2016). Haider et al. (2018) noted that providing an employee with a quality work–life balance could reduce stress, burnout, and mental illness in an organization. Providing flexible or alternative work schedules improves employee work–life balance.

Haider et al. (2018) found that the millennial generation is most enthusiastic and concerned with work–life balance than baby boomers or Generation X employees. Aruldoss et al. (2020) found that employee work–life positively relates to employee retention and commitment. Likewise, Geydar (2020) further asserted that stressful working environments were significant contributors to employee absenteeism. Millennial employees use technology to get work done and believe that employees should work smarter, not harder (Haider et al., 2018). Leaders in organizations could use employee work–life balance as a retention strategy to attract skilled employees and reduce turnover intention (Stavrou & Ierodiakonou, 2016). Stavrou and Ierodiakonou (2016) found that a flexible working schedule could increase job satisfaction and performance.

Employees are under continuous pressure from employers to accomplish specific tasks, adapt to new policies, and perform at specific workplace standards (Manasa & Showry, 2018). Manasa and Showry (2018) reported findings consistent with Haider et al. (2018) that employees who have work–life balance are energetic, engaged, and show commitment and high-performance capacity. Employee work–life balance is essential in preventing stress, mental illness, and burnout. Zheng et al. (2016) noted that employees could experience work-family conflict if organizations do not allow personal time and life beyond the office. Zheng et al. defined work-family conflict as the absence of a balance between an employee's work and life with family, friends, and colleagues outside of the working environment. An imbalance between work and life could affect an employee's health over time and affect performance and productivity (Manasa & Showry, 2018).

Employee burnout is prolonged stress that creates exhaustion and reduces an individual's energy and capacity to perform at a high level in an organization (Harjanti & Todani, 2019). Mo and Shi (2017) found that ethical leadership plays a significant role in recognizing and changing employees' behavior. Chaudhuri et al. (2020) studied employees' work–life balance, and their findings support creating a flexible working environment. Organizations that recognize stress and burnout in employees early could prevent employee mental illness by providing help in therapy, medical treatment, or paid time off work (Mo & Shi, 2017).

Occupational stress is psychological stress that affects an individual's work-related performance (Raza et al., 2018). Raza et al. (2018) noted that balancing working hours, quality of work, and performance could reduce employee stress. Wong et al. (2019) found that employees who continue to work long hours with little rest or breaks could experience hypertension, diabetes, depression, and anxiety, leading to a turnover. Wong et al. further noted that employees experiencing health problems could exhibit poor performance, lack of concentration, absenteeism, and intention to quit an organization.

Organizational sustainability is the fundamental goal of any organization. Employees are significant contributors to organizational sustainability, providing labor and production and enhancing competitive advantage (Amor et al., 2019). According to Lee (2017), sustaining an organization requires collective efforts from employers and employees to maintain a healthy working environment. An organization's sustainability depends heavily on its workforce, which means that employees' health should be a significant concern (Amor et al., 2019).

Employee work–life balance is a phenomenon that affects organizations and businesses globally. Every organization has a different perspective on the concept of employee work–life balance and how it works (Gragnano et al., 2020). Zheng et al. (2016) suggested that organizations should see employees' health as significant because healthy employees are productive, engaged and increase organization profitability. Likewise, Niessen et al. (2018) suggested that there should be a balance between work and personal life and that an imbalance could affect employees' mental state, work, family, and health. Investing in every employee’s health, well-being, and mental state could reduce stress and employees’ intention to leave an organization (Gragnano et al., 2020).

Compensation and Rewards

Businesses have used various forms of compensations to attract and retain skilled workers (Crowley, 2017). Prasetio et al. (2019) posited that businesses provide compensation and benefits to employees in different forms—salaries, bonuses, vacation trips, stocks, medical insurance, and commissions. Leaders in businesses could use compensation and benefits as strategic tools to influence retention rates and reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Prasetio et al. noted that businesses and organizations could reduce voluntary employee turnover by developing comprehensive compensation packages that might appeal to highly skilled employees and increase retention. Pohler and Schmidt (2016) found that the disparity between a business leader’s compensation and an employee’s compensation could contribute to voluntary employee turnover in an organization. Pohler and Schmidt further cautioned organizations and businesses not to use compensation as the only strategy for retaining employees because the compensation could become noncompetitive over time, and voluntary employee turnover might become a problem.

Businesses and organizations could use nonmonetary rewards as a motivation to retain employees. Pohler and Schmidt (2016) noted that monetary compensation might not be enough to retain an employee but suggested nonmonetary compensations like flexible work schedules, paid leave, and performance recognition. Jamal Ali and Anwar

(2021) noted that nonfinancial compensation could help businesses complement financial compensation, appealing to employee social and motivational esteem. Thus, nonmonetary compensation also plays a significant role in employee retention strategy.

Businesses and organizations should develop compensation and reward strategies to improve ethical standards and values. The relationship between employee compensation and performance could strengthen organizational culture and commitment (Do Carmo et al., 2019). Knapp et al. (2017) found that nonmonetary compensation and rewards provide employees with quality of life, respect, recognition, and job satisfaction.

However, Ndungu (2017) found that compensation might attract an employee initially but eventually might be a reason for voluntary turnover. Businesses with values and appreciation for employees' work ethics could attract skilled workers and reduce voluntary employee turnover. Likewise, Stater and Stater (2018) and Yusuf et al. (2020) noted that working environment and organizational culture directly affect employee job satisfaction. Magnan and Martin (2018) asserted that business leaders could improve commitment and loyalty by understanding what motivates employees more monetary or nonmonetary compensation.

Employee job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon influenced by many factors in monetary and nonmonetary rewards (Khaliq, 2020). Yarbrough et al. (2017) conducted a study analyzing employees' perception of compensation and concluded that feedback and training were significant to employee job satisfaction. Businesses could increase employee job satisfaction by using training, mentorship, and promotion as nonmonetary compensation (Dopson et al., 2017). Developing compensation strategies that affect employee's job satisfaction could increase retention rates in businesses and organizations.

Employee recognition programs significantly influence employee's motivation and embeddedness within a business or organization (Li et al., 2016). Recognition programs could be nonmonetary rewards used by businesses and organizations to motivate and recognize talented employees' performance (Montani et al., 2017). Li et al. (2016) posited that using formal recognition programs in the workplace to display employees' achievements could increase embeddedness and reduce the intention to leave an organization. Masri and Suliman (2019) expressed similar views and emphasized that formal employee recognition programs could protect talent management. Montani et al. (2017) asserted that employee recognition programs influence behavior change and employee commitment.

Transition

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that owners of small businesses used to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. In Section 1, I addressed the background of the problem and its implication for business practice, problem statement, purpose statement, nature of the study, research question, conceptual framework, and significance of the study. I also discussed the operational definitions and assumptions, limitations, and delimitations associated with the study. I concluded Section 1 with the analysis and synthesis of the academic and professional literature of the study.

Section 2 includes the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, research method, research design, population and sampling, and ethical research. Section

2 contains data collection instruments, data collection techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity. Section 3 comprises an introduction, presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, the implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for future research, reflections, and conclusion.

Section 2: The Project

In Section 2, the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, research method, research design, population and sampling, and ethical research are discussed. Section 2 consists of the data collection instruments, data collection techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity. Section 3 comprises an introduction, presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, the implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for future research, reflections, conclusion, and appendices.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that owners of small businesses have used to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. The targeted population of this study consisted of five owners of small businesses in the eastern United States who have successfully used strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. The implications for positive social change from this study include providing stable jobs for communities' residents, contributing to job security, community development projects, and economic empowerment for families.

Role of the Researcher

In a qualitative study, the researcher is the primary data collection instrument (Karagiozis, 2018). My role in this study was the primary data collector. A researcher is responsible for gaining access to the participants after receiving consent and ensuring respect for participants' information and confidentiality (Karagiozis, 2018). To ensure that my preconceived knowledge about small businesses did not impact the findings, I guarded against subjectivity using an interview protocol, member checking, and triangulation to guide against researcher bias. I had no relationship with the participants or the research area. Satalkar and Shaw (2019) noted researchers should establish ethics and integrity in the data collection process to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. Naidu and Prose (2018) suggested that researchers practice ethical accountability throughout the research process to ensure the credibility of a study.

Yin (2018) cautioned novice researchers, especially student researchers, to be aware of their personal biases and how their biases could influence the quality of the research results and findings. To address my personal biases, I conducted member checking to ensure the information presented in the data collection represents the expressed view of the participants and not my personal views (Naidu & Prose, 2018). Data saturation is achieved when no new themes and codes emerge from the data collection process (Weller et al., 2018).

Establishing trust between a researcher and participants can enhance communication and help the researcher gather essential data for the research (Sheikh & Hoeyer, 2018). I followed an interview protocol (see Appendix B) that outlined the interview structure, which contained an opening statement, open-ended interview questions, and follow-up questions to gain clarity and an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

Researchers should strive to conduct their study with the highest level of ethical standards respecting the rights of the participants. The Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research's (1979) *Belmont Report* defined core ethical values that guide research, which rely on respect for person, beneficence, and justice. *The Belmont Report* was used as a guiding principle in conducting this study to ensure the benefits exceeded the associated risks. Care was taken to protect participants from exposure by maintaining the highest level of confidentiality. Protecting human subjects in research is an ethical responsibility of the researcher.

After obtaining approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), I followed all recommendations from the IRB and proceeded with data collection. I explained to participants their right to withdraw from the study at any time during the research process. Nurmi et al. (2017) explained that collaborating with stakeholders or communities can help researchers understand the impact the research could have on the community. I recorded the interviews using a voice recorder as the primary device and a smartphone as my backup.

Participants

Participant selection is a critical step in the research process and can influence the study's findings or results (Buchheit et al., 2019). The participants for this study were five owners of small businesses in the eastern United States who were familiar with voluntary employee turnover strategies and have successfully implemented these strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. I selected participants with a minimum of 3 years of experience using strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover.

Gaining access to research participants can be challenging and sometimes requires a researcher to build relationships and trust (Amundsen et al., 2017). The recruitment process lasted longer than I anticipated because participants were reluctant or slow to respond to the invitation letters. After receiving IRB approval, I used the Virginia Department of Small Businesses and Suppliers and the Virginia Chamber of Commerce databases to identify qualified participants. I used purposeful sampling to recruit eligible participants to provide in-depth information to answer the research question. I established a working relationship with participants by making personal contact using email and phone as the first line of communication and answering any questions participants had, which created trust and allowed me to gather more in-depth information during the interviews.

I ensured that the selected participants aligned with the selection criteria. The selection criteria for this study consisted of small business owners with a minimum of 3 years of experience in using successful strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. After establishing a working relationship with the participants, I sent letters of invitation and consent forms to participants explaining their role in the research, the purpose of the research, the significance of the research, and the research's impact on businesses. Interviews were scheduled in the order of consent forms I received.

Researchers should align their knowledge and experience of the business problem (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). I expanded my search for eligible participants by reaching out to 15 potential participants and gaining consent from at least five. I exercised flexibility with participants to accommodate different schedules and to prevent participants from dropping out of the study.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

There are three research methods, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Yin, 2018). The qualitative research method was suitable for this research because I explored leadership strategies by asking open-ended questions. The qualitative research method was the most suitable for this study because I collected, analyzed, and interpreted data and narratives from multiple participants and reviewed company documents to answer the research question. Johnson et al. (2017) explained that researchers use a qualitative method to gather information using document reviews, interviews, and focus groups to explore and understand complex phenomena. I selected the qualitative method because this method is used to understand participants' lived experiences and perceptions using open-ended questions compared to quantitative or mixed methods.

Researchers use the quantitative research methodology to collect and analyze data to explain relationships among variables through statistical analysis of the research's findings and results (Zyphur & Pierides, 2019). The quantitative methodology was not suitable for this research because I did not test hypotheses or use a systematic experiment to understand the phenomenon. Conversely, I explored a phenomenon that was not well understood to answer a research question. A mixed method is a pragmatic approach that researchers use to collect and analyze data using qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Shannonhouse et al., 2017). I did not select the mixed method because the mixed-method approach uses qualitative and quantitative data, which was unsuitable for my study.

Research Design

There are multiple research designs—case studies, ethnography, and phenomenology designs—that researchers can use in qualitative research (Cook & Cook, 2016). I chose the multiple case study design for this research because researchers use this design to collect multiple data types from different sources and explore the similarities and differences among cases to understand a phenomenon (Mureithi et al., 2018). Researchers use the single case study design to gather deep insight into a phenomenon by asking what, how, and why questions within a single firm (Yin, 2018). Using a multiple case study design allows researchers to identify similar or opposing themes among different businesses to understand a phenomenon.

The focus of my study was to collect data from multiple small businesses by conducting interviews and consulting source documents and relevant information to understand the phenomenon. The single-case design was unsuitable for this study because I explored multiple business owners' strategies from different small businesses. The phenomenological design is a qualitative research design that researchers use to understand individuals' meaning, structure, and lived experiences (Yin, 2018). The phenomenological design was inappropriate for this study because I did not intend to study individuals' personal stories. The ethnographic design involves the interaction and close observation of a selected group of people's social and cultural behaviors over time (Hassan, 2019). The ethnographic design was unsuitable for this study, given its nature and the protracted time requirement for observation and interaction.

Determining the appropriate sample size for a research study is critical to the study's data collection, results, and findings (Hennink et al., 2019). Researchers conducting qualitative research should focus on the depth of data collected to ensure data saturation (Yin, 2018). Hennink et al. (2019) defined data saturation as the point at which the data, codes, and themes collected by the researcher become redundant, and there is no new information emerging from the data collection. I continued to interview participants until I achieved data saturation. I achieved data saturation after I interviewed all five participants selected for the study.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was owners of small businesses in the eastern United States who have successfully used strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. Benoot et al. (2016) noted that researchers use a purposeful sampling method to select targeted participants with specific knowledge and experience about a phenomenon. I used the purposeful criterion sampling method for the selection of participants. Creswell and Poth (2018) posited that the purposeful sampling method helps select qualified participants, sites, and sampling strategies for data collection. Researchers using the purposeful criterion sampling method need to identify the population and the sample size (Yin, 2018). I used purposeful criterion sampling to select participants who met the qualifications criteria I established in the interview protocol (see Appendix B).

The sample size for this study consisted of five owners of small businesses in the eastern United States who have successfully used strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. Hennink et al. (2019) noted that the sample size is typically small in qualitative research, and the focus is on the sample quality and the researchers' in-depth investigation to understand the phenomenon rather than the sample size. I reached data saturation after interviewing the fifth participant, which showed repetitive information from the data collection.

Data saturation occurs when no new information, codes, and themes emerge from the data collection but repeated information (Saunders et al., 2017). Researchers use data saturation in qualitative research to measure the sample size and to justify stopping collecting additional data when no new information emerges (Hennink et al., 2016). To achieve data saturation, I continued to interview participants until no new codes or themes emerged and all the information collected began to repeat.

Ethical Research

Researchers are responsible for obtaining informed consent from participants before conducting an interview (Lantos, 2017). Informed consent shows that a participant agreed to participate in a study (Ho et al., 2018). After receiving approval from IRB, I sent out consent forms to participants to participate in the study. The informed consent form included a summary of the study, the participant's role, the risks, benefits, and contribution to business practice. Researchers should use the informed consent form to document a participant's acceptance of the research (Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). I made sure that participants responded by email stating "I consent" before I scheduled the interviews.

Researchers should inform participants of their rights to withdraw from the study at any time. During the interview, I informed participants that they could withdraw from the study at any time or contact me via telephone or email. Participants in this study received no compensation for participating, as stated in the consent form and the interview. Researchers should inform participants of any monetary compensation in the consent form. Millum and Garnett (2019) noted that researchers could compensate a participant provided the compensation does not influence the data collection process. I stated in the consent form that I was not offering compensation to participants to participate in this study.

Protecting human subjects in research is an essential ethical requirement (Roulston & Preissle, 2018). Nurmi et al. (2017) noted that researchers should follow ethical standards to mitigate research exposure and exploitation. I followed all ethical standards outlined in *The Belmont Report* and recommendations from Walden University's IRB. Lynch et al. (2018) posited that researchers should follow all protocols and recommendations from IRB to protect participants' identities. I stored all paper files collected in a safe and encrypted all electronic files on a password-protected computer. My IRB approval number for this study was 01-19-21-0599703, with an expiration date of January 18, 2022. I will destroy all paper documents related to this study by shredding them, and all electronic files will be deleted 5 years from the time of publication of this study.

Data Collection Instruments

I was the primary data collection instrument for this study. Researchers use various data sources, interviews, focus groups, documentation, and archives to gather data for analysis and interpretation (Haseski & Ilic, 2019; Ridder, 2017). I used an audiorecorder to record my interviews with participants and reviewed company documents collected to achieved triangulation. Agarwal (2020) posited that semistructured interviews enable researchers to explore and gather rigorous data using open-ended questions. Researchers use semistructured interviews to acquire rich data from participants by asking open-ended questions and probing to gain clarity (Bearman, 2019). The semistructured interview process enables the researcher to gather an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

I used the interview protocol to ask all participants the same interview questions (see Appendix A) and probing questions to gather rich, thick data. Researchers use an interview protocol to guide each participant's interview process and interaction (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Using an interview protocol helps researchers gather evidence and improve consistency during the interview process (Heydon & Powell, 2018). The interview protocol development is a critical task that could add quality to the data collection process. *The Belmont Report* contains ethical standards that help the researcher create interview protocols and provides guidelines for protecting human subjects. I conducted semistructured telephone interviews using the interview protocol (see Appendix B) as the standard for all participants.

To strengthen the reliability and validity of the data, I sent a summary of the interview to each participant for review, corrections, and accuracy. Researchers use member checking to ensure that the data collected and interpreted accurately represent the participants' views (Naidu & Prose, 2018). Using member checking creates trust and confidence between the researcher and the participants and contributes to the research quality and knowledge sharing (Madill & Sullivan, 2018).

Data Collection Technique

I used semistructured interviews and organization documents as data collection techniques. Researchers conducting qualitative research use (a) interviews, (b) participants of observation, and (d) focus group discussion (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). I used interviews as the primary data collection technique because interviews enable researchers to establish trust and ask open-ended and probing questions. Puyvelde (2018) noted that interviews are the most common data collection used in qualitative research. Researchers used semistructured interviews to interact with the participants, collect information, and ask follow-up questions to obtain clarity.

There are advantages and disadvantages associated with using the semistructured interview as with any other methods. Tai et al. (2018) noted that semistructured interviews enable the participants to reflect and outline experiences essential for the study. Puyvelde (2018) posited that semistructured interviews allow the researchers to ask open-ended questions and answer the research question. One disadvantage of the semistructured interview is the possibility that a participant may decide not to disclose in-depth information and experiences (Rahman, 2016).

After receiving Walden University’s IRB approval, I recruited qualified participants using emails (see Appendix C) and then sent out an informed consent form. The interview process began after participants provided their consent. The interview protocol (see Appendix B) consisted of an introduction, interview questions, wrap-up, and follow-up member checking interview. Before the interview began, I explained the ground rules to ensure rigor and focus on the interview questions. I shared a copy of the interview interpretation with each participant for corrections and clarifications to conduct member checking. Researchers use member checking as a process of validating the study and providing credibility and rigor (Iivari, 2018). The research's reliability and credibility are critical, and researchers must ensure that all information in the research is accurate and reflects the participants' experiences and not the researcher (Rose & Johnson, 2020).

Data Organization Technique

Data organization techniques are essential steps that researchers should use during the research process. Dilger et al. (2018) explained that researchers who failed to organize and secure data accurately could affect participants' privacy by leaking data unintentionally. I used NVivo software for data organization, coding, and developing of themes, which aided in the data analysis. Min et al. (2017) posited that researchers use NVivo software in qualitative research to transcribe data and show patterns, themes, and coding used for analysis. I recorded all interviews for accuracy to ensure that the participants' responses entered in NVivo verbatim. All transcripts, files, and digital recordings from the interviews are password protected and stored safely at my home and destroy all data after 5 years, as required by Walden University.

Data Analysis

I used Yin's (2018) five-step data analysis to decipher the data using inductive reasoning to code and theme the transcripts and write my findings. Yin's (2018) five steps of data analysis: (a) compile, (b) disassemble, (c) reassemble, (d) interpret, and (e) conclude were used to analyze the data. I ran several queries in NVivo (crosstab, word frequency, map tree, and matrix query), made notes and annotations, and conducted a cross-analysis to familiarize myself with the data. I compiled all the data and arranged them into segments and categories, after which I disassembled the data to remove all outliers. I reassembled the data into core themes and subthemes to better understand the patterns, similarities, or differences. I cross-referenced all emergent themes with the literature review and conceptual framework to identify similarities or differences and present my findings. I used descriptive coding (which by definition means reading through and coding passages) to gain an understanding of the data. Later, I used concept coding to understand the concepts that were emerging from the participant’s responses. Finally, I used pattern coding to identify similarities or differences in the data and grouped them into themes and sub-themes. Data analysis is a critical part of the research process that involves transcribing, coding, and analyzing themes from the interview and document review to arrive at findings (Ravindran, 2019). I used semistructured telephone interviews and reviewed organization documents to accomplish methodological triangulation.

Researchers use triangulation to add credibility and reliability to a study (Fusch et al., 2018). Denzin (1978) identified the four types of triangulations as (a) theoretical triangulation, (b) data triangulation, (c) research triangulation, and (d) methodological triangulation. Mendikoetxea and Lozano (2018) posited that researchers use methodological triangulation when using two or more types of data sources to gather information about a phenomenon. To help ensure the credibility of the data, I used member checking and triangulation. Researchers use methodological triangulation more often in qualitative research than theoretical, data, and research triangulation (Denzin, 1978). The use of software for data analysis helps researchers analyze data efficiently and save time.

Researchers use software for data analysis by converting interviews, surveys, and focus group data using codes and themes to establish research findings (Ravindran, 2019). Researchers transcribe data and evaluate patterns, codes, and themes to conclude and present the data collection findings (Min et al., 2017). Sharma and Deb (2019) posited that NVivo software is a qualitative data analysis software used by researchers to decipher the information. I used NVivo software for data organization which aided in data analysis and generated the necessary codes and themes to answer the research question. The use of software for data analysis increases the efficacy of the analysis and helps researchers understand and interpret the data (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). I developed themes and subthemes by looking at keywords, phrases, and ideas from the coded data.

Organizing research themes is critical to conceptualize the study and answer the research question (Meadows & Wimpenny, 2017). Developing qualitative research themes requires the researcher to look for repeating words, ideas, and concepts consistent in the data (Spiers & Riley, 2018). I looked for related themes from the literature review and recent studies to see if there was a correlation with emergent themes from my study to answer the research question. Researchers use qualitative research to collect data and transcribe them using codes and themes to understand a phenomenon (Renz et al., 2018).

Reliability and Validity

Establishing reliability and validity in qualitative studies is necessary for credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Hirsch & Philbin, 2018). Reliability and validity increase transparency in qualitative research and could eliminate research biases (Mohajan, 2017). In qualitative studies, the findings are not quantitative or statistical, which means that the researcher must establish research reliability and validity (Ashworth et al., 2019).

Reliability

To achieve reliability, I used member checking and methodological triangulation for data collection. Methodological triangulation uses two or more data collection sources of similar evidence to confirm the findings (Denzin, 1978). Dependability in qualitative research is the consistency of the research findings when repeated under the same conditions (Wisenthal et al., 2019). I conducted member checking by sending the summary of the transcript to participants for correction or additions and reviewed companies' documents to achieve data triangulation. I used member checking to verify that the data collected represents the participants' experiences to enhance this study's reliability.

Validity

In qualitative research, validity is how the research findings align with the data and the research question (FitzPatrick, 2019). To ensure credibility, I shared a summary of my interpretations of the interview responses with participants to validate the information and used triangulation to confirm participants' experiences using document review. Triangulation increases the credibility of qualitative research and helps researchers confirm emergent themes (Denzin, 1978). Member checking enhances the credibility and validity of the research. Langtree et al. (2019) noted that qualitative research's transferability is like internal validity and generalization in quantitative studies.

Transferability is the degree to which a research study's findings could apply to other industries or groups of people (Daniel, 2019). The determination of the qualitative research findings' transferability lies with researchers and readers not part of the study Forero et al. (2018) and Krefting (1991) noted that providing in-depth information is a strategy that researchers can adopt to enhance the transferability of qualitative study findings. I provided detailed information and descriptions of the findings and environmental settings, which might help future researchers transfer and apply to other contexts or environments.

Prosek and Gibson (2021) noted that confirmability in research is how the findings in research reflect the participants' views. I used member checking and methodological triangulation to ensure that the findings in this study were the expressed views of the participants. Abdalla et al. (2018) expressed similar views but focused on using triangulation as one method to ensure the confirmability of research findings. To ensure the confirmability of the research findings, I maintained ethical standards, adhered to the interview protocol and data analysis process using software to analyze the data, and created an audit trail. Detailing the processes used to reach data saturation could add reliability to the research findings (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Fusch and Ness (2015) explained that data saturation is achieved when researchers cannot identify any new data, themes, or coding in a study. I used purposeful sampling for participant selection to ensure that I interviewed only qualified participants until I reached data saturation. Benoot et al. (2016) noted that achieving data saturation in qualitative research is essential for researchers to validate the data and confirm that further data collection will not produce new themes. Saunders et al. (2017) posited that reaching data saturation in qualitative research requires the researcher to dig deep by asking open-ended questions to generate rich, thick data to answer the research question.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that owners of small businesses used to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. In Section 2, I described the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, and the research method. I described the research design and the reason for choosing the design for this study. I also detailed the target population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instrument, and data collection techniques. I concluded Section 2 by outlining the data analysis, reliability, and validity. I began Section 3 with the introduction and presentation of the findings, the application of the findings to professional practice, and the implications for social change. I concluded Section 3 by presenting recommendations for actions, recommendations for future research, reflections, and a conclusion.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that small business owners use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. The data in this study came from interviews with five small business owners located in southeastern Virginia who have successfully used strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. I reviewed business documents to help me understand the phenomenon and conducted methodological triangulation. I used NVivo software for coding and identifying themes using Yin’s (2018) five-step approach for the data analysis. To better understand the data and the participants’ responses, I started coding using descriptive coding to familiarize myself with the data. Later, I used concept coding to understand the concepts that were emerging from the participants’ responses. Finally, I used pattern coding to identify similarities or differences in the data and grouped them into themes and subthemes. Some of my assumptions about the recruitment process and participants were far from reality. The recruitment and data collection process lasted for 6 weeks; 2 weeks more than I assumed. Each interview lasted about 50 minutes, and participants chose a date and time that was convenient to them.

I used coding such as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 to represent the five participants to protect participants’ identities. Three themes emerged from the data analysis: (a) training and development, (b) open communication, and (c) compensation and rewards. The participants provided insights on the strategies they have used successfully to mitigate voluntary employee turnover.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question was: What strategies do small business owners use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover? I used semistructured telephone interviews for five participants who met the selection criteria as small business owners who have successfully used strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. I used Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation to understand the phenomenon and answer the research question. I reached data saturation after I interviewed the fifth participant and found no new codes or themes. Three themes emerged from the data collection and company documents: (a) training and development, (b) open communication, and (c) compensation and rewards. The findings in this study align with the synthesis and analysis from the literature review and conceptual framework. Table 1 represents the themes, data collection sources, and frequencies of participants' responses to the interview questions.

Table 1

Themes, Sources, and Frequency

Themes	Sources	Frequency
Training and development	3	15
Open communication	2	18
Compensation and rewards	2	17

Theme 1: Training and Development

The first theme that emerged from the data analysis was *training and development*, which participants have used to develop critical skills in the workforce. All participants mentioned training and development as a strategy used to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. These findings are consistent with the conclusions of Saengchai et al. (2019)

that employee training and development serve to promote employee performance and business sustainability. Table 2 provides an overview of the training and development theme and frequencies and percentages of participants' responses to the interview questions.

Table 2

Theme 1: Training and Development

Participants	Frequency of response	Percentage of response
P1	2	11.11%
P2	5	27.78%
P3	3	16.67%
P4	4	22.22%
P5	4	22.22%

Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) posited that it is essential for businesses to develop innovations and training for employees to meet global economies' changing realities. P2 and P4 mentioned that new employees are given the training necessary to become productive before starting their onboarding process. The training of employees in any business sets the stage for employers to develop critical skills to successfully manage a business (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

Training was one of the strategies used by all participants to motivate and retain their employees. Ocen et al. (2017) found that employee training could serve as a motivational factor for employees' commitment and job satisfaction. The participants indicated that they employ three different mechanisms of training. P3 uses fun games and refreshments at training sessions, whereas P2 uses job rotation training to solidify skills throughout the business. P4 uses targeted training that focuses on developing specialized skills that enhance business success.

According to Armstrong and Landers (2018), most businesses and organizations have some form of training for their employees but are inadequate or obsolete in many cases. P3 stated that their business incorporates recreation in their training sessions to keep employees focused and motivated to participate. P2 explained that COVID-19 affected many small businesses, and some experienced voluntary employee turnover because some of their employees left for safety concerns and others for unemployment benefits provided by the CARES Act of 2020.

Providing employees with expanded training opportunities beyond the office may also boost job satisfaction and help business leaders reduce voluntary employee turnover (T. W. Lee et al., 2017). Data analysis revealed that businesses that offer training and development opportunities to their employees see a decrease in voluntary employee turnover. As expressed by P4 and P2, training and development are nonmonetary incentives used in their businesses that attract new employees and increase retention rates. When asked what (if any) changes have you seen since the implementation of these strategies, P4 stated,

> We had problems with employees coming into our business and leaving for 2 years, and we did not know why that was happening. However, as soon as we started providing training for our employees, we started getting some good employees, committed, and stayed with our business for years.

P2, P3, and P4 also answered this question and acknowledged that their employees were motivated after receiving training and performed their jobs proficiently, which increased productivity. Findings from the study show that all participants use training as a regular part of their human resources policies and strategy to develop critical skills that they believe could improve employee job satisfaction. The responses from P2, P3, and P4 suggest that training and development of employees in an organization could lead to behavioral change, commitment, and employee embeddedness. The findings indicate that training and development have a positive effect on employee retention.

Alignment to the Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

The alignment of the training and development theme to the conceptual framework is apparent. Vroom (1964) posited that employees are driven by self-desire for performance, leading to the desired reward. Training and development are critical parts of employee performance, leading to desired reward (instrumentality). Ben Mansour et al. (2017) noted that employers who provide adequate job training for their employees are likely to have higher retention rates and commitment from their employees.

According to P2, P3, and P4, employee training and development play a significant role in their retention strategy and strengthen employee commitment to the business. The participants’ responses show that employees’ desires for self-improvements, such as training and development, motivate them to remain with the business. Vroom’s instrumentality construct is based on an individual’s perception that performance leads to expected desired results. The training and development theme was used to measure instrumentality using Questions 2 and 6 from the interview. Measuring the effectiveness of this construct was important because participants needed to understand the full impact that training and development has on their organization. Participants track the progress and performance of all employees who receive training.

I found that the instrumentality constructs align with the training and development theme based on participant responses and company documents. Training and development were essential in this study because the participants' responses were consistent with existing literature. The interpretation of this finding suggests that businesses and organizations could harness their resources and invest in employee training and development as a retention strategy. Managers who provide employees with the proper training and development opportunities create an environment where employees can grow professionally and contribute significantly to an organization (Chaudhry et al., 2017).

Theme 2: Open Communication

The second theme that emerged from the data analysis was open communication. The interviews showed that all participants (P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5) use some form of communication as a strategy to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. All participant responses aligned with Men and Yue (2019) and Usman (2019) who found that organizations with open communication policies between employers and employees have proven to create job satisfaction and could serve as a retention strategy. Based on the responses and company documents such as employee handbooks, open communication was a successful retention strategy used by the five participants. Table 3 provides an overview of the open communication theme and frequencies and percentages of participants' responses to the interview questions

Table 3

Theme 2: Open Communication

Participants	Frequency of response	Percentage of response
P1	3	17.65%
P2	2	11.76%
P3	3	17.65%
P4	4	23.52%
P5	5	29.41%

P2 said that because of having regular communication with employees on any topic, they have developed a bond of friendship and loyalty, which contributes to the business retention rates. P3 explained that the open communication strategy creates a situation where employees are treated more like family, and their concerns are taken seriously. The interpretations from all participants concerning open communication suggest that employees are an essential part of any organization, and as such, it is essential for leaders to hear their opinions.

The open communication theme is consistent with Schuetz's (2017) assertions that leaders could use communication to influence employee behavior and improve employee engagement. P5 noted that because of the open communication policy implemented in the business, fraud, waste, and abuse of the business resources are appropriately managed, and employees feel free to express themselves when there is a problem. P2, P3, and P4 also discussed using open communication as a strategy in their business and how this strategy has improved the trust among employees and management and has created employee commitment.

Lai et al. (2019) noted that open communication among employees and employers could significantly increase employee embeddedness and reduce voluntary employee turnover. P4 noted, "During the COVID-19 pandemic, providing quality leadership and communication played an important role given the fact that some small businesses were shut down and employees needed hope, help, and assurance that they would not be fired." A review of P2, P3, and P5 company documents collected showed that open communication is used throughout the business to inform the employee about its management decisions.

Ichimiya (2019) noted that communication is an essential function that enhances credibility and trust, contributes to organizational sustainability, and increases employee commitment. Andersen (2019) noted that it is essential for employers to gain employee trust through communication and transparency. A review of company documents provided by P2 showed that open communication is part of their business strategy to inform, educate, and keep employees involved with the business operations. The participants' responses suggest that organizations that treat their employees with respect and dignity, allowing them to express themselves on issues that directly affect them and the company, could play a role in reducing voluntary employee turnover.

Alignment to the Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

The findings from this theme align with Vroom's expectancy theory—precisely, the valence construct. I used open communication as a measurement of valence and employee retention. Small business owners could identify what each employee valued as a reward (valence) through open communication. Vroom's expectancy theory aligns with the open communication theme in that for employers to understand what motivates employees, it is vital to have an open line of communication. Haque et al. (2019) researched responsible leadership, and their findings align with the open communication theme and show how leaders can affect employee cognition and decisions.

Business owners can predict employee dissatisfaction and intention to leave an organization by regularly conducting surveys and encouraging employees to share their opinions. Businesses and organizations can use open communication to mitigate voluntary employee turnover by identifying employee dissatisfactions and finding amenable solutions. By providing a channel for employees to voice their concerns and ideas, business owners can strengthen relationships with employees and improve retention. Kristina (2020) found that using effective communication strategies and feedback increases employee job satisfaction and retention.

Theme 3: Compensation and Rewards

The third theme that emerged from the data analysis was that compensation and rewards reduce voluntary employee turnover. All the participants acknowledged that they experienced voluntary turnover at one point because of inadequate compensation or rewards. Liggans et al. (2019) and Prasetio et al. (2019) suggested that one way for organizations to mitigate voluntary employee turnover is to have a comprehensive compensation policy to increase employee job satisfaction. Table 4 provides an overview of the compensation and rewards theme and frequencies and percentages of participants' responses to the interview questions

Table 4

Theme 3: Compensation and Rewards

Participants	Frequency of response	Percentage of response
P1	1	6.67%
P2	3	20%
P3	4	26.67%
P4	2	13.33%
P5	5	33.33%

Compensation and rewards are an integral function of organization management that influences employees' willingness to stay with an organization. De Spiegelaere et al. (2018) found that organizations that prioritize compensation and rewards reduce voluntary employee turnover significantly. Information gathered from all the participants revealed that using compensation and rewards has mitigated voluntary employee turnover in their respective businesses. Theme 3 aligns with the expectancy theory of motivation built on the framework of employees' expectation of reward for completed work. P1 stated that during employee recruitment and interview, compensation is discussed in negotiation to ensure that employees are satisfied and willing to work for that compensation.

However, all participants revealed that their inability to provide all employees with the necessary compensation was a barrier that precipitated some employees leaving. All participants acknowledged that compensation and rewards were a key barrier and a retention strategy. As living costs changed, employees constantly looked for a raise in compensation or other businesses offering competitive compensation. All participants talked about compensation and rewards as a sensitive topic to discuss with employees as this could be a reason for them leaving or demanding higher compensation during negotiation.

P2 stated, “I reduce voluntary employee turnover by making sure that my employees are compensated adequately.” P2, P3, and P5 noted that they used gift cards and days off to reward employees for good work to motivate employees. Company documents reviewed from P1 and P4 showed that employees offered compensation and rewards based on position, qualification, and performance. Singhvi et al. (2018) posited that compensation was a factor that motivated employees and influenced performance, and so it was in the interest of an organization to establish compensation policies that would attract and retain qualified employees. On the question of “What strategies did you use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover?” P3 stated,

> I have built consensus with my employees and compensated them in different forms using commissions, gift cards, days off, and alternative schedules to avoid burnout and spend time with their families. Because I started using this strategy, my employees have stayed with the business, and I have not experienced voluntary employee turnover in a long time. Because I treat my employees like family, this has also increased our bond and made it hard for them to leave the business.

P1 highlighted that using surprise rewards for good work reduced voluntary employee turnover and increased employee performance and commitment in their business. All participants revealed that rewards promoted trust and loyalty and contributed to high performance and increased retention rates. Providing employees with monetary and nonmonetary compensation could help small business owners mitigate voluntary employee turnover.

Alignment to the Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

The findings from this theme aligned with Vroom's expectancy theory. The three constructs of Vroom's expectancy theory (expectation, instrumentality, and valence) can be applied to the theme of compensation and rewards because the three constructs are hinged on desirable outcomes based on motivation. Hassan and Govindhasamy (2020) worked on intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, confirmed the compensation and rewards theme in this study, and gave a deeper look at rewards in the context of workforce categories (baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y). According to Hassan and Govindhasamy, employers need to understand the three generations of workers and their work ethics concerning compensation and rewards. The expectancy theory can be used as a framework to explore organizational performance management in the context of compensation and rewards (Lee, 2019).

Companies and organizations used compensation and rewards as a motivating factor to attract and retain skilled employees over the years (Muneeb & Ahmad, 2020). The findings in this study support Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation by revealing that employees are motivated by intrinsic values. Vroom assumed that rewards motivate employees, which some researchers like Hackman and Porter (1968) have challenged. Hackman and Porter critiqued Vroom's theory for lacking the motivational hygiene factors such as organizational culture and working environment, as discussed by Herzberg et al. (1959).

The findings in this study about employees training confirmed Ben Mansour et al. (2017) and Riley et al. (2017) findings in the literature review that investing in employees through training and development yields high performance and productivity. Current research done by Arora et al. (2021) and Zimmermann (2020) confirms the findings in this study that training, and development have a positive impact on employee retention. Similar findings from the training and development theme were consistent with the findings of McCarthy and Ford (2019) that training, and development create self-confidence and promote quality of work. In alignment with Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) and Covella et al. (2017), findings from this study revealed that communication, training, and compensation could be used as tools to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. Like the findings in this study, Hassan and Govindhasamy (2020) found that, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards affect employee’s commitment. Likewise, Joshi (2021) came to the same conclusion but farther noted that the intrinsic reward motivates employees and stimulate creativity which has a direct effect on self-efficacy and productivity.

Applications to Professional Practice

The application of this study to professional practice includes providing small business owners with strategies used to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. Sawaneh and Kamara (2019) pointed out that organizations need to develop effective retention strategies that contribute to their overall sustainability. According to Al Mamun and

Hasan (2017), the effects of voluntary employee turnover can be devastating and costly to organizations and impact their competitive advantage.

Findings in this study contribute to the existing literature on voluntary employee turnover and add insight on nonmonetary rewards such as paid days off and training. Business leaders must attract and retain skilled workers who can maximize organization profitability by using effective retention strategies (Masri & Suliman, 2019). Stroo et al. (2020) noted that organizations implementing competency framework strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover reduce organizational costs and increase retention rates. The findings from this study could help business leaders implement strategies that could reduce voluntary employee turnover by using open communication, training, and compensation. Small business owners have an opportunity to use the strategies outlined in this study to mitigate voluntary employee turnover.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for social change from this study are to provide sustainable employment for community dwellers. Mitigating voluntary employee turnover in a business means that employees have stable jobs and take care of their families. The implication for positive social change from this study includes the potential to contribute to the local economy from taxes and provide community development projects. By mitigating voluntary employee turnover, businesses could be reducing the unemployment rates in local communities and providing families with financial stability. Tax revenue generated from small businesses in local communities could be used to improve essential social services.

Findings from this study could help small business owners decrease voluntary employee turnover and become competitive. By reducing voluntary employee turnover, small business owners can attract and retain skilled workers who might improve business performance. The current COVID-19 pandemic has affected many small businesses, and as such, implementing positive social change programs might protect employees and businesses. The implication for social change from this study could promote community infrastructure programs and social service activities.

Recommendations for Action

Small business owners in the United States continue to struggle with voluntary employee turnover. Afsar et al. (2017) found that leaders can use the transformational leadership approach to influence employee engagement and embeddedness. Findings from this study showed that utilizing open communication, training, development, and compensation and rewards can significantly impact employee behavior and mitigate voluntary employee turnover. Based on the findings in this study, I recommend the following:

- Small business owners should develop job-related training programs that motivate employees and give them the right skills to perform their jobs proficiently.
- Training programs should be as flexible as possible to ensure that employees are enthusiastic about learning and developing new skills.
- Training should be an ongoing process to ensure proficiency throughout the organization.

- Small business owners should implement open communication policies that eliminate the bureaucracy among employers and employees.
- Encourage feedback from employees.
- Regular meetings and information sharing eliminates speculation in the business and promote transparency.
- Establish compensation policies that attract and retain qualified employees.
- Provide monetary and nonmonetary rewards to employees as recognition for achievements of work done.

Even though the focus of this study was on small businesses, the findings could be used by other leaders across various industries. Voluntary employee turnover is a global phenomenon that affects businesses, organizations, and government institutions (Hermans, 2019). I will distribute this study through the ProQuest database, training, scholarly journals, participants, and relevant government agencies.

Recommendations for Further Research

Theofanidis and Fountouki (2019) stated potential limitations and gaps in any research because of the assumptions, research method, or study design. I recommend that further research include more significant sample size, a different industry, and population using a quantitative or mixed-methods approach to establish correlations or relationships between voluntary employee turnover and variables such as compensation, training, and communication. Using a larger sample size could reveal more strategies used by small businesses to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. Future researchers could establish statistical inferences and correlations to provide statistical data to address voluntary employee turnover using a quantitative approach. The five small business owners in this study might not fully represent the entire small business industry views but could set the stage to explore more strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. The exclusion of employees as participants in this study was one of the delimitations that could be further explored to hear what motivated them to remain in an organization or caused them to leave.

Reflections

I must admit that Walden University's doctoral program has been one of the most significant challenges of my life and a development and learning process. When I started this journey 3 years ago, I was clueless, afraid, and hesitant, not knowing if I would succeed. I have learned to set measurable goals, live in the moment, and be steadfast amidst all the challenges associated with a doctoral degree. I have learned to be resilient and daring no matter what life throws at me. As an active-duty member of the U.S. Air Force, a husband, and a father, I faced many challenges balancing my work, school, and family. I adopted new time management strategies and applauded my family for understanding when I needed to skip a family dinner to complete an assignment.

Before conducting this study, I had some personal biases and preconceived ideas about small businesses. However, reading *The Belmont Report*, Walden University's ethical research standards, and identifying my biases helped me conduct this research with the highest degree of transparency and an open mind. The findings in this study are the reflections, thoughts, and experiences of the participants. During this process, I have gained substantial knowledge, and my mind has been transformed to think critically and ask the right questions.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted my study, for which I had to adjust. Like many families, my family and I were tried and tested, but God kept us safe. As an agent of positive social change, I am committed to using my degree for the greater good of my family and community. Volunteering and assisting in community-based projects and community schools will be my focus. I am forever grateful to Walden University staff and, more specifically, my chair, second committee member, and the university research reviewer. I have been empowered and have developed critical writing skills during my doctoral journey to set the pace for future research and critical thinking.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that owners of small businesses used to mitigate voluntary employee turnover. Voluntary employee turnover costs businesses significant resources in recruitment and training. There is no all-inclusive antidote to solving voluntary employee turnover across businesses. However, owners of small businesses could utilize this study’s strategies as a framework. The themes that emerged from this study were (a) training and development, (b) open communication, and (c) compensation and rewards, which small business owners can use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover.

The findings from this study provide a framework that small business owners could use to improve employees’ welfare and organizational commitment. Small business owners should consider employee retention strategies as a fundamental part of business operation. Identifying what motivates employees could be a significant breakthrough that might help business owners develop effective retention strategies.

References

Abdalla, M. M., Oliveira, L. G. L., Azevedo, C. E. F., & Gonzalez, R. K. (2018). Quality in qualitative organizational research: Types of triangulation as a methodological alternative. *Administracao: Ensino e Pesquisa*, *19*(1), 66–98. https://doi.org/10.13058/raep.2018.v19n1.578

Acevedo, A. (2018). A personalistic appraisal of Maslow's needs theory of motivation: From "humanistic" psychology to integral humanism. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *148*(4), 741–763. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551–015–2970–0

Afsar, B., Badir, Y. F., Saeed, B. B., & Hafeez, S. (2017). Transformational and transactional leadership and employee's entrepreneurial behavior in knowledge-intensive industries. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *28*(2), 307–332. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1244893

Agarwal, V. (2020). The semi-structured interviewing method in a qualitative study examining complementary and alternative medicine providers' knowledge discourse. In *SAGE Research Methods Cases: Medicine and Health*. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529715989

Al Mamun, C. A., & Hasan, N. (2017). Factors affecting employee turnover and sound retention strategies in business organization: A conceptual view. *Problem and Perspectives in Management*, *15*(1), 63–71. https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.15(1).2017.06

Ali, Z., Mahmood, B., & Mehreen, A. (2019). Linking succession planning to employee performance: The mediating roles of career development and performance appraisal. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, *28*(2), 112–121. https://doi.org/10.1177/1038416219830419

Allen, S., Winston, B. E., Tatone, G. R., & Crowson, H. M. (2018). Exploring a model of servant leadership, empowerment, and commitment in nonprofit organizations. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, *29*(1), 123–140. https://doi.org/10.1002/nml.21311

Aman, A. (2019). Managing internal marketing channel conflict: A proposal for narrative epistemology. *Global Business Review, 20*(4), 901–916. https://doi.org/10.1177/0972150919844889

Amor, E. V., Galindo, V. M., García, S. I., & David, F. (2019). An extension of the industrial, corporate social responsibility practices index: New information for stakeholder engagement under a multivariate approach. *Corporate Social Responsibility & Environmental Management*, *26*(1), 127–140. https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1665

Amundsen, D. L., Msoroka, M., & Findsen, B. (2017). "It is a case of access." The problematics of accessing research participants. *Waikato Journal of Education*, *22*(4), 5–17. https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v22i4.425

An, S. (2019). Employee voluntary and involuntary turnover and organizational performance: Revisiting the hypothesis from classical public administration. *International Public Management Journal, 22*(4), 444–469. https://doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2018.1549629

An, S., Meier, K. J., Bollingtoft, A., & Andersen, L. B. (2018). Employee perceived effect of leadership training: Comparing public and private organizations. *International Public Management Journal, 22*(1), 2–28. https://doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2018.1497739

Andersen, J. A. (2018). Servant leadership and transformational leadership: From comparisons to farewells. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 39*(6), 762–774. https://doi.org/10.1108/lodj-01-2018-0053

Andersen, J. A. (2019). Trust in managers revisited, antecedents, mediating factors, and consequences. *Dynamic Relationships Management Journal, 8*(2), 65–73. https://doi.org/10.17708/DRMJ.2019.v08n02a05

Aquino, P. G., Jr. (2020). Accounting for job satisfaction and job performance via Herzberg's two-factor theory: The case of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in Vietnam. *Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical and Control Systems, 12*(SP3), 1173–1183. https://doi.org/10.5373/jardcs/v12sp3/20201364

Ariyabuddhiphongs, V., & Kahn, S. I. (2017). Transformational leadership and turnover intention: The mediating effects of trust and job performance on café employees in Thailand. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism, 16*(2), 215–233. https://doi.org/10.1080/15332845.2016.1202730

Armstrong, M. B., & Landers, R. N. (2018). Gamification of employee training and development. *International Journal of Training and Development, 22*(2), 162–169. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijtd.12124

Arora, R., Adhikari, B., & Kaur, H. (2021). A study on relationship between employee engagement and training and development. *Trans Asian Journal of Marketing &*

Management Research, *10*(4), 84–90. https://doi.org/10.5958/2279-0667.2021.00008.0

Aruldoss, A., Kowalski, K. B., & Parayitam, S. (2020). The relationship between quality of work life and work-life-balance mediating role of job stress, job satisfaction and job commitment: evidence from India. *Journal of Advances in Management Research*, *18*(1), 36–62. https://doi.org/10.1108/jamr-05-2020-0082

Ashworth, R. E., McDermott, A. M., & Currie, G. (2019). Theorizing from qualitative research in public administration: Plurality through a combination of rigor and richness. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, *29*(2), 318–333. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muy057

Baumann, M. R., & Bonner, B. L. (2017). An expectancy theory approach to group coordination: Expertise, task features, and member behavior. *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*, *30*(2), 407–419. https://doi.org/10.1002/bdm.1954

Bearman, M. (2019). Focus on methodology: Eliciting rich data: A practical approach to writing semistructured interview schedules. *Focus on Health Professional Education*, *20*(3), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.11157/fohpe.v20i3.387

Bejtkovsky, J. (2016). The employees of baby boomers generation, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z in selected Czech corporations as conceivers of development and competitiveness in their corporation. *Journal of Competitiveness*, *8*(4), 105–123. https://doi.org/10.7441/joc.2016.04.07

Ben Mansour, J., Naji, A., & Leclerc, A. (2017). The relationship between training satisfaction and the readiness to transfer learning: The mediating role of normative commitment. *Sustainability, 9*(5), 834–842. https://doi.org/10.3390/su9050834

Benoot, C., Hannes, K., & Bilsen, J. (2016). The use of purposeful sampling in a qualitative evidence synthesis: A worked example on sexual adjustment to a cancer trajectory. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, *16*(1), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-016-0114-6

Bian, X., Sun, Y., Zuo, Z., Xi, J., Xiao, Y., Wang, D., & Xu, G. (2019). Transactional leadership and employee safety behavior: Impact of safety climate and psychological empowerment. *Social Behavior and Personality*, *47*(6), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.7295

Breevaart, K., & Bakker, A. B. (2018). Daily job demands and employee work engagement: The role of daily transformational leadership behavior. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *23*(3), 338–349. https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000082

Buchheit, S., Dalton, D. W., Pollard, T. J., & Stinson, S. R. (2019). Crowdsourcing intelligent research participants: A student versus MTurk comparison. *Behavioral Research in Accounting*, *31*(2), 93–106. https://doi.org/10.2308/bria–52340

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2017). *Job openings and labor turnover survey press release*. United States Department of Labor. https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/jolts_03162017.htm

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. Harpers & Row

Bussin, M. H. R., Mohamed-Padayachee, K., & Serumaga-Zake, P. (2019). A total rewards framework for the attraction of generation Y employees born 1981–2000 in South Africa. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management, 17*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v17i0.1066

Caillier, J. G., & Sa, Y. (2017). Do transformational-oriented leadership and transactional-oriented leadership have an impact on whistle-blowing attitudes? A longitudinal examination conducted in U.S. federal agencies. *Public Management Review*, *19*(4), 406–422. https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2016.1177109

Capnary, M. C., RachmawatI, R., & Agung, I. (2018). The influence of flexibility of work to loyalty and employee satisfaction mediated by work-life balance to employees with millennial generation background in Indonesia startup companies. *Business: Theory & Practice*, *19*, 217–227. https://doi.org/10.3846/btp.2018.22

Castillo-Montoya, M. (2016). Preparing for interview research: The interview protocol refinement framework. *Qualitative Report, 21*, 811–831. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2016.2337

Chaudhry, N. I., Jariko, M. A., Mushtaque, T., Mahesar, H. A., & Ghani, Z. (2017). Impact of working environment and training & development on organization performance through mediating role of employee engagement and job satisfaction. *European Journal of Training and Development Studies, 4*, 33–48. https://www.eajournals.org/journals/european-journal-of-training-and-development-studies-ejtds/vol-4-issue-2-april-2017/impact-working-environment-training-development-organization-performance-mediating-role-employee-engagement-job-satisfaction/

Chaudhuri, S., Arora, R., & Roy, P. (2020). Work-Life balance policies and organizational outcomes—A review of literature from the Indian context. *Industrial and Commercial Training, 52*(3), 155–170. https://doi.org/10.1108/ict-01-2019-0003

Cho, Y., Rutherford, B. N., Friend, S. B., Hamwi, G. A., & Park, J. (2016). The role of emotions on frontline employee turnover intentions. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 25*(1), 57–68. https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2016.1235960

Cho, Y., Shin, M., Billing, T. K., & Bhagat, R. S. (2019). Transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and affective organizational commitment: A closer look at their relationships in two distinct national contexts. *Asian Business & Management*, *18*(3), 187–210. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41291-019-00059-1

Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. (1979). *The Belmont report: Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research.*

Cook, B. G., & Cook, L. (2016). Research designs and special education research: Different designs address different questions. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, *31*(4), 190–198. https://doi.org/10.1111/ldrp.12110

Covella, G., McCarthy, V., Kaifi, B., & Cocoran, D. (2017). Leadership's role in employee retention. *Business Management Dynamics*, *7*(5), 1–15. http://bmdynamics.com/issue_pdf/bmd110934-01-15.pdf

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE.

Crowley, M. J. (2017). Compensation, retraining and respiratory diseases: British coal miners, 1918-1939. *Labor History, 58*(4), 423–449. https://doi.org/10.1080/0023656X.2017.1255541

Daniel, B. K. (2019). Using the TACT framework to learn the principles of rigor in qualitative research. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 17*(1), 118–129. https://doi.org/10.34190/JBRM.17.3.002

De Spiegelaere, S., Van Gyes, G., & Van Hootegem, G. (2018). Innovative work behaviour and performance-related pay: Rewarding the individual or the collective? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(12), 1900–1919. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1216873

Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Dilger, H., Pels, P., & Sleeboom-Faulkner, M. (2018). Guidelines for data management and scientific integrity in ethnography. *Ethnography, 20*(1), 3–7. https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138118819018

Do Carmo, M., Neto, M. S., & Donadone, J. C. (2019). Financialization in the automotive industry: Shareholders, managers, and salaries. *Journal of Economic Issues, 53*(3), 841–862. https://doi.org/10.1080/00213624.2019.1646609

Dopson, S. A., Griffey, S., Ghiya, N., Laird, S., Cyphert, A., & Iskander, J. (2017). Structured mentoring for workforce engagement and professional development in public health settings. *Health Promotion Practice, 18*(3), 327–331. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839916686927

Dugan, R., Hochstein, B., Rouziou, M., & Britton, B. (2019). Gritting their teeth to close the sale: The positive effect of salesperson grit on job satisfaction and performance. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *39*(1), 81–101. https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2018.1489726

Fey, C. F. (2005). Opening the black box of motivation: A cross-cultural comparison of Sweden and Russia. *International Business Review*, *14*(3), 345–367. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2005.03.004

FitzPatrick, B. (2019). Validity in qualitative health education research. *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*, *11*(2), 211–217. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2018.11.014

Forero, R., Nahidi, S., De Costa, J., Mohsin, M., Fitzgerald, G., Gibson, N., McCarthy, S., & Aboagye-Sarfo, P. (2018). Application of four-dimension criteria to assess rigour of qualitative research in emergency medicine. *BMC Health Services Research*, *18*(1). 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-018-2915-2

Fusch, P., & Ness, L. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2015.2281

Fusch, P., Fusch, G. E., & Ness, L. R. (2018). Denzin's paradigm shift: Revisiting triangulation in qualitative research. *Journal of Social Change*, *10*(1). https://doi.org/10.5590/josc.2018.10.1.02

Gao, X., Wen, J., & Zhang, C. (2019). An improved random forest algorithm for predicting employee turnover. *Mathematical Problems in Engineering*, *2019*, 4140707. https://doi.org/10.1155/2019/4140707

Gede, R. (2019). Managing work family conflict and work stress through job satisfaction and its impact on employee performance. *Jurnal Teknik Industri*, *20*(2), 122–127. https://doi.org/10.9744/jti.20.2.127-134

Gertsson, N., Broberg, P., Friberg, J., & Sylvander, J. (2018). Exploring motivational drivers of audit employees—A study focusing on generation Y. *Journal of Accounting & Finance*, *18*(2), 89–105. https://doi.org/10.33423/jaf.v18i2.401

Geydar, D. (2020). An empirical research on factors affecting employee absenteeism in an airline industry: A relook on job stress, work-life balance and job satisfaction as predictors. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, *24*(02), 804–832. https://doi.org/10.37200/ijpr/v24i2/pr200393

Gragnano, A., Simbula, S., & Miglioretti, M. (2020). Work-life balance: Weighing the importance of work-family and work health balance. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(3), 1–907. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17030907

Greer, C. R., Lusch, R. F., & Hitt, M. A. (2017). A service perspective for human capital resources: A critical base for strategy implementation. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *31*(2), 137–158. https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2016.0004

Hackman, J. R., & Porter, L. W. (1968). Expectancy theory predictions of work effectiveness. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, *3*(4), 417–426. https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(68)90018-4

Haider, S., Jabeen, S., & Ahmad, J. (2018). Moderated mediation between work-life balance and employee job performance: The role of psychological well-being and

Three themes emerged satisfaction with coworkers. *Revista de Psicología del Trabajo y de Las Organizaciones*, *34*(1), 29–37. https://doi.org/10.5093/jwop2018a4

Hannola, L., Richter, A., Richter, S., & Stocker, A. (2018). Empowering production workers with digitally facilitated knowledge processes—A conceptual framework. *International Journal of Production Research*, *56*(14), 4729–4743. https://doi.org/10.1080/00207543.2018.1445877

Haque, A., Fernando, M., & Caputi, P. (2019). The relationship between responsible leadership and organizational commitment and the mediating effect of employee turnover intentions: An empirical study with Australian employees. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *156*(3), 759–774. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3575-6

Harjanti, D., & Todani, F. A. (2019). Job burnout and employee performance in hospitality industry: The role of social capital. *Jurnal Teknik Industri*, *21*(1), 15–24. https://doi.org/10.9744/jti.21.1.15-24

Haseski, H. İ., & Ilic, U. (2019). An investigation of the data collection instruments developed to measure computational thinking. *Informatics in Education, 18*(2), 297–319. https://doi.org/10.15388/infedu.2019.14

Hassan, M. K. (2019). Research design and methodological issues for undertaking a research: An ethnographic approach. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, *7*(7). 2321–9203. https://doi.org/10.24940/theijhss/2019/v7/i7/hs1907-121

Hassan, Z., & Govindhasamy, C. (2020). An investigation on extrinsic and intrinsic rewards on employee retention among gen Y: A study in Malaysian manufacturing companies. *Journal of Business and Economic Analysis, 3*(1), 55–69. https://doi.org/10.36924/sbe.2020.3104

Hennink, M. M., Kaiser, B. N., & Marconi, V. C. (2016). Code saturation versus meaning saturation. *Qualitative Health Research*, *27*(4), 591–608. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316665344

Hennink, M. M., Kaiser, B. N., & Weber, M. B. (2019). What influences saturation? Estimating sample sizes in focus group research. *Qualitative Health Research, 29*(10), 1483–1496. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732318821692

Hermans, M. (2019). Perceived organizational change intensity and voluntary employee turnover in Latin America. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, *2019*(1), 12–503. https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2019.12503abstract

Herzberg, F. (1974). Motivation-hygiene profiles: Pinpointing what ails the organization. *Organizational Dynamics*, *3*(2), 18–29. https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616(74)90007-2

Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. B. (1959). *The motivation to work* (2nd ed.). Wiley.

Heydon, G., & Powell, A. (2018). Written-response interview protocols: An innovative approach to confidential reporting and victim interviewing in sexual assault investigations. *Policing and Society, 28*(6), 631–646. https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2016.1187146

Hirsch, J. S., & Philbin, M. M. (2018). The heroines of their own stories: Insights from the use of life history drawings in research with a transnational migrant community. *Participatory Visual Methodologies in Global Public Health, 11*(5–6), 242–262. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315192536-15

Ho, P., Downs, J., Bulsara, C., Patman, S., & Hill, A.-M. (2018). Addressing challenges in gaining informed consent for a research study investigating falls in people with intellectual disability. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities, 46*(2), 92–100. https://doi.org/10.1111/bld.12217

Hoch, J. E., Bommer, W. H., Dulebohn, J. H., & Wu, D. (2018). Do ethical, authentic, and servant leadership explain variance above and beyond transformational leadership? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Management*, *44*(2), 501–529. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316665461

Ichimiya, G. (2019). Leader development through communication with subordinates. *Organizational Dynamics*, *48*(2), 44–52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2018.12.001

Iivari, N. (2018). Using member checking in interpretive research practice. *Information Technology & People, 31*(1), 111–133. https://doi.org/10.1108/itp-07-2016-0168

Jamal Ali, B., & Anwar, G. (2021). An empirical study of employees' motivation and its influence Job satisfaction. *International Journal of Engineering, Business and Management*, *5*(2), 21–30. https://doi.org/10.22161/ijebm.5.2.3

Jang, J., & Kandampully, J. (2018). Reducing employee turnover intention through servant leadership in the restaurant context: A mediation study of affective organizational commitment. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*

Administration, 19(2), 125–141. https://doi.org/10.1080/15256480.2017.1305310

Johnson, M., O'Hara, R., Hirst, E., Weyman, A., Turner, J., Mason, S., & Siriwardena, A. N. (2017). Multiple triangulation and collaborative research using qualitative methods to explore decision making in pre-hospital emergency care. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 17*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-017-0290-z

Joshi, D. G. (2021). Rewards and their influence on employee motivation. *International Journal for Research in Applied Science and Engineering Technology, 9*(VII), 94–99. https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2021.36244

Junaid Khan, A., & Iqbal, J. (2020). Training and employee commitment: The social exchange perspective. *Journal of Management Sciences, 7*(1), 88–100. https://doi.org/10.20547/jms.2014.2007106

Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal, 33*(4), 692–724. https://doi.org/10.5465/256287

Kang, M., & Sung, M. (2019). To leave or not to leave: the effects of perceptions of organizational justice on employee turnover intention via employee-organization relationship and employee job engagement. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 31*(5-6), 152–175. https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726x.2019.1680988

Karagiozis, N. (2018). The complexities of the researcher's role in qualitative research: The power of reflexivity. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Educational Studies, 13*(1), 19–31. https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-011x/cgp/v13i01/19-31

Kark, R., Van Dijk, D., & Vashdi, D. R. (2018). Motivated or demotivated to be creative: The role of self-regulatory focus in transformational and transactional leadership processes. *Applied Psychology*, *67*(1), 186–224. https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12122

Kashive, N., Khanna, V. T., & Bharthi, M. N. (2020). Employer branding through crowdsourcing: Understanding the sentiments of employees. *Journal of Indian Business Research*, *12*(1), 93–111. https://doi.org/10.1108/jibr-09-2019-0276

Khaliq, A. (2020). Relationship of employee training, employee empowerment, team work with job satisfaction. *Journal of Arts & Social Sciences, 7*(2), 185–198. https://doi.org/10.46662/jass-vol7-iss2-2020(185-198)

Khanna, V. (2017). Measuring job satisfaction of academicians using Herzberg Theory. *Delhi Business Review*, *18*(2), 75–86. https://doi.org/10.51768/dbr.v18i2.182201706

Kihuro, A. N., Sang, A., & Ngure, S. (2018). Product strategies influencing performance of private hospitals in Nyeri county, Kenya. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 8*(8), 36–56. https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v8-i8/4472

Kim, W. (2017). Examining mediation effects of work engagement among job resources, job performance, and turnover intention. *Performance Improvement Quarterly, 29*(4), 407–425. https://doi.org/10.1002/piq.21235

Knapp, J. R., Smith, B. R., & Sprinkle, T. A. (2017). Is it the job or the support? Examining structural and relational predictors of job satisfaction and turnover intention for nonprofit employees. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 46*(3), 652–671. https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764016685859

Kodwani, A. D. (2017). Decoding training effectiveness: The role of organizational factors. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, *29*(3), 200–216. https://doi.org/10.1108/JWL-05-2016-0038

Kose, E., & Pehlivanoglu, M. C. (2020). The effect of organizational identification on organizational commitment. *Journal of Business Research-Turk*, *12*(2), 2151–2160. https://doi.org/10.20491/isarder.2020.968

Koskey, M. C., & Njoroge, J. (2019). Influence of employee retention practices on employee performance in disciplined services: Case of the administration police service Nyandarua county, Kenya. *International Journal of Current Aspects, 3*(3), 83–95. https://doi.org/10.35942/ijcab.v3iiii.32

Krefting, L. (1991). Rigor in qualitative research: The assessment of trustworthiness. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, *45*(3), 214–222. https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.45.3.214

Kristina. (2020). The organizational communication perspective theory. *Journal of Social Science, 1*(3), 61–74. https://doi.org/10.46799/jsss.v1i3.37

Lacerenza, C. N., Reyes, D. L., Marlow, S. L., Joseph, D. L., & Salas, E. (2017). Leadership training design, delivery, and implementation: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *102*(12), 1686–1718. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000241

Lai, F., Lu, S., Lin, C., & Lee, Y. (2019). The relationship between leader-member exchange and employees' proactive behaviors: The moderating role of leader's linking-pin position. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, *18*(2), 106–111. https://doi.org/10.1027/1866-5888/a000226

Langtree, T., Birks, M., & Biedermann, N. (2019). Separating "fact" from fiction: Strategies to improve rigor in historical research. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *20*(2), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-20.2.3196

Lantos, J. D. (2017). Informed consent for comparative effectiveness research should not consider the risks of the standard therapies that are being studied as risks of the research. *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, *45*(3), 365–374. https://doi.org/10.1177/1073110517737537

Lapointe, E., & Vandenberghe, C. (2018). Examination of the relationships between servant leadership, organizational commitment, and voice and antisocial behaviors. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *148*(1), 99–115. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-3002-9

Larkin, M., Shaw, R., & Flowers, P. (2018). Multiperspectival designs and processes in interpretative phenomenological analysis research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *16*(2), 182–198. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2018.1540655

Lawler, E. E., & Suttle, J. L. (1973). Expectancy theory and job behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 9*(3), 482–503. https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(73)90066-4

Lee, H. W. (2019). Moderators of the motivational effects of performance management: A comprehensive exploration based on expectancy theory. *Public Personnel*

Management, *48*(1), 27–55. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026018783003

Lee, T. W., Hom, P. W., Eberly, M. B., Mitchell, T. R., & Li, J. (2017). On the next decade of research in voluntary employee turnover. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *31*(3), 201–221. https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2016.0123

Lee, W. (2017). Sustainability of nonprofit human service organizations in a neighborhood context. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, *28*(1), 11–24. https://doi.org/10.1002/nml.21264

Li, N., Zheng, X., Harris, T. B., Liu, X., & Kirkman, B. L. (2016). Recognizing "Me" benefits "We": Investigating the positive spillover effects of formal individual recognition in teams. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *101*(7), 925–939. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000101

Liao, C., Lee, H. W., Johnson, R. E., & Lin, S.-H. (2020). Serving you depletes me? A leader-centric examination of servant leadership behaviors. *Journal of Management*, *47*(5), 1185–1218. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206320906883

Liggans, G., Attoh, P. A., Gong, T., Chase, T., Russell, M. B., & Clark, P. W. (2019). Military veterans in federal agencies: Organizational inclusion, human resource practices, and trust in leadership as predictors of organizational commitment. *Public Personnel Management*, *48*(3), 413–437. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026018819025

Linneberg, M. S., & Korsgaard, S. (2019). Coding qualitative data: a synthesis guiding the novice. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *19*(3), 259–270. https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-12-2018-0012

Linuesa-Langreo, J., Ruiz-Palomino, P., & Elche-Hortelano, D. (2018). Integrating servant leadership into managerial strategy to build group social capital: The mediating role of group citizenship behavior. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *152*(4), 899–916. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3823-4

Litwin, A. S., & Eaton, A. E. (2018). Complementary or conflictual? Formal participation, informal participation, and organizational performance. *Human Resource Management*, *57*(1), 307–325. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21835

Liu, H. (2019). Just the servant: An intersectional critique of servant leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *156*(4), 1099–1112. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3633-0

Lloyd, R., & Mertens, D. (2018). Expecting more out of expectancy theory: History urges inclusion of the social context. *International Management Review*, *14*(1), 28–43. http://americanscholarspress.us/journals/IMR/pdf/IMR-1-2018/IMR-v1-n1-2018-4-19.pdf#page=28

Lu, J., Zhang, Z., & Jia, M. (2019). Does servant leadership affect employees' emotional labor? A social information-processing perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *159*(2), 507–518. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3816-3

Lumpkin, A., & Achen, R. M. (2018). Explicating the synergies of self-determination theory, ethical leadership, servant leadership, and emotional intelligence. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, *12*(1), 6–20. https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21554

Lynch, H. F., Largent, E. A., Joffe, S., & DeMichele, A. M. (2018). Protecting clinical trial participants and study integrity in the age of social media. *Cancer*, *124*(24), 4610–4617. https://doi.org/10.1002/cncr.31748

Madill, A., & Sullivan, P. (2018). Mirrors, portraits, and member checking: Managing difficult moments of knowledge exchange in the social sciences. *Qualitative Psychology*, *5*(3), 321–339. https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000089

Magnan, M., & Martin, D. (2018). Executive compensation and employee remuneration: The flexible principles of justice in pay. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *160*(1), 89–105. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3786-5

Mahadi, N., Woo, N. M. F., Baskaran, S., & Yaakop, A. Y. (2020). Determinant factors for employee retention: Should I stay? *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, *10*(4), 201–213. https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i4/7120

Manasa, K. V. L., & Showry, M. (2018). The impact of work-life balance practices on women employees in the IT sector. *IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, *12*(1), 54–68. https://ssrn.com/abstract=3313308

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, *50*(4), 370–396. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346

Masri, N. E., & Suliman, A. (2019). Talent management, employee recognition and performance in the research institutions. *Studies in Business and Economics*, *14*(1), 127–140. https://doi.org/10.2478/sbe-2019-0010

McCarthy, M. G., & Ford, D. J. (2019). Integrating evidenced-based counseling interventions into employee development and training: A narrative discussion on counseling professionals and business owners working together to better serve the employee and workplace environment. *TechTrends*, *64*(2), 260–264. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-019-00450-x

Meadows, A., & Wimpenny, K. (2017). Core themes in music therapy clinical improvisation: An arts-informed qualitative research synthesis. *Journal of Music Therapy*, *54*(2), 161–195. https://doi.org/10.1093/jmt/thx006

Melhem, R. A., & Ozgit, H. (2019). The mediating role of employee motivation on internal marketing and employee retention. *Ottoman Journal of Tourism and Management Research, 4*(3), 562–583. https://doi.org/10.26465/ojtmr.2018339528

Men, L. R., & Yue, C. A. (2019). Creating a positive emotional culture: Effect of internal communication and impact on employee supportive behaviors. *Public Relations Review, 45*(3), 101764. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2019.03.001

Mendikoetxea, A., & Lozano, C. (2018). From corpora to experiments: Methodological triangulation in the study of word order at the interfaces in adult late bilinguals (L2 learners). *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, *47*(4), 871–898. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-018-9560-0

Millum, J., & Garnett, M. (2019). How payment for research participation can be coercive. *American Journal of Bioethics, 19*(4), 21–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2019.1630497

Min, M., Anderson, J. A., & Minge, C. (2017). What do we know about full-service community schools? Integrative research review with NVivo. *School Community Journal*, *27*(1), 29–54. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1146450.pdf

Mo, S., & Shi, J. (2017). Linking ethical leadership to employee burnout, workplace deviance and performance: Testing the mediating roles of trust in leader and surface acting. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *144*(2), 293–303. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2821-z

Mohajan, H. K. (2017). Two criteria for good measurements in research: Validity and reliability. Annals of Spiru Haret University. *Economic Series*, *17*(4), 59–82. https://doi.org/10.26458/1746

Mohsen, M. A. M. S. (2016). Committed generations: a case study on generations X and Y employees in Saudi hotels. *Anatolia*, *27*(4), 456–467. https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2016.1160416

Montani, F., Boudrias, J. S., & Pigeon, M. (2017). Employee recognition, meaningfulness and behavioral involvement: Test of a moderated mediation model. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *31*(3), 356–384. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2017.1288153

Moore, C., Mayer, D. M., Chiang, F. F. T., Crossley, C., Karlesky, M. J., & Birtch, T. A. (2019). Leaders matter morally: The role of ethical leadership in shaping employee moral cognition and misconduct. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 104*(1), 123–145. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000341

Moser, A., & Korstjens, I. (2017). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 3: Sampling, data collection and analysis. *European Journal of General Practice, 24*(1), 9–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375091

Mumtaz, A. M., Salleh, R., & Mohamed Noor, R. B. (2016). The link between training satisfaction, work engagement, and turnover intention. *European Journal of Training and Development*, *40*(6), 407–429. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-10-20150077

Muneeb, A., & Ahmad, A. (2020). Awareness of employee compensation and its effect on employee motivation. *International Journal of Management Excellence*, *14*(3), 2114–2118. https://doi.org/10.17722/ijme.v14i3.1144

Mureithi, L., Burnett, J. M., Bertscher, A., & English, R. (2018). Emergence of three general practitioner contracting-in models in South Africa: A qualitative multi-case study. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, *17*(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-018-0830-0

Naidoo, V., Abarantyne, I., & Rugimbana, R. (2019). The impact of psychological contracts on employee engagement at a university of technology. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, *17*, a1039. https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v17i0.1039

Naidu, T., & Prose, N. (2018). Reenvisioning member checking and communicating results as accountability practice in qualitative research: A South African community-based organization example. *Forum*: *Qualitative Social Research, 19*(1), 756–783. https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-19.3.3153

Naim, M. F., & Lenka, U. (2017). How does mentoring contribute to gen Y employees' intention to stay? An Indian perspective. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, *13*(2), 314–335. https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v13i2.1304

Ndungu, D. N. (2017). The effects of rewards and recognition on employee performance in public educational institutions: A case of Kenyatta University, Kenya. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research, 17*(1), 42–68. https://globaljournals.org/GJMBR_Volume17/6-The-Effects-of-Rewards-and-Recognition.pdf

Niessen, C., Müller, T., Hommelhoff, S., & Westman, M. (2018). The impact of preventive coping on business travelers' work and private life. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *39*(1), 113–127. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2215

Nurmi, S. M., Halkoaho, A., Kangasniemi, M., & Pietila, A.-M. (2017). Collaborative partnership and the social value of clinical research: A qualitative secondary analysis. *BMC Medical Ethics*, *18*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12910-017-0217-6

Ocen, E., Francis, K., & Angundaru, G. (2017). The role of training in building employee commitment: The mediating effect of job satisfaction. *European Journal of Training and Development*, *41*(9), 742–757. https://doi.org/10.1108/ejtd-11-2016-0084

Paksoy, M., Kumral, T., & Sarp, P. (2019). The mediating role of knowledge sharing in the effect of transactional leadership and transformational leadership on the organizational creativity. *Press Academia*, *9*(9), 69–73. https://doi.org/10.17261/pressacademia.2019.1068

Panda, S., Begley, C., & Daly, D. (2018). Clinicians' views of factors influencing decision-making for cesarean section: A systematic review and meta-synthesis of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods studies. *PLoS ONE*, *13*(7), 1–27.

https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0200941

Pareek, A., Mohanty, S., & Mangaraj, S. (2019). Systematic review on employee engagement and its impact on employee retention. *Training & Development Journal*, *10*(2), 1–125. https://doi.org/10.5958/2231-069x.2019.00013.1

Peesker, K. M., Ryals, L. J., Rich, G. A., & Boehnke, S. E. (2019). A qualitative study of leader behaviors perceived to enable salesperson performance. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *39*(4), 319–333. https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2019.1596816

Pohler, D., & Schmidt, J. A. (2016). Does pay for performance strain the employment relationship? The effect of manager bonus eligibility on nonmanagement employee turnover. *Personnel Psychology*, *69*(2), 395–429. https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12106

Poucher, Z. A., Tamminen, K. A., Caron, J. G., & Sweet, S. N. (2019). Thinking through and designing qualitative research studies: a focused mapping review of 30 years of qualitative research in sport psychology. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, *13*(1), 163–186. https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984x.2019.1656276

Prasetio, A. P., Azis, e., & Anggadwita, g. (2019). Exploring compensation satisfaction to enhance motivation and reduce turnover intention among employee of private bottled water company in Indonesia. *Jurnal Bisnis Dan Manajemen, 20*(1), 32–48. https://doi.org/10.24198/jbm.v20i1.274

Preston, J., & Barnes, K. E. R. (2018). Successful leadership in rural schools: Cultivating collaboration. *Rural Educator*, *38*(1), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.35608/ruraled.v38i1.231

Prosek, E. A., & Gibson, D. M. (2021). Promoting rigorous research by examining lived experiences: A review of four qualitative traditions. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *99*(2), 167–177. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12364

Puyvelde, D. V. (2018). Qualitative research interviews and the study of national security intelligence. *International Studies Perspectives*, *19*(4), 375–391. https://doi.org/10.1093/isp/eky001

Rahman, K., Akhter, W., & Khan, S. U. (2017). Factors affecting employee job satisfaction: A comparative study of convectional and Islamic insurance. *Cogent Business & Management*, *4*(1), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2016.1273082

Rahman, M. S. (2016). The advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in language "testing and assessment" research: A literature review. *Journal of Education and Learning*, *6*(1), 102–115. https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v6n1p102

Ravindran, V. (2019). Data analysis in qualitative research. *Indian Journal of Continuing Nursing Education, 20*(1), 40–45. https://doi.org/10.4103/ijcn.ijcn_1_19

Raza, M. A., Khan, M. M., & Mujtaba, B. G. (2018). The impact of organizational change on employee turnover intention: Does stress play a mediating role? *Public Organization Review*, *18*(3), 313–327. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11115-017-0380-8

Renz, S. M., Carrington, J. M., & Badger, T. A. (2018). Two strategies for qualitative content analysis: An intramethod approach to triangulation. *Qualitative Health Research, 28*(5), 824–831. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732317753586

Ridder, H. (2017). The theory contribution of case study research designs. *Business Research, 10*(2), 281–305. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40685-017-0045-z

Riley, S. M., Michael, S. C., & Mahoney, J. T. (2017). Human capital matters: Market valuation of firm investments in training and the role of complementary assets: Human Capital Matters. *Strategic Management Journal*, *38*(9), 1895–1914. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2631

Rose, J., & Johnson, C. W. (2020). Contextualizing reliability and validity in qualitative research: toward more rigorous and trustworthy qualitative social science in leisure research. *Journal of Leisure Research, 51*(4), 432–451. https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2020.1722042

Roulston, K., & Preissle, J. (2018). Debating ethical research with human subjects. *Acta Paedagogica Vilnensia, 40*(1), 11–24. https://doi.org/10.15388/actpaed.2018.0.11885

Rubenstein, A. L., Eberly, M. B., Lee, T. W., & Mitchell, T. R. (2018). Surveying the forest: A meta-analysis, moderator investigation, and future-oriented discussion of the antecedents of voluntary employee turnover. *Personnel Psychology*, *71*(1), 23–65. https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12226

Rutherford, B. N., Boles, J. S., & Ambrose, S. C. (2019). Reconceptualizing the measurement of multidimensional salesperson job satisfaction. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *39*(3), 287–298.

https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2019.1601018

Saengchai, S., Siriattakul, P., & Jermsittiparsert, K. (2019). The mediating role of employee engagement between team and co-worker relation, work environment, training and development and employee performance. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, *23*(4), 853–864. https://doi.org/10.37200/ijpr/v23i4/pr190414

Salah, M., Abou-Shouk, M., & Fawzy, N. M. (2019). Exploring the impact of internal marketing on organizational commitment of travel agents' employees. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Systems*, *12*(1), 1–12. http://www.publishingindia.com/ijhts/24/exploring-the-impact-of-internal-marketing-on-organizational-commitment-of-travel-agents-employees/744/5164/

Saleem, M., & Mahmood, F. (2019). Transformational leadership and employees' creativity: A multi-mediation model. *Journal of Management and Research*, *5*(1), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.29145/jmr/51/0501005

Satalkar, P., & Shaw, D. (2019). How do researchers acquire and develop notions of research integrity? A qualitative study among biomedical researchers in Switzerland. *BMC Medical Ethics*, *20*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12910-019-0410-x

Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., & Jinks, C. (2017). Saturation in qualitative research: Exploring its conceptualization and operationalization. *Quality & Quantity*, *52*(4), 1893–1907. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8

Sawaneh, I. A., & Kamara, F. K. (2019). An effective employee retention policies as a way to boost organizational performance. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, *7*(2), 41–48. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.jhrm.20190702.12

Schlechter, A. F., Syce, C., & Bussin, M. (2016). Predicting voluntary turnover in employees using demographic characteristics: A South African case study. *Acta Commercii*, *16*(1), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.4102/ac.v16i1.274

Schuetz, A. (2017). Effective leadership and its impact on an organisation's success. *Journal of Corporate Responsibility and Leadership*, *3*(3), 73–90. https://doi.org/10.12775/jcrl.2016.017

Shannonhouse, L. R., Barden, S. M., & McDonald, C. P. (2017). Mixed methodology in group research: Lessons learned. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 42*(1), 87–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/01933922.2016.1264521

Sharma, V. K., & Deb, M. (2019). Knowledge management through technology: Exploring extant research using NVivo. *Theoretical Economics Letters, 9*(4), 761–770. https://doi.org/10.4236/tel.2019.94050

Sheikh, Z., & Hoeyer, K. (2018). "That is why I have trust": unpacking what 'trust' means to participants in international genetic research in Pakistan and Denmark. *Medicine Health Care and Philosophy*, *21*(2), 169–179. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11019-017-9795-9

Singhvi, P. A. S., Dhage, N. N., & Sharma, P. P. (2018). Compensation and its impact on motivation employee's satisfaction and employee's performance. *International Academic Journal of Organizational Behavior and Human Resource*

Management, 5(2), 1–43. https://doi.org/10.9756/iajobhrm/v5i2/1810012

Siyal, S., & Peng, X. (2018). Does leadership lessen turnover? The moderated mediation effect of leader–member exchange and perspective taking on public servants. *Journal of Public Affairs 18*(4), e1830. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.1830

Smith, M. B., Wallace, J. C., Vandenberg, R. J., & Mondore, S. (2018). Employee involvement climate, task and citizenship performance, and instability as a moderator. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(4), 615–636. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1184175

Soriano, A., Kozusznik, M. W., Peiro, J. M., & Mateo, C. (2018). Mediating role of job satisfaction, affective well-being, and health in the relationship between indoor environment and absenteeism: Work patterns matter! *Work, 61*(2), 313–325. https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-182802

Sousa, M., & van Dierendonck, D. (2017). Servant leadership and the effect of the interaction between humility, action, and hierarchical power on follower engagement. *Journal of Business Ethics, 141*(1), 13–25. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2725-y

Spiers, J., & Riley, R. (2018). Analysing one dataset with two qualitative methods: The distress of general practitioners, a thematic and interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 16*(2), 276–290. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2018.1543099

Stater, K. J., & Stater, M. (2018). Is it "just work"? The impact of work rewards on job satisfaction and turnover intent in the nonprofit, for-profit, and public sectors.

American Review of Public Administration, *49*(4), 495–511. https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074018815261

Stavrou, E., & Ierodiakonou, C. (2016). Entitlement to work-life balance support: employee/manager perceptual discrepancies and their effect on outcomes. *Human Resource Management*, *55*(5), 845–869. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21745

Steffens, N. K., Yang, J., Jetten, J., Haslam, S. A., & Lipponen, J. (2018). The unfolding impact of leader identity entrepreneurship on burnout, work engagement, and turnover intentions. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *23*(3), 373–387. https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000090

Stroo, M., Asfaw, K., Deeter, C., Freel, S. A., Brouwer, R. J. N., Hames, B., & Snyder, D. C. (2020). Impact of implementing a competency-based job framework for clinical research professionals on employee turnover. *Journal of Clinical and Translational Science*, *4*(4), 331–335. https://doi.org/10.1017/cts.2020.22

Sun, R., & Wang, W. (2017). Transformational leadership, employee turnover intention, and actual voluntary turnover in public organizations. *Public Management Review*, *19*(8), 1124–1141. https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2016.1257063

Suwinci, N. K. R. S. (2020). Influence of leadership and organization climate to organizational fairness and employee engagement. *Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical and Control Systems*, *12*(SP8), 173–186. https://doi.org/10.5373/jardcs/v12sp8/20202513

Tai, S., Woodward-Kron, R., & Barr, C. (2018). Audiology students' perspectives of enacting and learning clinical communication: A qualitative interview and video reflexivity Study. *American Journal of Audiology*, *27*(2), 219–230. https://doi.org/10.1044/2018_AJA-17-0097

Theofanidis, D., & Fountouki, A. (2019). Limitations and delimitations in the research process. *Perioperative Nursing*, *7*(3), 155–162. http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2552022

Tiwari, M. (2017). Work-life balance of female employees in private institutions, Gwalior: An investigation. *ISOR Journal of Business and Management*, *19*(5), 35–38. https://doi.org/10.9790/487X-1905053538

Travis, D. J., Lizano, E. L., & Barak, M. E. M. (2016). “I am so stressed!”: A longitudinal model of stress, burnout, and engagement among social workers in child welfare settings. *British Journal of Social Work*, *46*(4), 1076–1095. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bct205

Usman, K. (2019). Impact of organizational culture, organizational communication and supervisor support on the job satisfaction of employees working in online IT-based distance learning institutions of Pakistan. *Open Praxis*, *11*(2), 1–143. https://doi.org/10.5944/openpraxis.11.2.931

Vermooten, N., Boonzaier, B., & Kidd, M. (2019). Job crafting, proactive personality and meaningful work: Implications for employee engagement and turnover intention. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, *45*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v45i0.1567

Vrchota, J., & Rehor, P. (2019). The influence of a human resource strategy to the function of human resource processes in small and medium-sized enterprises

(SMEs). *Serbian Journal of Management*, *14*(2), 299–314. https://doi.org/10.5937/sjm14-19588

Vroom, V. (1964). *Work and motivation*. Wiley.

Wahba, M. A., & Bridwell, L. G. (1976). Maslow reconsidered: A review of research on the need hierarchy theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 15*(2), 212–240. https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90038-6

Wardani, L. M. I., & Oktafiansyah, D. (2020). Employer branding and work engagement in non-bank financing company. *Jurnal Psikologi*, *19*(2), 152–173. https://doi.org/10.14710/jp.19.2.152-173

Weber, M. (1947). *The theory of social and economic organizations*. Free Press.

Weller, S. C., Vickers, B., Bernard, H. R., Blackburn, A. M., Borgatti, S., Gravlee, C. C., & Johnson, J. C. (2018). Open-ended interview questions and saturation. *PLoS ONE*, *13*(6), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0198606

Willis, S., Clarke, S., & O'Connor, E. (2017). Contextualizing leadership: Transformational leadership and management-by-exception-active in safety-critical contexts. *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, *90*(3), 281–305. https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12172

Wisenthal, A., Krupa, T., Kirsh, B., & Lysaght, R. (2019). Insights into cognitive work hardening for return-to-work following depression: Qualitative findings from an intervention study. *Work*, *62*(4), 599–613. https://doi.org/10.3233/wor-192893

Wong, K., Chan, A. H. S., & Ngan, S. C. (2019). The effect of long working hours and overtime on occupational health: A meta-analysis of evidence from 1998 to 2018.

International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, *16*(12), 2102. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16122102

Wu, J., Liden, R. C., Liao, C., & Wayne, S. J. (2021). Does manager servant leadership lead to follower serving behaviors? It depends on follower self-interest. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *106*(1), 152–167. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000500

Xu, F., & Wang, X. (2019). Transactional leadership and dynamic capabilities: The mediating effect of regulatory focus. *Management Decision*, *57*(9), 2284–2306. https://doi.org/10.1108/md-11-2017-115

Yang, J., Guan, Z., & Pu, B. (2019). Mediating influences of entrepreneurial leadership on employee turnover intention in startups. *Social Behavior and Personality*, *47*(6), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.8117

Yarbrough, S., Martin, P., Alfred, D., & McNeill, C. (2017). Professional values, job satisfaction, career development, and intent to stay. *Nursing Ethics*, *24*(6), 675–685. https://doi.org/10.1177/0969733015623098

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). SAGE.

Yusuf, D. C., Hamzah, D., & Yusuf, R. M. (2020). The effect of compensation and job environment on employee loyalty through job satisfaction as an intervening variable. *Hasanuddin Journal of Business Strategy*, *2*(4), 76–84. https://doi.org/10.26487/hjbs.v2i4.370

Zheng, C., Kashi, K., Fan, D., Molineux, J., & Ee, M. S. (2016). Impact of individual coping strategies and organizational work-life balance programs on Australian employee well-being. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *27*(5), 501–526. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2015.1020447

Zimmermann, B. (2020). Employee voice and lifelong education capabilities in France and Germany: Two models of responsibility. *International Journal of Training and Development*, *24*(3), 265–282. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijtd.12196

Zyphur, M. J., & Pierides, D. C. (2019). Statistics and probability have always been value-laden: An historical ontology of quantitative research methods. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *167*(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04187-8

Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. What key strategies did you use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover?
2. What key barriers did you encounter in developing and implementing the strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover in your organization?
3. How did you overcome the critical barriers in developing and implementing the strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover in your organization?
4. How did your organization assess the effectiveness of the strategies for mitigating voluntary employee turnover?
5. What key strategies did you find least effective in mitigating voluntary employee turnover in your organization, and why?
6. What, if any, changes have you seen since the implementation of these strategies?
7. What impact did these strategies have on retention rates?
8. What additional information would you like to share regarding mitigating voluntary employee turnover in your organization?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol	
What to do	What to say
Interview questions and ground rules.	Good morning/afternoon, and thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to participate in this study. The overreaching question for this study is: What strategies do owners of small businesses use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover? I want your permission to record this interview, which will help me create a transcript for our conversation analysis. You have the right to stop the recording at any time during the interview, and your participation is voluntary.
I will ask follow-up questions, probing questions, and Paraphrase questions if needed for clarity.	What key strategies did you use to mitigate voluntary employee turnover?
	What key barriers did you encounter in developing and implementing the strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover in your organization?
	What key barriers have you encountered in the implementation of the strategies?
	How did you overcome the critical barriers in developing and implementing the strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover in your organization?
	What key strategies did you find least effective in mitigating voluntary employee turnover in your organization, and why?
	What, if any, changes have you seen since the implementation of these strategies?
	What impact did these strategies have on retention rates?
	What impact did these strategies have on retention rates?

Interview wrap-up.	What additional information would you like to share regarding mitigating voluntary employee turnover in your organization that I have not asked? Once again, I would like to thank you for your participation in this study.
Member checking and schedule of a follow-up interview.	To ensure an accurate interpretation of the information you have given, I sent a summary of the interview for you for review. I scheduled a follow-up interview to discuss any corrections or addition to the transcript.

Appendix C: Email Invitation

Date: [Insert date]

Subject: Participation in a Doctoral Research Study

Dear [Insert Name]

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in a doctoral study concerning strategies for mitigating voluntary employee turnover in small businesses. My name is Eric R. Gant, and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. Your selection to participate in this study is because you have successfully used strategies to mitigate voluntary employee turnover in your organization. Participants in this study will be owners of small businesses in the eastern United States.

The interview will be conducted using the telephone because of the current COVID-19 pandemic. It is expected that the interview will last for about an hour and will be recorded, and a summary of the interview will be sent to you for clarity and corrections. I will be requesting public company documents on your organization's retention rates. A copy of the findings and recommendations will be sent to your organization.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and there will be no compensation given to participants. To protect your identity and your organization, I will use codes to represent each participant so that your information is not revealed. I have also enclosed the Consent Form for your review and consent should you decide to participate in this study.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards

Eric R. Gant

Email: eric.gant@waldenu.edu Tel: 6789549241