

2021

Strategies to Reduce Voluntary Employee Turnover in Big-Box Retailers

Destiny Cheyenne Harper-Lane
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Destiny Cheyenne Harper-Lane

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Review Committee

Dr. Michael Lavelle, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Isabel Wan, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Judith Blando, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

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

Walden University
2021

Abstract

Strategies to Reduce Voluntary Employee Turnover in Big-Box Retailers

by

Destiny Cheyenne Harper-Lane

MS, Northern Kentucky University, 2008

BS, Berea College, 2006

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

October 2021

Abstract

Each year, more than 33 million employees in the United States voluntarily quit their jobs. Voluntary employee turnover is prevalent in the big-box retail industry, thus making it an important focus for managers. Grounded in transformational leadership theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies big-box retail managers used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. The participants comprised 14 managers from 11 different retailers with proven employee retention best practices from big-box retail locations in San Antonio, Texas. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews, company documents, company websites, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics website. Four themes emerged from the thematic analysis: care for employees, employee ownership and empowerment, effective leadership communication, and positive relationships. A key recommendation includes displaying empathy for life challenges and providing employees tangible recognition and benefits. The implications for positive social change include the potential for additional employment opportunities in big-box retail to support economic growth within local communities. Reducing voluntary employee turnover may improve the customer's shopping experience and enhance employee's vitality and growth.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to my loving family. To my supportive husband, Charles Anthony Lane- thank you for always understanding the sacrifice and believing in me, even when I did not believe in myself. To my amazing parents, Derrick Glenn and Vivian Ann Harper- thank you for being my biggest fans and motivators- we did it Joe! Lastly, I want to thank my sweet girl, Harper Alyse Lane, for inspiring me to push, press, and pursue despite all obstacles. Becoming your mommy has been the best thing that has ever happened to me, and my goal is to be a consistent and humble example of what you can do with a whole lot of Jesus, humility, hard work, positivity, and some black girl magic! I'm so excited for all God has in store for the Lane family -To God Be the Glory.

Acknowledgments

I would like to give praise, honor, and glory to God for affording me with the strength to obtain this tremendous accomplishment. I also want to give special acknowledgement to the influential chairs who pushed me to complete this process and become the best scholar I could be. It has been a journey, but Dr. Mike Lavelle remained steadfast and committed to the task of making a doctor. For that, I am truly grateful! I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Isabel Wan and Dr. Judy Blando, for their support and feedback. Finally, I thank my extended family, friends, sorority sisters, church family and work colleagues for their support and prayers throughout this process. I am forever thankful for your love and encouragement.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Voluntary employee turnover creates an ongoing challenge for managers due to a continuous need to focus on recruitment and training (Ellingson et al., 2016). The residual effects of voluntary employee turnover range from a loss of knowledge to reduced operational effectiveness (Reina et al., 2018). Big-box retail managers must aggressively monitor and control turnover trends because it directly affects the profitability of their organization (Mekraz & Gundala, 2016). To reduce voluntary employee turnover in their retail environment, managers must identify and deploy strategies that promote employee retention (Nica, 2016).

Background of the Problem

A significant problem influencing some business leaders is voluntary employee turnover (Moon, 2017). When employees leave voluntarily, companies experience costly staff replacements, gaps in process knowledge, and reduced team morale (Katsikea et al., 2015). Big-box retail managers might experience challenges with voluntary employee turnover when team members believe their organization is more focused on prestige and profit than taking care of their staff (Newman & Kane, 2014). Big-box retail leaders must address this perception by mitigating organizational concerns to achieve profitability and retain their employees (Kundu & Lata, 2017). Managers might use research from this study to gain strategies to reduce organizational conflicts and positively affect operational performance.

Employees reveal that poor communication, conflict with leadership style, and unclear vision are the top reasons they lose loyalty to their organization (Coetzer et al.,

2019). When employees become disloyal, their commitment level reduces, triggering voluntary employee turnover (Coetzer et al., 2019). Business leaders are responsible for resolving disengagement issues that lead to employee turnover and should actively seek solutions to improve their organization (George, 2015). Concepts from theories such as transformational leadership might strengthen employee commitment and retention (Bass, 1985). Big-box retail managers need additional research to understand how to improve profits by reducing voluntary employee turnover.

Problem Statement

Each year, more than 33 million employees in the United States voluntarily quit their jobs (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). The estimated cost associated with replacing knowledge and performance lost when an employee voluntarily leaves is 90% to 200% of an employee's annual salary (Stamolampros et al., 2019). The general business problem was some businesses experience a loss of profitability when employees leave the organization. The specific business problem was that some big-box retail managers lack strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. The target population consisted of 14 big-box retail managers from big-box retailers located in San Antonio, Texas, who had reduced voluntary employee turnover. I interviewed 14 big-box retail managers employed in a total of 11 retailers in San Antonio, Texas, who had successfully implemented strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover for at least 1 year.

These managers shared their successful reduction in employee turnover strategies through open-ended interview sessions. The implications for positive social change include the potential to help big-box retail managers acquire additional strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover costs. Reducing voluntary employee turnover within big-box retail organizations might increase gainful employment, thus improving living standards and financial stability for residents in the community.

Nature of the Study

The three research methods used by researchers are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Venkatesh et al., 2016). Researchers use qualitative methods to explore the why, what, or how of a phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In contrast, quantitative researchers use numerical data to test hypotheses to examine a specific research question (Park & Park, 2016). Researchers use mixed methods to combine both qualitative and quantitative elements to understand a phenomenon (Venkatesh et al., 2016). For this study, I did not test hypotheses or use numerical data; therefore, quantitative and mixed methods were not appropriate. I explored what strategies big-box retail managers could use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Consequently, a qualitative method was appropriate for this study.

I considered four research designs for a qualitative study on reducing voluntary employee turnover: phenomenological, ethnographic, narrative, and case study. Business researchers use phenomenology to explore lived experiences within one unique phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). A phenomenological design was not appropriate as my study did not focus on the lived experiences of participants. Researchers use ethnographic

designs to explore a specific culture's patterns and interactions (Venkatesh et al., 2016). Ethnography was not suitable because the nature of my exploration did not require cultural patterns and interactions. The narrative design includes temporal sequencing, characters, and plots to deliver a lesson or moral (Bruce et al., 2016). The narrative design did not support my study because I did not focus on temporal sequencing and story development. Business researchers use the case study design to explore a real-time, contemporary issue in a bounded environment (Yin, 2017). I selected the case study design to explore the contemporary issue of voluntary employee turnover within the bounded environment of big-box retail.

Research Question

This study's central research question is: What strategies do some big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover?

Interview Questions

1. What retail managerial strategies do you use to motivate your employees to stay on your team?
2. What strategy did you find worked best to minimize voluntary employee turnover?
3. Describe what strategies you use to inspire employee buy-in to the company's mission and its influence on employee retention.
4. Describe what strategies you use to stimulate employee creativity and its influence on employee retention rates.

5. How do you foster commitment from employees who become misaligned with your organization's mission?
6. What additional information regarding retail managerial leadership strategies and voluntary employee turnover would you like to share?

Conceptual Framework

Burns (1978) developed the transformational leadership theory, which was expanded by Bass in 1985. Bass (1985) used transformational leadership theory to emphasize the influence leaders can have on increasing employees' organizational commitment and performance by using these fundamental concepts: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Building upon Burn's theory, Bass (1990) solidified transformational leadership theory as an ideal practice to effectively engage and empower employees through influential leader-follower relationships. Sun and Wang (2017) posited that engaged employees had increased trust in their managers and lower turnover intentions. Tenets from transformational leadership theory relate to this study as transformational leadership theory can offer helpful strategies to strengthen the manager-employee relationship and promote employee satisfaction.

Leaders use transformational leadership theory to build strong organizational awareness and commitment to a unified mission. Managers align employees to the company mission and vision by helping them move beyond self-interest to act on behalf of the company's best interests (Bass, 1990). Employees who experience strong leader-follower relationships have enhanced commitment to their organization and increased

self-value through goal achievement, reducing turnover ratios (Joseph, 2016). Bass (1985) enriched the transformational leadership theory to support employees' advancement and organizational goals through vision, influence, and total team contribution. Transformational leadership theory can provide a lens for exploring the strategies big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Operational Definitions

A clear definition of the unique terms presented in this study from professional and scholarly sources is essential to understanding this topic. The following operational definitions will foster mutual understanding and prevent misinterpretation of terms for the reader:

Big-box retailer: A big-box retailer refers to a large-scale corporate retail chain that measures 50,000 square feet or more (Johnson & née Lybecker, 2018). Alternately known as a *super* or *megastore*, big-box retail stores sell general merchandise items such as grocery, household goods, electronics, or clothing at wholesale prices to create a convenient shopping experience (Newman & Kane, 2014).

Idealized influence: Idealized influence refers to a leader's ability to apply emotional influence using charisma, ethical leadership, and trust to gain regard from his/her employees (Langat et al., 2019).

Organizational citizenship behavior: Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to voluntary behavior and commitment an employee exhibits that go beyond their self-interest (Gupta et al., 2017).

Turnover intentions: Turnover intentions refer to an employee's thoughts and plans to leave their job (Fazio et al., 2017). The act of searching for a new employment opportunity also relates to turnover intentions.

Voluntary employee turnover: Voluntary employee turnover refers to an employee's decision to leave their employer (Lee et al., 2017).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Qualitative researchers must understand and document the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations found within their research to promote credibility and rationale for interpretation (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). Failure to address these elements properly could affect the reader's belief in the evidence provided (Pietrzak & Roman, 2018). The section below outlines the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations selected for this study.

Assumptions

Assumptions are facts, beliefs, or expectations that researchers consider to be true despite their validity or ability to prove them (Nkwake & Morrow, 2016). Three assumptions existed for this study. The first assumption was that all participants will answer questions honestly. The second assumption was that participants will understand the significance of this study and desire to contribute to the exploration of reducing voluntary employee turnover. A final assumption was that the interview questions may result in the responses necessary to uncover strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover in big-box retail organizations.

Limitations

Limitations are potential weaknesses within a study that a researcher cannot control (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). Three limitations were in this study. The first limitation was time restraints to conduct data collection. The second limitation was expecting the findings of this case study to be transferable to other retail industry cases. Yin (2017) noted the detriment of considering case studies for statistical data, as they are not representative sampling units and may vary in sample size. A final limitation was the possibility of not reaching data saturation during interviews. To overcome this limitation, I continued interviews until I met data saturation.

Delimitations

Delimitations are bounds that define and help determine the scope of a study (Yin, 2017). The focus of my study was to explore the strategies some big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. One delimitation was that only managers from big-box retailers will participate in this study. Another delimitation was that participants would represent big-box retail stores in the San Antonio, Texas, metropolitan area who met my study's sampling criteria. By effectively enforcing these bounds, this study produced relevant research within the scope of voluntary employee turnover that may improve future business leaders' practices.

Significance of the Study

In this section, I describe how the study is a value to businesses and, may contribute to the effective practice of business and may contribute to positive social change. Results from this study might help big-box retail managers gain an understanding

of the factors that influence voluntary employee turnover, thus improving employee retention. As such, better big-box leadership strategies could enhance the bottom-line of companies, encouraging investment opportunities in their local communities.

Value to Businesses

Voluntary employee turnover affects the bottom line of every business. The staggering costs to recruit and train new employees to fill vacant positions reduces the funds available to advance and maintain top talent (Sandhya & Sulphrey, 2020). This study may be valuable to businesses because it offers insight managers can use to retain their employees. Managers who understand strategies that boost their employees' organizational commitment behaviors can maintain productive and collaborative environments that curb turnover intentions (Islam et al., 2016).

Contribution to Business Practice

Business leaders are responsible for maximizing profitability within their organizations (Mekraz & Gundala, 2016). Reducing voluntary employee turnover can help maintain a sustainable business by contributing to its profitability (Coetzer et al., 2019). This study is significant to business practice because it might provide a practical model for better understanding the strategies big-box retail managers can use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Leadership strategies can increase retention and mitigate costs, thereby improving profitability.

Implications for Social Change

Leadership can influence employee behaviors and motivations necessary for building sustainable and profitable environments (Kundu & Lata, 2017). Implications for

social change include higher employee retention that might financially stimulate the local community. A decrease in voluntary employee turnover might increase an organization's financial and relational health (Kundu & Lata, 2017). Vibrancy from reduced voluntary employee turnover might also affect the community's social fabric by developing employment opportunities and enhancing the economic livelihood of surrounding residents.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

This study's professional goal was to establish an understanding of how to reduce employee turnover within the big-box retail sector and other business industries. For this literature review, credible and peer-reviewed articles came from ABI/Inform Complete, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, Google Scholar, ProQuest Central, SAGE Journals, and Science Direct. Keywords used to identify these articles were *big-box retail organizations, employee turnover, voluntary employee turnover, employee turnover, employee retention strategies, employee turnover in retail, leader-member exchange theory, leadership and retail management, leadership and employee turnover, servant leadership, transformational leadership theory, transactional leadership, and turnover intentions.*

I used Ulrich's Global Series Directory to verify the peer review of each source. This study consisted of 251 references, of which 220 are peer-reviewed, 14 are books, two are from corporate websites, and three are from government websites. Articles, books, corporate, and government websites were selected because of their relevance to the topic of reducing voluntary employee turnover.

Table 1*Frequency of Study Sources*

Sources	Within 5 years	Older than 5 years	Total
Peer-reviewed journal articles	159	61	220
Non-peer reviewed journal articles	6	6	12
Government websites	2	1	3
Corporate websites	2	0	2
Books	5	9	14
Total sources	174	77	251

I organized this literature review by using specific sections to develop a relevant and comprehensive analysis of my study topic. The first section of this review explores the constructs of the conceptual framework for this study, transformational leadership theory, research using this theory, and how supporting and contrasting theories compare to it. The second section introduces the origin and evolution of big-box retail and its impression on the retail industry. The third section consists of literature on employee turnover, specifically focusing on the influence of voluntary turnover on big-box retail organizations.

The fourth and final section provides synthesis and discussion on the importance of employee retention and the effects of voluntary employee turnover on profitability. The focus of this literature review was to enhance the research on the topics of employee turnover and transformational leadership by exploring strategies managers can use to

reduce voluntary employee turnover in big-box retail. The research uncovered in this literature review is valuable to the contribution of this focus in big-box retail, as it largely remains unaddressed.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership is a well-respected theory within the business industry. Business leaders have historically used the concepts of Burns' (1978) transformational leadership theory to improve productivity within their organizations. Later advanced by Bass (1985), transformational leadership has become one of the highest regarded leadership theories in the world and a preferred approach amongst business managers to accomplish company goals (Bass, 1990; Gupta et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2017). Burns (1978) developed transformational leadership to define the influence leaders have on teams through organizational change using clear vision and attention to employee needs. Researchers use transformational leadership theory to explore ways leaders can inspire employees to extend their organizational commitment through fairness, unconditional regard, and valuing each employee's special contributions to the organization (Phaneuf et al., 2016).

To effectively employ transformational leadership, researchers must apply the four tenets of transformational leadership to tap into the full potential of the leader-follower relationship that emerges during this type of leadership. Leaders can use the concepts of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration to drive organizations in any phenomenon to operate with a higher level of engagement (Burns, 1978; Giddens, 2018; Paladan, 2015).

Transformational leadership is a comprehensive model that supports the strengthening of the leader-follower relationship in businesses while reducing turnover and improving retention (Gyensare et al., 2016). Transformational leadership is extensive in international literature, rich in empirical evidence, and presents a critical lens to assess ways leaders can foster optimum employee performance through trust and role clarity (Paladan, 2015).

Leaders who leverage transformational leadership behaviors recognize positive change on their employees and their organization. This leadership method also challenges followers to share a joint vision with their leader to articulate and carry forth organizational goals (Pohler & Schmidt, 2015). Researchers globally endorse transformational leadership theory to facilitate effective change in business environments (Khan & Khan, 2019; Paladan, 2015). Transformational leadership theories can provide a framework for business leaders to navigate challenges with organizational commitment, turnover and retention, and overall satisfaction (Salem, 2015).

Transformational leaders motivate their employees by leading by example, inspiring positive behaviors, and exhibiting selfless conduct. Research has found that transformational leadership behaviors spark empowerment, drive loyalty to the organization, and promote creative and progressive results (Martin, 2015).

Transformational leaders foster organizational commitment and focus by encouraging behaviors that inspire team members to contribute to a shared vision by lending their strengths and talents to create sustainable change (Martin, 2015). Gumusluoglu et al. (2017) indicated employees who have a leader-follower relationship where they feel their

unique skills are considered by leadership feel valued, better utilized, and trusted, thus maintaining a stronger organizational commitment and maximizing their potential (Burns, 1978). As a result of the tenants defined in the subsequent paragraphs, the transformational leadership theory has become a preeminent model across multiple industries, including retail management (Giddens, 2018).

Idealized Influence

Idealized influence refers to the admirable and charismatic qualities leaders may use to influence followers. Transformational leaders consistently exhibit idealized influence to cultivate loyalty and devotion within their organizations (Sahu et al., 2018). By exhibiting charismatic behaviors, leaders can drive a clear and shared vision amongst team members that promotes a common voice and commitment to excellence (Phaneuf et al., 2016). Burns (1978) emphasized that leaders who demonstrated idealized influence displayed behaviors that inspired employees to replicate their approach. When employees emulate their leader's dedicated behaviors, organizational productivity and performance increases (Sahu et al., 2018).

Idealized influence behaviors have a strong effect on the organizational commitment of employees. Leaders who foster this attribute can influence employee engagement and organizational commitment, ultimately contributing to job satisfaction and reduced employee turnover (Jain & Duggal, 2016; Siew, 2017). Influential leaders garner aspiration and respect from their employees by using their charisma to positively lead their team (Phaneuf et al., 2016). Koveshnikov and Ehrnrooth (2018) found that leaders who embraced this role affected their employees' ability to develop a stronger

self-concept and personal identification within the organization, all of which supported retention.

Employees admire leaders who display honest and consistent behaviors.

Transformational leaders who set a high standard are often associated with being ethical, trustworthy, and well respected amongst their followers (Yasir & Mohamad, 2016).

Idealized influence behaviors represent this foundational principle of ethics, inspiring their employees to drive the organization's results through their excellent example (Linge & Sikalieh, 2019). The desire to uphold the company's mission, vision, and values speak to the organizational commitment promoted by idealized influence (Gyensare et al., 2016; Linge & Sikalieh, 2019).

Charismatic business leaders inspire their employees to elevate their performance personally and professionally. Researchers have linked idealized influence and other transformational leadership behaviors to the personal growth and development of their employees, all of which have contributed to improved performance and job satisfaction (Gyensare et al., 2016; Koveshnikov & Ehrnrooth, 2018). Through inspiring, empowering, and developing employees, organizations can also experience increased employee engagement and reduced turnover intentions (Mittal, 2016; Park et al., 2017; Sandhya & Sulphey, 2020).

Inspirational Motivation

Leaders who use inspirational motivation behaviors better connect their employees to the mission of the organization. Jiang et al. (2018) and Zineldin (2017) defined inspirational motivation as a leader's ability to establish employee structure and

alignment toward accomplishing an organization's goals. Transformational leaders inspire their employees to execute their organization's vision through passion and encouragement to raise the bar beyond their limitations (Bass, 1985). Inspirational leaders use optimism to articulate high expectations and focus areas by influencing their employees to develop an emotional connection to their work (Zineldin, 2017). Managers can use transformational leadership behaviors to create a catalyst for trust, teamwork, and commitment, promoting a culture that inspires employees to remain within their organization (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016).

Businesses rely on operational and financial success, especially during times of uncertainty. Researchers found that behaviors connected to inspirational motivation can strengthen operational practices during times of chaos (Alkhawlani et al., 2019; Devi & Mahajans, 2019). Inspirational leaders can confidently show their employees how to pivot in times of turmoil by demonstrating the behaviors of positive reinforcement, active-listening, encouragement, and mentorship (Paladan, 2015; Schuesslbauer et al., 2018). Leaders who offer this support cultivate trusting and affirming relationships with their employees that, in turn, strengthen organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Gyensare et al., 2016; Mittal, 2016). The research affirms inspirational motivation is instrumental in curbing turnover intentions and other employee challenges (Cheng et al., 2016; Pasha et al., 2017).

Inspirational motivation may improve the health of employees with an organization. Zineldin (2017) found that inspirational leaders positively influence employee job satisfaction, enthusiasm, organizational pride, and happiness, thus

improving their team members' mental well-being and retention. Further, Sun and Wang (2017) found transformational leadership behaviors reduce turnover intentions because of the connection developed between employees, the work environment, and their inspirational leader's emotional influence. When inspirational motivation behaviors prompt employees to internalize their organization's vision, they become personally invested, contributing to the reduction of employee turnover (Gilbert et al., 2016).

Intellectual Stimulation

Transformational leaders can encourage organizational progress by stimulating the creative energy of their employees. Leaders who use intellectual stimulation behaviors empower their employees to use innovation to develop solutions to business problems (Martin, 2015; Yin et al., 2019). Employees encouraged to challenge the status quo through educated risk-taking develop a stronger commitment to improving the organization (Pasha et al., 2017; Yin et al., 2019). Researchers found that when business leaders allow their team members the autonomy to complete their workload creatively, it enhances the professional competency and job satisfaction of their employees (Ali & Chin-Hong, 2017; Pasha et al., 2017; Tongchaiprasit & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016). Increased satisfaction can ultimately strengthen organizational commitment and reduce employees' turnover intentions (Tongchaiprasit & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016).

Transformational leaders use intellectual stimulation to motivate their employees to increase the effectiveness of their organization. Leaders rely on intellectual stimulation to encourage employees to solve problems or contribute to their organization's progression, thus stimulating commitment, effort, and productivity within their team

(Mittal, 2016; Sahu et al., 2018). Researchers found that stimulated employees had lower intentions to leave when their leader promoted collaborative approaches toward accomplishing the company's vision (Sun & Wang, 2017). Paladan (2015) also suggested that leaders who use transformational leadership to foster employee input saw improved engagement and reduced voluntary turnover from employees feeling valued. Mathieu and Babiak (2016) highlighted the notion that intellectual stimulation increases employee purpose and morale increases, influencing employee satisfaction, and commitment to their organization.

Individualized Consideration

Employees thrive in environments where they feel understood and regarded. Leaders who leverage individualized consideration experience more operational success because of higher follower commitment within their organization (Paladan, 2015; Phaneuf et al., 2016). Employees' personal needs are better reflected through individualized consideration, clearing the supervisory mentorship path that helps the team maximize strengths and refine their weaknesses (K'Aol et al., 2016; Paladan, 2015). According to a study conducted by Phaneuf et al. (2016), employees deemed their leader effective and the environment more supportive when they felt understood, appreciated, and cared for by their supervisor. Managers who lead with care and interest in their subordinates maximize their employees' potential and skillset (Burns, 1978).

Leaders who consider the individual needs of their employees create enthusiasm and forward movement within their organization. Andersen et al. (2018) emphasized the significance of transformational leadership theory on influencing excitement within

employee competence and a commitment to the mission and vision of an organization. In their study, the researchers found that a leader's focus on the individualized consideration of their employees ignited an enhanced passion and enthusiasm for the work they do. The excitement in turn promoted professional development and confidence in their employees (Andersen et al., 2018). When leaders foster autonomy that sparks individual proficiency, employees demonstrate more loyalty and commitment, thus reducing their plans to leave the organization (Gyensare et al., 2016; Pohler & Schmidt, 2015).

Transformational leadership promotes organizational citizenship behaviors that benefit the organization and the employee. Leaders who exhibit individual consideration have teams who are motivated, appreciate striving for results, understand their purpose, and enjoy their work environment (Andersen et al., 2018). The factors above are essential for curbing voluntary employee turnover within an organization (Siew, 2017).

Transformational Leadership Research

Transformational leadership theory continues to be a consistent practice in business literature. Managers who exhibit transformational leadership behaviors experience increased environmental success and commitment (Mathieu & Babiak, 2016.). The following section includes examples of research that uses transformational leadership theory to support using this established theory.

To maintain a competitive advantage, businesses must evolve by inspiring innovative solutions to their customer's needs. Research conducted by Ranjbar et al. (2019) found transformational leadership to be a fundamental theory for creating an environment that inspires employees to meet organizational goals creatively. In a study

conducted with 365 medical employees, the researchers found that leaders who demonstrated high behavioral levels of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration created a more stimulating work environment (Ranjbar et al., 2019). Employees felt empowered to take risks and experienced increased satisfaction from their ability to take on additional responsibility (Ranjbar et al., 2019).

Researchers continue to show the positive effect transformational leadership has on employee job satisfaction and attitudes toward turnover intentions. In a study of 324 service industry employees conducted by Ohunakin et al. (2019), transformational leadership positively influenced the leader-follower relationship. Employees demonstrated a heightened performance on assigned tasks from their leader displaying behaviors that celebrated their unique skillset (Ohunakin et al., 2019). The research supported the powerful effects of transformational leadership behaviors that can promote a workplace of high performance, engagement, team morale, and mentorship, all of which reduce turnover intentions (Ohunakin et al., 2019).

Supporting and Contrasting Leadership Theories

Business researchers use a vast number of leadership theories to explore concepts such as voluntary employee turnover. To expand my understanding beyond the transformational leadership theory, I conducted a thorough review of common leadership theories to understand employee turnover within my phenomenon better. The information provided details that support and oppose the leadership theory selected for this study.

Theories reviewed were the servant leadership theory, the transactional leadership theory, and the leader-member exchange theory.

Supporting Leadership Theories

A theory supportive of the attributes of transformational leadership theory is the servant leadership theory. Greenleaf (1977) coined the concept of servant leadership to emphasize the role leaders should adopt to meet the needs of those they serve first.

Leaders who display this theory place their commitment to service above any title and self-gain (Greenleaf, 1977). Servant leaders project their desire and motivation to uplift and promote others; they are not motivated by personal benefits and accolades (Greenleaf, 1977). Business leaders use servant leadership behaviors to develop their team members' skills and abilities, much like transformational leadership.

Servant leadership places value primarily on growing employees within an organization. Servant leaders choose to put their employees above organizational results by displaying strong vision, honesty, trust, service, appreciation of others, and empowerment (Eva et al., 2019). A leader's ability to demonstrate care and concern for their employees' personal and professional development creates a culture of appreciation and progress within the organization (Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2018). Coetzer et al. (2017) found these value-based behaviors to improve employee performance, interactions with supervisors, and, ultimately, the organization (Kermond et al., 2015).

Extended research of Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership theory defines seven key dimensions that servant leaders use to exercise care and service with their employees. Servant leaders successfully allow space for emotional healing by showing sensitivity for

employee concerns and creating value for the community through genuine altruistic acts. Servant leaders also demonstrate conceptual skills about the organization that help their employees perform, encourage problem-solving and workload prioritization, and help employees grow and succeed within their career. Lastly, leaders who adopt servant leadership behaviors put their employees first by using clear and supporting language that puts their work first and use ethical behaviors to foster openness, fairness, and honesty (Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2018; Liden et al., 2015). The rich focus on prioritizing employee needs creates a standard for leaders to aspire to if they are committed to being champions for their employees (Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2018). Servant leadership behaviors can positively influence employee behaviors, enhance emotional attachment to the organization, and strengthen organizational commitment (Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2018). The dimensions of servant leadership have a similarity to intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. The focus on employee needs and empowered contributions promote the leadership support desired to influence employees to stay within their organization (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Coetzer et al., 2017).

Despite similarities within theory components, servant leadership does have some contrasts from transformational leadership. Servant leadership focuses heavily on employees' psychological needs being its primary goal, while transformational leadership places this need second to meeting organizational objectives (Eva et al., 2019). Leaders use transformational leadership to drive organizational results by using follower commitment, while servant leaders place service and unconditional regard of their employees above results (Eva et al., 2019). Although researchers have shown numerous

organizational benefits from using servant leadership, Liao et al. (2021) found the frequent use of servant leadership behaviors can deplete the energy and effectiveness of leaders with minimal experience with perspective-taking.

The effectiveness of a leadership style relies on the execution of the leader employing the approach. Leaders with the inability to understand and manage various perspectives may digress to exhibiting laissez-faire behaviors, diminishing servant leadership's effectiveness on employee loyalty to reduce turnover intentions (Liao et al., 2021). Servant leadership behaviors may differ from the consistently positive effect of transformational leadership behavior on constructs, such as turnover intention, loyalty, and team climate (Cheng et al., 2016).

Another supporting theory of transformational leadership is the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory. LMX gives a quintessential lens for examining the relationship dynamics that can emerge between leaders and their subordinates (Martin et al., 2016). Known originally as the Vertical Dyad Linkage Model, LMX supports the notion that relationships can vary between leaders and their employees because of the exchanges and interactions between them (Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Over time researchers found LMX to offer essential concepts for developing relationships that foster productivity, retention, engagement, and satisfaction within organizations (Hwang et al., 2016; Martin et al., 2016). Like transformational leadership, leaders who use LMX benefit from understanding and supporting the individual needs and contributions of their employees (Terpstra-Tong et al., 2020).

Leaders who use LMX can strengthen their organizations through collaboration and team development. Research conducted by Terpstra-Tong et al. (2020) found LMX to enhance trust between employees and leaders, ultimately increasing knowledge and resource sharing, team synergy, and organizational performance. Hwang et al. (2016) emphasized that practicing LMX leadership behaviors can contribute to high-quality interactions, improved job organizational citizenship behavior, and better management of change within the organization. The positive effects of LMX also include better task performance and the potential to embrace innovation, a similar concept found within transformational leadership (Atitumpong, & Badir, 2018; Hwang et al., 2016).

Employees experience active learning when they can contribute to the organization with creative outcomes. Creativity enhances engagement and intrinsic motivation among employees (Atitumpong, & Badir, 2018). Leaders and team members who experience high LMX relationships have more autonomy, empowerment, participative decision-making, and discretion, similar to the effects of transformational leadership (Atitumpong, & Badir, 2018). LMX varies slightly from transformational leadership as it is contingent on the employee having affirmative perceptions about their leader's behaviors (Little et al., 2016). Leaders who fail to demonstrate reciprocal influence may have low LMX exchanges that can influence their employees' performance and turnover intentions (Hwang et al., 2016; Little et al., 2016).

Contrasting Leadership Theory

A well-known contrasting theory in comparison to transformational leadership is the transactional leadership theory. Transactional leadership leverages exchanges,

expectations, and rewards to motivate employee performance, which presents a stark contrast from encouraging performance through aligned values and individual interests with transformational leadership behaviors (Bass, 1990). Transactional leaders use contingent rewards to motivate employees to meet organizational objectives and maintain optimum employee performance (Cho et al., 2019). Researchers exploring transactional leadership found transactional leaders foster more stable and predictable work environments because of the enforcement and refinement of institutional knowledge (Baškarada et al., 2017; Hussain et al., 2017). Transactional leaders preserve established organizations by modeling active and passive management-by-exception behaviors to correct actions when employees have not met their expectations (Cho et al., 2019).

Leaders use transactional leadership to drive for success by focusing on performance outcomes. The adaption of transactional behaviors can better equip leaders with overcoming operational challenges and effectiveness with their employees (Ahmad et al., 2015; Mathieu et al., 2016). Unlike transactional leadership theory that focuses on reward in exchange for results, transformational leadership promotes a deeper connection to organizational purpose and vision from a collaborative approach that inspires purpose (Paladan, 2015). The selection of leadership methods ultimately depends on the style the leader finds most effective for their employee dynamic.

Transformational leaders influence employees to engage in innovation and positive organizational change. Conversely, transactional leaders strive to reduce employee turnover by using external rewards such as increased compensation (Ahmad et al., 2015; Cho et al., 2019). Researchers suggested that the most influential leaders utilize

transactional and transformational leadership behaviors (Afsar et al., 2017; Baškarada et al., 2017). Obeidat and Tarhini (2016) found transactional leaders successfully improve employee job performance when they give rewards for accomplishing specific goals, which ultimately improved the knowledge shared within the organization and reduced turnover. Notably, employees who thrive in inspiring, supportive environments that promote belongingness do not respond well to transactional leadership's direct drives for results (Cho et al., 2019).

The emphasis leaders place on task completion can radically affect employee relationships. Transactional leadership can yield many foundational benefits for an organization, but the potential for employee dissatisfaction and amplified stress from a constant drive for task completion could increase turnover intentions (Maaitah, 2018). An intense focus on performance excellence can create strains within the leader-follower relationship, resulting in employee turnover (Hwang et al., 2016).

Big-Box Retail

Big-box retail chains must balance multiple priorities to maintain their competitive edge. Big-box retail organizations achieve success by effectively managing inventory levels, floor schematics, operating policies and procedures, and store performance metrics to yield profitable results (Hise et al., 1983; Mekraz & Gundala, 2016). Managers must also determine the factors that positively influence store performance while also mitigating personnel issues, customer expectations, and the ever-changing retail environment (Mekraz & Gundala, 2016). Big-box retail has dramatically changed the United States economy and local communities in numerous ways, both good

and bad (Richman & Simpson, 2016; Stainback & Ekl, 2017). In the next section, I uncover the important components of superstores for business leader consideration by discussing the origin of big-box retail, its evolution, and the impression it has had on the retail industry.

Origin and Evolution

Big-box retail has dramatically influenced the United States shopping experience. Since the 1960s, big-box retail stores have expanded across communities in the United States (Richman & Simpson, 2016; Stainback & Ekl, 2017). Before World War II, customers relied on general stores or mom and pop shops to serve individual communities (Richman & Simpson, 2016). Retail pioneers such as Walmart, Target, Toys R Us, K-Mart, Price Club, and Home Depot were essential to laying the foundation and format of big-box retailing well before this terminology was adapted (Sampson, 2008). Other organizations have now forged into the mega retail space, creating diversity within the big-box retail approach that includes the following categories: general merchandise retailers such as Target, grocery or food retailers such as Kroger and Safeway, home improvement retailers such as Home Depot and Lowe's, drug retailers such as CVS and Walgreens, home electronics retailers such as Best Buy, and retail office retailers such as Office Depot and Staples (Stainback & Ekl, 2017). These stores represent most of the top Fortune 500 companies in the United States and are also examples of highly regarded organizations within the community that provide a cost-effective, one-stop-shop experience for their customers (Sciara et al., 2018; Stainback & Ekl, 2017).

Big-box retail revolutionized the consumer shopping experience. The United States Census Bureau (2017) defines retail stores as merchandise selling entities that operate fixed point-of-sale locations in high volume areas while using elaborate displays and marketing strategies to attract consumers. Big-box or megastores can range from 50,000 to over 150,000 square feet, depending on the product category (Johnson & née Lybecker, 2018; Jones & Doucet, 2000). These stores offer a single-story shopping experience within a large footprint with strong illumination, heating, cooling, and ventilation (Han et al., 2018; Richman & Simpson, 2016). The thoughtful layout and product variety of big-box retailers address consumer demand to purchase merchandise in a one-stop-shop environment conveniently (Han et al., 2018; Johnson & née Lybecker, 2018; Sampson, 2008). Stores such as Walmart and Target represent a super retailer's ability to execute this one-stop format successfully and supersede the competition to become a prominent leader in the business community (Han et al., 2018; Jones & Doucet, 2000; Richman & Simpson, 2016).

Retailers like Walmart continue to refine the essence of one-stop shopping. Since opening its first store in 1962, Walmart has become a dominant player in the big-box retail industry (Seenivasan & Talukdar, 2016). With more than 1.5 million employees and 11,500 stores and clubs nationwide, this retail giant has transformed the way we operate within our communities (Walmart, 2020). Researchers coined the term *The Walmart Effect* to describe the corporation's economic power on consumer behavior and its local competitors (Paruchuri et al., 2009; Seenivasan & Talukdar, 2016). Stores like Walmart and Target have survived the changing economic market and thrived through

the expansion of supercenters and grocery options (Ahn, 2019; Rice et al., 2016).

Through expanding its footprint by more than 50% between 1962 and 1990, Target has disrupted the industry by delivering cost-savings on high-quality items, innovation, and intentional customer service (Alghalith, 2018; Target, 2020).

Influence on the Retail Industry

Customers nationwide enjoy living near super retail stores. In the United States, more than 75% of Americans live within 10 miles of a Target, while 90% live within proximity to Walmart (Jantzen et al., 2009; Target, 2020). The increased accessibility of big-box retail organizations has drastically shifted the United States' economic structure and sparked concern around social and financial inequality (Stainback & Ekl, 2017).

Research conducted by Stone (1988) to examine the effect of big-box retailers on mom and pop stores found Walmart negatively affected local establishments. Stone (1995) also found emerging local businesses that sold complementary products near the big-box retailer experienced some financial gain, proving local businesses that establish near a big-box retailer may benefit residually because of proximity (Stainback & Ekl, 2017). Researchers found that big-box retail store arrival helped establish new businesses and reduce store closings compared to neighboring towns without new big-box retailers (Hicks, 2009; Hicks et al., 2012; Paruchuri et al., 2009).

Research regarding big-box retail traditionally reflects the challenges created in the local retail community. Some researchers offered that the benefits of rapid product consumption are important (Freedman et al., 2016; Hicks, 2009; Hicks et al., 2012). The heightened demand for a product can increase revenue for the local community

(Freedman et al., 2016). The one-stop-shopping concept of big-box retail stores specifically improves the consumer's experience. They reduce the number of multiple shopping trips, and the distance traveled to obtain their necessary goods (Sciara et al., 2018). Consumers could also retain more disposable funds to spend at local businesses from obtaining the items they need from less expensive big-box stores (Freedman et al., 2016; Håkansson et al., 2019).

Big-box retailers must use their influence to address the needs of their employees, support their customers, and invest in their communities. Researchers found that retailers committed to corporate social responsibility improve their company's perception amongst their customers and strengthen brand loyalty (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Richman & Simpson, 2016; Simões & Sebastiani, 2017). Walmart is a big-box retailer securitized for creating job opportunities within the community, but not providing sufficient hourly wages for their employees (Basker, 2005; Hicks & Wilburn, 2007; Stainback & Ekl, 2017). The focus on improving employee conditions contributes to super retailers understanding the positive relationship between labor productivity and increasing wages for devoted and consistently productive employees (Rudholm et al., 2018). Entry big-box retailers must recognize inequalities they may create within the community when employees acquire their positions due to displacement; hours provided, wages, and benefits need to align to support economic growth (Sciara et al., 2018).

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover is a long-standing issue for business researchers and practitioners because of its direct influence on gaining and maintaining a competitive

advantage (Hom et al., 2017; Mekraz & Gundala, 2016). Early studies about employee turnover found supervisor leadership styles, environment constraints, pay, and the inability to advance to be some of the reasons employees leave their organization (Diemer, 1917; Douglas, 1918; Fisher, 1917). The continued focus on this topic remains consistent with previous findings while also adding factors such as poor hiring practices, ineffective onboarding, and job satisfaction to contribute to employee turnover (Heavey et al., 2013; Rubenstein et al., 2015). This section will extend the discussion on employee turnover literature and review the effects of voluntary turnover in big-box retail.

Multiple variables affect employee turnover intentions, thus making it a challenging element to reduce. Turnover intention is the final cognitive decision-making process of voluntary turnover (Fazio et al., 2017). Kim et al. (2017) emphasized that employees who withdraw cognitively from their organization have thoughts of quitting the job, intent on searching for a new one, and ultimately intention to leave their organization. High performing employees who voluntarily leave their employer create detriments to the operational excellence of their organization. Researchers have found employees seek better opportunities for their skillset when their current position no longer creates satisfaction (Becton et al., 2017; Kamarulzaman et al., 2015; Zhang & Li, 2020). To ensure their organizations' productivity and profitability, business leaders must identify and control antecedents that cause employee turnover (Zhang & Li, 2020).

Effects of Voluntary Turnover in Big-Box Retail

Retail store managers face a multitude of challenges in their quest to operate successful businesses. One challenge continues to be the need to manage high employee

turnover rates (Mekraz & Gundala, 2016). The cost of personnel is the second most important factor to control for big-box retail stores (Mekraz & Gundala, 2016). Broadbridge (1999) attributed the high turnover rate in retail to the nature of the business. Abrupt changes to meet customer demand and repetitious workload could attribute to tangible stressors retail employees face, influencing their desire to leave their organization (Mekraz & Gundala, 2016). Negative effects of voluntary turnover on big-box retail are costly and can include declined organization performance because of the loss of knowledge, skills, and abilities, disruptions in operational practices, and undesirable replacement costs that decrease financial gains (Heavey et al., 2013; Sciara et al., 2018).

Employee turnover has tremendous effects on the operational success of an organization. Several researchers have reinforced the detriment of employee turnover may lead to decreased employee morale, reduced productivity, and poor customer transactions (Hom et al., 2017; Kamarulzaman et al., 2015). Voluntary turnover has serious effects on team dynamics within big-box retail stores. Shepherd et al. (2020) found an increase in voluntary turnover when customers perceived employees to provide a low quality of service. Voluntary turnover diminishes team interactions and increases the workload of remaining team members, making it challenging for employees to effectively respond to customers' needs (Argote et al., 2018).

To better understand how to curb voluntary employee turnover, big-box retail managers must understand the terminology and the factors that contribute to it. Voluntary turnover occurs when employees choose to independently leave an organization (Purba &

Fawzi, 2019; Wang et al., 2017). This form of turnover is challenging for big-box retailers because of the significant loss in profit, knowledge, and skills that occur when employees leave (Becton et al., 2017; Dhanpat et al., 2018). Beyond the expensive and damaging effects of voluntary turnover, big-box retail managers must acknowledge that employees are essential for organizational survival (Kim et al., 2017).

Big-box retail is vastly affected by voluntary employee turnover. The retail industry hires more than 15 million employees annually yet experiences one of the highest turnover rates amongst business industries (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). Turnover rates in the retail industry have fluctuated between 34.7% and 100% since the mid-2000s, with turnover rates exceeding 50% each year after 2013 (Olubiyi et al., 2019). Big-box retail managers must adapt effective retention strategies to improve their organization (Luthra & Singh, 2019). Kim et al. (2017) found that employees who have positive organization-employee relationships were less likely to have turnover intentions. Big-box retail managers who utilize leadership behaviors such as transformational leadership to strengthen the leader-follower dynamic can potentially address challenges that lead to turnover before they start (Bass, 1990).

Employee Retention

The retention of employees is a crucial focus for business leaders. Big-box retail managers must recognize the importance of their human capital to successfully fulfill their company mission and expand their business presence (Kamarulzaman et al., 2015). Effective managers must deploy strategies that influence their most talented and valued employees to stay with their organization (Mandhanya, 2015; Shatila & Alozian, 2019).

Insufficient training, lack of advancement opportunities, and employee disengagement are factors that impede employee retention (Lee, 2018; Shatila & Alozian, 2019).

Researchers also found that establishing consistent training and development opportunities for high performing employees could improve organizational commitment (Kamarulzaman et al., 2015; Mandhanya, 2015; Shatila & Alozian, 2019). In these final sections, I expand the review of employee retention in the big box-retail industry and discuss the effects of voluntary turnover on profitability.

Employee exits are costly for organizations. Each year business leaders in the United States spend more than \$11 billion to replace employees who voluntarily leave their organizations (Khan, 2018). Big-box retail establishments must develop sustainable retention strategies to reduce the financial implications of employee turnover (Olubiyi et al., 2019). Lee (2018) found employees had more motivation and job satisfaction when they felt appreciated and rewarded for their extraordinary contributions. Mandhanya (2015) supported this finding, emphasizing the benefits managers may experience from supplementing intentional training with tangible recognition. Big-box retail leaders should use employee recognition, supervisory support, and consistent feedback as primary retention strategies to reduce voluntary turnover and increase retention (Khan, 2018; Mandhanya, 2015).

Employee Retention in Big-Box Retail

Big-box retail establishments experience frequent employee turnover for a variety of reasons. Olubiyi et al. (2019) posited that some organizations experience voluntary employee turnover because of the person-organizational fit between an employee and the

organization. Employees who have little value congruence with their employers may have less job satisfaction, reduced outcomes, and diminished performance (Olubiyi et al., 2019). Big-box retail managers must identify ways to understand their employees, establish business priorities, and adapt leadership behaviors that contribute to employees' success (Olubiyi et al., 2019).

Big-box retail leaders should explore ways to remain connected with their employees. Support and effective communication from managers play an essential role in promoting employee retention (Kim et al., 2017). Shatila and Alozian (2019) found the sustainability and advancement of organizational goals relied on effective and fluid communication. Big-box retail managers may benefit from using transformational leadership to exhibit clear, supportive, and timely communication to clarify roles and expectations. Employees who receive clear communication are less confused, reducing employee turnover (Kamarulzaman et al., 2015). Mekraz and Gundala (2016) reinforced the value of other transformational leadership behaviors by proving that idealized influence and inspirational motivation had the most significant effects on retaining employees. Big-box retail stores who commit to training their leaders to be more transformational may also improve employee retention and reduce employee turnover rates (Handayani, 2018; Mekraz & Gundala, 2016).

Voluntary Employee Turnover and Profitability

Successful retail organizations require managers who can effectively balance the financial obligations of merchandise and personnel. A manager's inability to retain high performing employees has adverse effects on the organization's financial performance

(Lee, 2018). In addition to managing employees, retail stores must consistently control gross margin, contribution margin, and net profit margin (Mekraz & Gundala, 2016). Voluntary employee turnover is financially damaging to an organization's bottom line, and managers should monitor turnover closely to correct undesirable trends (Kim et al., 2017). Voluntary employee turnover not only increases the cost for staffing, but it also affects the productivity of teams, which directly affects corporate profit (Heavey et al., 2013; Shatila & Alozian, 2019; Zhang & Li, 2020).

Costs of Voluntary Turnover

High voluntary employee turnover has significant financial ramifications on an organization. Direct turnover costs that influence profitability include recruitment, selection, orientation, and training of new employees (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Indirect costs that retail stores could face include education and development of staff, declines in performance, employee stress, and the reduction of positive social interactions (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). The cost of voluntary employee turnover could cripple an organization's brand and profitability for months and sometimes even years (Becton et al., 2017). Big-box retail managers who use behaviors that promote employee motivation may experience increased employee satisfaction and reduced employee turnover (Stamolampros et al., 2019).

Transition

Section 1 of this study included information on the background of the business problem, the problem statement, purpose statement, conceptual framework, and the nature of the study. Additional components included assumptions, limitations,

delimitations, the significance of the study, and a review of relevant literature pertaining to my topic. The literature review covered the following: transformational leadership theory, transformational leadership theory research, and contrasting and supportive theories such as transactional leadership theory, servant leadership, and leader-member exchange theory.

The literature review also addressed important themes within employee turnover, employee retention, and profitability. In Section 2, I will readdress the purpose of this study and discuss the researcher's role, participant information, and selected research methods and research design. I will wrap up Section 2 by covering the process for data collection, data organization, data analysis, and assessment of reliability and validity. Section 3 will culminate the findings of my study, highlight recommendations for the practical application of the collected data, and conclude with a reflection on my doctoral process.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 includes relevant information about my role as the researcher, the purpose of this study, and my methods for identifying study participants. This section also justifies the population of participants involved in this study, the selection of project methodology and design, and a review of other research methods and design considerations. Lastly, this section uncovers my steps for conducting ethical research, the resources I used for data collection, organization and analysis processes, and the controls I established to guarantee reliability and validity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. The target population consisted of 14 big-box retail managers from big-box retailers located in San Antonio, Texas, who had reduced voluntary employee turnover. I interviewed 14 big-box retail managers employed in a total of 11 retailers in San Antonio, Texas, who had successfully implemented strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover for at least 1 year. These managers shared their successful reduction in employee turnover strategies through open-ended interview sessions. The implications for positive social change include the potential to help big-box retail managers acquire additional strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover costs. Reducing voluntary employee turnover within big-box retail organizations might increase gainful employment, thus improving living standards and financial stability for residents in the community.

Role of the Researcher

A successful qualitative study requires careful planning and skillful execution. The researcher is the main instrument for ethical research methods and has the greatest influence on a qualitative study (Hoover et al., 2018). A researcher's role includes responsibilities such as identifying research methods, selecting research participants, ethical execution of data collection, and analysis and interpretation of results (Schoenherr et al., 2015). The qualitative researcher should also demonstrate knowledge and intentionality when engaging study participants and choose an interview approach that purposefully considers each subject (Brinkmann, 2016). Failure to capture one of these crucial steps may result in skewed results or an unsavory experience for participants.

As the primary collector and assessor of data, I acknowledged that I must demonstrate honesty in selecting my research topic and participant population. Galdas (2017) affirmed that qualitative researchers must maintain transparency with data collection and remove bias that might probe participants for responses that affirm researcher perceptions. The decision to research voluntary employee turnover within big-box retail derived from my managerial experience within a well-known international big-box retailer. My relationship to this topic influenced my desire to help current big-box retail managers alleviate unexpected turnover of top talent and improve company profitability through retention and sustained productivity.

Researchers must place ethics at the core of any research study. In 1979, the National Commission for Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research established the National Research Act to promote ethical research practices for

study participants (Belmont Report, 1979). Researchers are responsible for eliminating unethical and compromising practices when researching personal interests (Chou & Frazier, 2020). The Belmont Report provides three key principles for conducting ethical research: demonstrate respect for all persons, practice beneficence, and maintain a commitment to justice (Belmont Report, 1979). Respect for persons requires clear and independent interactions with participants that recognize cultural differences, while beneficence expects the researcher to protect participants from maltreatment and abuse (Chou & Frazier, 2020). The commitment to justice drives the researcher to practice equal rights throughout their study and amongst all participants (Chou & Frazier, 2020). As a researcher, I consistently exercised strong ethics to promote my participants' best experience.

To mitigate bias and temptation of viewing data through a personal lens, qualified big-box retail managers who met study criteria had a confidential and fair opportunity to share how they reduce voluntary employee turnover within their organizations. As the researcher, I managed my research's credibility by reducing bias from infusing my personal experiences with the data collection and analysis process. I also adapted Moustakas' (1994) approach of epoché to eliminate personal judgment and recorded only the details provided to me to best document participant interactions, behaviors, and trends (Overgaard, 2015). To implement standards from the Belmont Report and comply with the expectations of Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), I confidentially coded and tracked each participant to protect their identity and well-being.

I used an interview protocol to establish a foundation of consistency for each interview interaction. According to Yeong et al. (2018), an interview protocol creates a comprehensive experience for each participant by providing a clear plan of action from start to finish. Using Yeong et al.'s (2018) example as my guide, I used an interview protocol that included quality procedures to acquire relevant data and a consistent script to consider each participant. The protocol (see Appendix A) provided participants with the necessary details of the interview process and offered a seamless transition throughout the interview.

Participants

A credible study requires a clear definition of the eligibility criteria for each study participant. Establishing well-developed criteria for participation supports the validity of the researcher's approach (Palinkas et al., 2015; Teeuw et al., 2014). In 2016, the national average for employees who voluntarily quit their job within the retail industry was 35.2% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). The eligibility criteria for study participants within this multiple case study consisted of big-box retail managers in San Antonio, Texas. Selected participants had achieved success in reducing employee turnover and maximizing retention per metrics assessed by the organization. The targeted sample was big-box retail managers (department, assistant, or general) who sustained a reduction in voluntary employee turnover for 1 year or more. Selecting big-box retailers who accomplished an annual turnover rate of 35% or less reinforced this research's validity compared to the national turnover average for retail.

A strategy is important to developing an effective approach to reach eligible study participants. Gaining access to research participants can be one of the most challenging processes for a researcher and must be carefully executed through multiple forms to achieve desired outcomes (Hafer & Ran, 2016; Hoyland et al., 2015). Leveraging professional connections and using research transparency can help increase study involvement (Opollo et al., 2014). After gaining approval from Walden University's IRB, I reached out to the Corporate Human Resources Manager of a well-known big-box retailer to solicit support from case study participants from multiple stores within the San Antonio market. A recruitment flyer was then sent to the identified participants to define the rationale for my study, outline the contributions their participation will make, and officially request their voluntary participation in this study.

After gaining access to study participants, a researcher is responsible for fostering a supportive working relationship. Executing a successful case study requires a commitment to putting the participant's needs and well-being before the researcher (Yin, 2017). Lowther et al. (2016) reinforced the researcher's responsibility within the relationship by demanding honest, sensitive, and clear communication with each interaction. As a former big-box retail manager and an organization leader since 2008, I understand the effect of voluntary employee turnover on achieving company goals and meeting customer demands. Company leaders expect supervisors to manage the emotional and professional commitment to their organizations and improve performance and profit results (Kang et al., 2015). To be a good steward of the participants'

involvement, I thoroughly provided information needed before interview meetings and used an interview protocol to guarantee concision and consistency.

Research Method and Design

Selecting the correct research method and design is important to the successful completion of a study. Marshall and Rossman (2016) supported that the appropriate method will help a researcher effectively address a study's research question. The qualitative method is well suited to explore contemporary phenomena in a real-life setting (Makrakis & Kostoulos-Makrakis, 2016). As such, the method of this study was qualitative. The design was a case study to explore strategies big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. The subsections below will provide a rationale for the selected method and design and justify the qualitative case study's necessity over other research methods.

Research Method

Three methodologies frequently used by researchers are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. For this study, a qualitative research method provided a deeper understanding of manager strategies used within a complex big-box retail setting to reduce voluntary employee turnover (Kaur, 2016). The qualitative method allows the researcher to extract the experiences, attitudes, and motivations of multiple individuals to answer essential questions within a phenomenon (Barnham, 2015; Makrakis & Kostoulos-Makrakis, 2016). Quantitative research seeks statistical facts, while qualitative research subjectively explores participant behaviors from a holistic, empirical, and interpretive lens (Ebneyamini & Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018). Researchers use the

qualitative method in a natural, contextual setting by gaining descriptive insights from interviews, observations, secondary data sources, or archival artifacts (Bevan, 2014; Nassaji, 2015). Given the use of interviews to uncover strategies, I used the qualitative research method to explore the phenomenon, collect data, and describe how managers can improve employee retention in big-box retail.

Many scientific researchers consider quantitative methods, such as questionnaires, to be the most convenient means of understanding the world around them (Barnham, 2015; Luthe & Wyss, 2016). Quantitative methods use numerical data from random samples and close-ended questions to test hypotheses (Allen, 2015). Researchers use quantitative methods to examine two or more research variables in their quest for statistical understanding (Kavoura & Bitsani, 2014; Smith, 2014). My study did not test a hypothesis, gather numerical data, or evaluate the cause-and-effect relationship between two or more variables; thus I rejected the quantitative method.

Researchers use mixed methods to incorporate both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Mixed methods use systematic techniques to collect data in various ways to include questionnaires, narratives, and random sampling (Bernard, 2017). Although a mixed-methods approach can combine relevant qualitative data with statistical metrics, it was not appropriate for this study. There was no use of surveys or hypothetical testing. Therefore, I rejected the mixed-methods approach.

Research Design

Qualitative researchers might consider four research designs: phenomenological, ethnographic, narrative, and case study (Grossoehme, 2014). Business researchers rely on

intentional research design to cohesively tie study components together (Scammacca et al., 2014). Additionally, the research design directly correlates to the researcher's ability to collect relevant data and successfully answer the research question (Bailey, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). The case study design research promotes data collection from a group that might provide new understandings or perspectives from a specific population. A case study was the most appropriate to use in the pursuit of identifying strategies big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

According to Yin (2017) and Keenan et al. (2015), the case study design is a practical method for business research as it provides an understanding of a complex phenomenon such as small group behaviors, organizational and managerial processes, and the maturation of industries from a real-world perspective. To address content validity and reliability issues, a case study investigator must use multiple sources of evidence, such as documents, archival records, and physical artifacts (Lunnay et al., 2015; Yin, 2017). I used a multiple case study design for this research to focus on exploring strategies used by big-box retail managers to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Business researchers investigate individuals, groups, or organizations to gain intelligence that might help them solve contemporary problems (Wilkinson et al., 2016). I included data collection from interviews and information on employee turnover, thus incorporating additional evidence sources to improve the effectiveness of this case study.

Researchers use the narrative design to illustrate participants' individual experiences through themes and storytelling (Lewis, 2015). Narrative research can enhance evidence-based data by providing new and unexpected information about a

phenomenon from a participant-centered approach that gains their perspective and beliefs (Dohan et al., 2016). Thanks to the structure, plot development, and context provided by narrative research, information gathered can help yield an intentional and holistic understanding of actions and decision-making (Dohan et al., 2016). Narrative research also explores why and how a story unfolds and its outcome on the person revealing the information (Berry, 2016). I did not use a narrative research design because the study did not focus on the plots, themes, and big-box retail participants' stories to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Ethnographic research uncovers cultural patterns and interactions from a shared experience over time, which was not a focus of this study (Graneheim et al., 2014; Grant et al., 2014). Ethnography requires extensive immersion into the participant's world to extract their behaviors, beliefs, and perspectives, a process that is both timely and restrictive for the participant and the researcher (Grossoehme, 2014). Observations within the natural environment and the ability to visually discern participant behavior could benefit any study but may not be the best approach. The ethnographic design was not suitable for this study because of the exploration of effective strategies managers use for employee retention, not the social or cultural concepts affect big-box retail managers.

Qualitative researchers use the phenomenological design to explore a phenomenon's lived experiences through an individual focus on each participant (Moustakas, 1994; Sambhava et al., 2016). A researcher can understand the shared attitudes within a specific community by penetrating their participants' ideas, beliefs, and experiences (Astalin, 2013; Sambhava et al., 2016). The exploration of these shared

experiences often requires an in-depth collection of data from parties within the community or phenomenon over an excessive amount of time (Yin, 2017).

Phenomenology aims to study the meaning of shared experiences within a specific group of individuals (Grossoehme, 2014). I did not use the phenomenological approach because of time constraints and my lack of focus on participants' lived experiences. After careful consideration of the four qualitative designs discussed in this section, the case study design was most appropriate for studying strategies big-box retailers managers may use to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Business researchers have the responsibility of ensuring data saturation to promote creditable and exhaustive research (Colombo et al., 2016; Yin, 2017). Data saturation occurs when the researcher finds no new information through the data collection and analysis process (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Marshall et al., 2013). Data saturation promotes quality and effective research within the study and influences content validity (Fusch & Ness, 2015). After receiving Walden University's IRB approval, I conducted open-ended interviews with big-box retail managers who had expertise in implementing employee retention strategies. To meet the data saturation goal, I conducted interviews until I reached a stopping criterion in which no new data and themes surfaced (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

Data saturation within a qualitative case study can arrive with as few as six participants or as many as 16 (Guest et al., 2006; Marshall et al., 2013). Yin (2017) supported that the researcher reserves the right to identify the appropriate number for their sample based on their needs, a size that could range between one and 10 participants

to yield credible results. For data collection I strictly adhered to these practices to provide the best sample process possible for this study's effectiveness.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study consisted of 14 retail managers from big-box retail organizations located in San Antonio, Texas. Qualitative researchers can select the sample size they deem acceptable for their population and topic, even if selecting a smaller population sample (Molenberghs et al., 2014; Yin, 2017). To this point, a multiple case study can yield a successful sample size and insightful data on reducing voluntary employee turnover if executed effectively. Eleven retail site locations were selected to yield an appropriate number of participants for this case study (Yin, 2017). Chosen participants met the following qualifications: over the age of 18, a retail manager within a big-box retail setting in San Antonio, Texas; used strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover, was approved to participate by the general manager, and has produced proven employee turnover strategies validated by documented company metrics. I conducted interviews using a secure Zoom video call and asked participants to use an off-site conference room within the retail establishment or home to provide maximum convenience for the interviewees while ensuring confidentiality.

Qualitative researchers use purposeful sampling techniques to select participants who will provide notable information based on their relevance or expertise (Perry & Nichols, 2014). Researchers use purposeful sampling to gain a wide span of helpful information in a specific and focused manner from participants with experiences that can effectively inform the research (Butler et al., 2018). This study used the critical case

sampling model to identify transferable trends applicable amongst other big-box retailers (Etikan et al., 2016). Critical case sampling is especially helpful within qualitative case studies where the researcher can narrow the focus to a specific population inside a phenomenon (Butler et al., 2018; Moss et al., 2014). Although purposeful sampling can provide intentional data, it can also produce limitations in smaller sample sizes (Roy et al., 2015).

To combat limitations and ensure research credibility, I cross-referenced the data I gathered using multiple collection methods such as interviews, company employee turnover data, and website data. Company information that supported turnover rates was provided by the Corporate Human Resources Manager, managers interviewed, and from public databases. Yin (2017) encouraged using these methods to gain detailed data that can improve research validity. Bernard (2013) stressed that data saturation occurs when qualitative researchers are consistent with interview questions asked to all participants. Once consistency is maintained, and no new themes, information, or codes are developed, data saturation will be achieved (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Member checking should also be administered after the interview process to ensure thoroughness, accuracy, and transparency (Morgan et al., 2017). The use of triangulation and member checking supported data saturation within this case study.

Ethical Research

After receiving approval from Walden University's IRB (02-19-21-0456852 with an expiration of February 18, 2022), I began the data collection process of this study. Participants first received a recruitment flyer to encourage involvement and a Participant

Consent Form. Participants signed and returned their consent form by electronically replying 'I Consent' to an email message to document their plans for involvement (see McDermott et al., 2019). Information about the participating company and retail managers remained anonymous by using alphanumeric coding such as Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), etc., along with the interview date. I will retain participant data on a secured external hard drive for 5 years after this study is complete to ensure confidentiality. The participant consent form included an abbreviated invitation to consent, background information, procedures, and details about the study's voluntary nature, potential risks, and benefits of participating. The form also included information about compensation, confidentiality, point of contact for questions, and a statement of consent. I carefully demonstrated beneficence by remaining professional and gracious with each participant's interaction.

Fairness and justice must also be displayed when engaging participants and managing data collection (Efthimios et al., 2019). Participants received an electronic recruitment flyer and consent form via work email that provided information regarding this study's purpose and necessity. I outlined the guidelines for interview involvement and the right to participate or terminate participation from the study at any time with no personal or professional judgment. The letter informed managers that they would receive a \$10 Starbucks gift card incentive for their participation. Participants should have an ethical and transparent opportunity to confirm their involvement through written consent (Barwise et al., 2019). Managers had the option to confirm their understanding and consent for participation through replying with the phrase 'I Consent' electronically.

Data Collection Instruments

The qualitative researcher serves as the primary data collector and should use semistructured interviews, archival records, and member checking to conduct a study (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). For this multiple case study, I was the primary data collection instrument. I used a semistructured interview technique with each participant to answer my research question through intentional, open-ended questioning. Researchers should select a process that allows the researcher to balance gaining a rich understanding of participant perspectives with managing their personal bias and experiences (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). When the interviews were complete, I triangulated the data using company documents, company websites, and BLS website information. Collecting data from interviews, company documents on employee turnover, and websites complemented Yin's (2017) case study recommendation of including data from two or more independent sources. Document review was the secondary data collection source for this study.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager identified a group of managers who met the criteria for the study. All managers selected received an email with a recruitment flyer enclosed inviting them to participate in the study. Managers who agreed to interview received an emailed version of the participant consent form with instruction to consent via email before the interview. A \$10 Starbucks E-gift card was distributed to participants as a gesture of appreciation for their time. Participants also received access to data results to inform their practice once the study was complete.

An interview protocol helped administer a consistent, ethical, and structured interview process (see Appendix A) with each participant. As the primary instrument for data collection, I used Zoom, Trint computer software on a laptop, and a Samsung Galaxy Note 20 smartphone to document and transcribe the interviews with each manager. According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), a researcher is responsible for creating an interview protocol that fosters reliability and validity within the study. Researchers use participant and direct observations, surveys, and archival data to enhance the collection and analysis, contributing to the study's reliability and validity (Houghton et al., 2017; Yin, 2017).

I used member checking as a verification procedure to ensure the reliability, validity, credibility, and accuracy of the data collected. Qualitative researchers use member checking to establish trustworthiness within a study by ensuring the correct thoughts, meanings, or terms from participants (Birt et al., 2016). Chase (2017) supported that researchers who use member checking experience increased respect and confidence regarding their study's academic rigor and support. To ensure member checking, I transcribed and analyzed data, drafted a summary for each interview session, and then emailed each study participant to allow them to review for accuracy and return notes to me within three days. This assessment allowed participants to expound upon or clarify the interpretations captured by the researcher (Allen, 2015). After the review was complete, I corrected errors as needed before requesting a final review from participants for absolute certainty. No additional reviews were needed as member checking yielded accurate summations with each participant.

Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique consisted of semistructured face-to-face interviews using an interview protocol (see Appendix A) and a review of the company website pages and turnover metrics (Flick et al., 2019). Clark and Vealé (2018) noted that a researcher reserves the right to select a technique they feel minimizes bias and best supports an environment's unique processes. The participant selection process began by partnering with company Corporate Human Resources Managers. The Corporate Human Resources Manager emailed a recruitment letter and consent form to big-box retail managers with established criterion and a turnover rate of 30% or less. A list of 14 big-box retail managers who agreed to participate was provided to me, as well as a pre-established Zoom link from the Corporate Human Resource Manager from the company Zoom account. Participants had the opportunity to select a weekday or weekend time block that worked best for them. All correspondence to schedule the interview occurred from the Corporate Human Resource Manager; however, participants consented to the interview process before each session by submitting an “I consent” statement via email before their interview.

To provide the best analysis and focus, I used Zoom for each interview to create a safe, distraction-free environment away from customers and other staff. The use of Zoom also allowed interviews to occur when convenient for the participant, such as before, after, or during their work shift. All participants were approved to interview at their convenience using their company Zoom account. Participants received a copy of the consent form for their records and information about the member-checking process. Each

interview was scheduled for 30 minutes and concluded in 25 minutes or less. This strict time limit helped alleviate researcher bias from additional reflection and assumption, an important practice for semistructured interviews (Bevan, 2014).

Before each interview, I confirmed that participants understood the format of the interview process by outlining each step of the interview and asking if there were any clarifying questions. During each interview session, I asked the participants six questions (see Appendix A). I conducted each interview individually and transcribed all the information provided on a word document. For each interview, I also used a web software, Trint, and a Samsung Galaxy Note 20 smartphone to document and transcribe interviews. I used Trint, Zoom, and the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 smartphone compared to the use of a standard recorder or a Livescribe because of the ability to provide a simple virtual integration. Trint software also offered a secure data collection process that seamlessly shifted to transcription and analysis. After each interview concluded, I thanked participants for their time and informed of the timeline for transcription and member checking. Within 1 week, participants received a summary of their interview for member checking. I gave participants the opportunity to address concerns that impacted accuracy and upon confirmation of interview interpretation, participants were emailed a \$10 Starbucks E-gift card as a token of appreciation for their time.

Qualitative researchers use semistructured interviews to explore themes within a phenomenon (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Radcliffe (2013) indicated that using semistructured interviews allow researchers to ask pointed, consistent, and intentional questions that foster open and active participation. For this study, I used semistructured

interviews to delve deeper into the participant's concepts and ideas while clarifying purpose and intent using follow-up ques. Interviews for this study were conducted using an interview protocol to facilitate a consistent, focused approach for each participant. 30-minute appointments were scheduled by a Corporate Human Resources Manager to allow participants a dedicated time to interview during employee work shifts.

The advantages of face-to-face interviews include the ability to view social cues and observe the body language of interviewees to inform the researcher of non-verbal information (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). As the researcher, I was able to assess to the interviewees' verbal and social cues fully understand their responses. A disadvantage of face-to-face interviewing is the interviewer's inability to effectively listen or ask probing questions (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). I used the interview protocol (see Appendix A) to ensure questions were consistently asked to each participant to maintain order and flow of the interview.

Additional disadvantages of this technique included challenges with collecting extensive responses for all interview questions within the limited time period. To ensure this technique is most effective, a researcher should give special consideration to each interview's location, potential distractions from external noises, and possibilities for equipment failures (Radcliffe, 2013; Yin, 2017). To maximize the time allotted, I ensured participants used a secure, private room to complete their interview while also using the interview protocol to provide a structured approach for each question. With the use of this tool, each interview was fully completed within the dedicated time.

To assess participants' data, I used triangulation to gain a holistic understanding of the big-box retail environment. Renz et al. (2018) and Yin (2017) encouraged methodological triangulation, data analysis triangulation, investigator triangulation, or theoretical triangulation to strengthen research design validity and confidence in study findings. A researcher must have a clear understanding of triangulation techniques to ensure the right process is selected (Noble & Heale, 2019). I gained an understanding of triangulation through a thorough literature review on the subject and then used methodological triangulation by conducting interviews, reviewing company documents and websites, and using BLS information. Information from company documents, websites, and BLS was used to triangulate participants' responses to interview questions.

Reviewing company information from secondary sources ensured accurate data was received from participants. I gained access to company archival information through big-box retail managers and confirmed it through the Corporate Human Resources Manager. Data from company websites and BLS information supported the effectiveness of big-box manager best practices. I gained an understanding of employee retention strengths through methodological triangulation, which also increased credibility and validity through multiple data collection methods.

Member checking aids in the accurate collection, decoding, and transcription of data. Birt et al. (2016) encouraged qualitative researchers to use member checking to capture their responses' intentionality and context. Verifying the accuracy of collected responses before completing the study improved the coding process and allowed the participants to convey a unique and accurate voice to their experience (Fusch & Fusch,

2015). Participants confirmed their comments by reviewing their interview summary electronically. They then had another opportunity to correct any detail that was incorrect or in need of expansion.

Data Organization Technique

As Johnson (2015) emphasized, a researcher must provide 100% respect and protect participant information and rights when collecting and storing data. To ensure ethical practices with data collection, I used special labels such as P1, P2, and the interview date. Forms and data collection materials did not include any company information (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). As the researcher, I was the sole reviewer and analyzer of the data collected. I ensured the data collected was accurate and necessary for this study. It was important to eliminate missing or non-vital data to maintain relevance and credibility throughout the research process. Additionally, I placed electronic data on a password-protected external hard drive to retain for a minimum of 5 years under Walden University retention expectations. After 5 years, I will erase electronic data from the external drive by completing a permanent deletion and factory reset process.

Data Analysis

Triangulation enhances the rigor or quality of case study research (Farquhar et al., 2020). Triangulation addresses both validity and reliability by using multiple data sources to eliminate bias (Yin, 2017). Renz et al. (2018), Denzin (2017), and Yin (2017) identified the four types of triangulation as methodological triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and data source triangulation as types of triangulation. Studies using method triangulation rely on more than one form of data, while investigator

triangulation involves multiple researchers collecting, interpreting, and analyzing data (Farquhar et al., 2020). Data triangulation uses more than one theoretical approach to interpret findings, while studies that use data source triangulation rely on collecting data from different informants over time (Farquhar et al., 2020).

For my qualitative case study, I used methodological triangulation to collect data from interviews, company documents provided by managers, company metrics, and website pages. The Corporate Human Resources Manager provided access to managers who met study criteria and archived performance data. I used methodology triangulation to gather data and ensure the integrity of the results from interviews. Company document and website data provided comprehensive research that supported insights provided by each participant. Metric data proved to be below national turnover rates provided by BLS, proving the effectiveness of the participants' organization. Incorporating of multiple data methods ensured a thorough exploration of the various perspectives that existed within the selected phenomenon (Fusch et al., 2018).

During data analysis, I searched for themes within the organization to better understand strategies that can reduce employee turnover and identify commonalities that support my conceptual framework of transformational leadership. Using the transformational leadership lens assisted with accurately coding leadership behaviors that emerged to improve employee retention (Richards, 2015). During analysis, I looked for themes to support, refute, or clarify peer-reviewed literature and conceptual framework and included correlation in the presentation of findings.

I used NVivo 1.0 software to code themes from data collected by interviews, performance metrics, and company website pages. Coding themes included the transformational leadership theory tenants of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, as well as attributes from comparable and contrasting theories referenced in this study. When comparing NVivo to other software such as Atlas and MAXQDA, NVivo appeared to be more user-friendly and appropriate for case study research. The use of NVivo assisted with developing complex sets of codes by automatically pulling together data associated with specific codes (Elliott, 2018). The process of data analysis followed Yin's (2017) five-step approach, which included compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding.

The first step of the data analysis process consisted of compiling transcripts and necessary research data. The second phase included a breakdown of data collected into smaller, more controllable fragments. Step three consisted of the reassembling process, which included organizing data into codes and clusters of codes to align with the conceptual framework. After researchers reorganize the data and create intentional themes, they progress to interpreting (Yin, 2017). I used NVivo 1.0 to identify frequencies within codes to develop themes within each transcript. Castleberry and Nolen (2018) affirmed that the process of assembling and disassembling might occur multiple times as needed for the researcher to ensure the appropriate codes are applied reliably throughout the data. Data in this study was dismantled and regrouped into several categories to ensure the accuracy of codes and eventual themes. To manage ideas as they

occurred, I created notes and comments within NVivo to assist with analysis. Completing the reassemble step could result in the improved matching of common themes (Ganapathy, 2016). After themes were strongly identified, the last phase involved determining a conclusion from the interpreted data.

Qualitative analysis requires a researcher to immerse themselves in the data, consider all nuances and connections, and interpret the data from different perspectives (Maher et al., 2018). Accurately completing the data analysis process also requires the researcher to move sequentially through the process (Yin, 2017). To fulfill this requirement, I compiled data collected, organized the data into more manageable fragments, and reassembled the information into clusters thematically. I then thoroughly interpreted data collected from interviews and information on employee turnover strategies and objectively arrived at an informed conclusion. Key themes from my findings correlated with literature and studies on transformational leadership to prepare a comprehensive presentation of the data.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are the cornerstones of a credible, dependable research study. Qualitative researchers must ensure quality to promote accuracy and trustworthiness within their study (Kyngäs et al., 2020; Morse, 2015). Strong researchers are consistent with their commitment to quality data and information. A researcher's ability to address concepts such as dependability, credibility, transferability, confirmability, and data saturation is also important for establishing reliability and validity within their study (Leung, 2015; Smith et al., 2017). To enhance reliability and

validity, I used techniques such as member checking and multiple data sources to demonstrate consistency and trustworthiness within study results.

Reliability

Yin (2017) reinforced the value of reliability by promoting replication through documentation and standardization of operational processes. Providing detailed information about the research and outlining procedures using a consistent interview protocol will create dependability that can yield accuracy within the research study (Kyngäs et al., 2020). I ensured this reliability by carefully transcribing data and reviewing my results with participants to use member checking to confirm my interpreted themes' validity. Participants received a verbatim account of their transcription to verify accuracy and correct errors before the data collection process concluded.

Qualitative researchers must provide adequate evidence that justifies their research findings (MacPhail et al., 2016). To overcome criticism regarding rigor, researchers should use thorough documentation and standardization of operational processes (Cypress, 2017; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2017). Qualitative researchers can overcome questions that challenge study stability and potential for replication by confidently ensuring reliability, care, consistency, and quality in their research practices (Cypress, 2017). As the researcher, I ensured data were well detailed and thoughtfully coded to identify correct themes that produced results that could replicate over time.

Dependability

Dependability occurs when a researcher can ensure data stability over time and throughout varying conditions (Kyngäs et al., 2020). Providing detailed information about the research and outlining procedures using a consistent interview protocol can create dependability within the research study (Kyngäs et al., 2020). I ensured dependability by using member checking to confirm interpreted responses are correct. Marshall and Rossman (2016) emphasized the value of clear and concise documentation to establish reliability. To demonstrate this practice, I used an interview protocol to create a framework to support future research.

Validity

To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of this study, I used member checking and methodological triangulation. Hayashi et al. (2019) stressed that triangulation may be the best criterion to use amongst the five validity criteria because of its holistic approach. Researchers must be cognizant of the methods they select and ensure the data collected is congruent to the foundation of the research (Leung, 2015). Employing member checking and method triangulation allowed me to promote credibility, transferability, and confirmability.

Qualitative researchers must also select appropriate tools, processes, and data to produce validity (Leung, 2015). Researchers choose qualitative methods to explore unique phenomena but often struggle with ensuring truth and validity (Fusch et al., 2018). Validity in qualitative research means the techniques used and the results are accurate and truthful (Cypress, 2017; Leung, 2015). Researchers can enhance their research's

validity by triangulating measures from multiple sources to offset any bias that may form (Farquhar et al., 2020; Fusch et al., 2018). Researchers must consider constructs such as credibility, transferability, and confirmability to ensure a valid, in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Hayashi et al., 2019).

Credibility

Researchers establish credibility by ensuring validity within their study findings (Morse, 2015). To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of this study, I used member checking and method triangulation. The use of member checking allows participants to confirm the researcher's interpretation of the data collected is accurate (Birt et al., 2016). I used this method by providing an email of my interpreted data to allow participants to directly address their statements' accuracy. Ensuring the accuracy of the data captured will strengthen the research's credibility amongst participants (Cypress, 2017).

Transferability

Hayashi et al. (2019) and Marshall and Rossman (2016) emphasized the importance of using clear, rich, and detailed descriptions to provide transferability for future researchers. Researchers have a responsibility to offer extensive descriptions of their participants and robust data on the research process to help the reader understand the transferable nature of the study results (Cypress, 2017; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). To adhere to this transferability process, I thoroughly documented all study processes and procedures to increase the potential of replication through consistent descriptions. Additionally, I included the interview protocol used for this study to provide an example that other researchers can use.

Confirmability

Researchers who establish credibility, transferability, and dependability within their studies also achieve confirmability (Morse, 2015). Confirmability consists of audits from participants that validate the data captured by the researcher is reflective of the selected phenomenon (Hayashi et al., 2019). To accomplish confirmability, I used method triangulation and member checking. Using methodological triangulation can increase validity using multiple data collection methods (Noble & Heale, 2019). Data collected from interviews and archival information verified by the participant can assist a researcher in ensuring complete understanding and validity of data collected (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Noble & Heale, 2019).

Data Saturation

Qualitative researchers must ensure data saturation to promote trustworthy and comprehensive research (Colombo et al., 2016; Yin, 2017). Researchers achieve data saturation when no new information is found (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Marshall et al., 2013). Fusch et al. (2018) stressed that researchers must ensure the inherent meaning of the data collected, or else themes confirmed through data saturation may become lost by researcher bias. To ensure data saturation within this study, I continued interviewing big-box retail managers within the selected organizations until I found no additional data or codes. Employing member checking also assisted with curbing researcher bias once data saturation occurs.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 addressed this qualitative study's purpose, my role as the researcher, and the strategy used for identifying research participants. This section also outlined research methods and design options, population and sampling approaches, steps taken to ensure an ethical research study, and the data collection and organization practices used. Lastly, Section 2 covered the importance of reliability and validity in achieving credible research. Section 3 will include the study findings, strategies for application within my selected industry, and the implications for social change that may exist. I will also offer recommendations for actions and further research on voluntary employee turnover. Section 3 will conclude with final reflections to culminate the study experience.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The objective of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. The specific problem that I addressed in the study was that some big-box retail managers lack strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover. The overarching research question that guided the study was: What strategies do some big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover? Data analysis included exploration and triangulation of the case study data. Transcribed interview data derived from Zoom interviews with big-box retail managers who have successfully reduced employee turnover for 1 year or more and maximized retention per metrics assessed by their organization.

While no additional information or themes emerged after the eighth interview, I conducted 14 interviews to provide further depth and reinforcement of best practices. Four major themes emerged from semistructured interviews (see Table 2). The results indicated that big-box retail managers are aware of the factors that influence voluntary employee turnover. Successful strategies must include effective leadership skills, commitment to employee development and well-being, and intentional relationship building. Participants also conveyed their strategies may apply to managers within and beyond the retail industry.

Table 2*Emerging Themes and Frequencies*

Emerging Themes	Frequency	Percentages
Care for employees	265	42%
Ownership and empowerment	172	27%
Effective leadership communication	198	31%
Positive relationships	263	29%
Total	898	100%

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question that guided the study was: What strategies do some big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover? The qualitative multiple case study involved 14 big-box retail managers from 11 retail locations within San Antonio, Texas. The participants consisted of leaders who had managerial experience in the big-box retail industry, worked as a retail store manager in San Antonio, Texas for a minimum of 12 months, and had experience implementing effective strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover. All participants provided electronic consent and retained a copy of the form for their records before the interview. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I collected primary data by conducting 25 minute semistructured face-to-face interviews on Zoom with participants using six open-ended questions.

I used an alphanumeric coding system to protect the identity of participants, using the range of P1 through P14 (P1 representing participant number one). I completed member checking with each participant after transcribing the interviews, which yielded 100% accuracy from all participants. Archival data from managers, information collected

from company documents and web pages, and statistics from the BLS website formed the secondary analysis data.

Data analysis included thorough exploration and methodological triangulation of case study data, which consisted of the transcribed interview data and archival evidence from the case organizations. I uploaded the transcribed interview and archival data into NVivo 1.0 for Windows qualitative software to code and identify themes. I used Yin's five-step analysis of compiling, disassembling, reassembling, clarifying, and concluding to analyze data. The NVivo 1.0 software assisted with identifying and coding keywords, phrases, and sentences from participant responses related to each theme. Table 2 illustrates the number of words, phrases, or sentences coded to each theme and the frequency they occurred. Four major themes emerged from the data analysis: care for employees, employee ownership and empowerment, effective leadership communication, and positive relationships.

Theme 1: Care for Employees

The demonstration of care for employees emerged as a theme that contributed to reducing voluntary turnover within each case population. Good organizations invest in their employees and recognize their contribution to the company's value creation (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). All participants acknowledged their organization's commitment to creating a culture that values, respects, and protects the employee. The fundamental ways participants and their organizations expressed care for their teams were through empathy for life challenges, compensation and benefits, and support of personal and career goals. The identified subgroup themes were consistent with research

on employee retention factors that inspire employees to stay and help to improve organizational performance and customer satisfaction (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018; Schaap & Olckers, 2020).

The 14 big-box retail managers that participated in this study affirmed that understanding the individual needs of their employees influenced their desire to stay on their teams. Further, using tangible methods to show consideration for the employee increased employee retention and performance (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). P1 highlighted that employees are less likely to leave an organization when they feel like their managers genuinely care about them. P1 stated,

There are employees who have been here for 30, 25, and 40 years. The culture creates an understanding that our company takes care of the employee; everything I do is to promote the employee as their leader. If they understand that process and that I'm here to help them grow to become the best employee they can be, the turnover is minimal. I rarely see people quitting unless it's for an advanced opportunity.

P5, P6, P7, and P11 indicated that a successful leader invests in their team and lets them know they come first. P6 further emphasized,

We are a people-first company. We sell goods and services, but at the end of the day, the people make it happen. It's how you create relationships with those people that allows you to solidify your culture of being people first and ultimately moving the company forward within the community.

As a result of this investment in their teams, all participants expressed they could enhance employee engagement. Findings showed that even during the COVID-19 pandemic, employees were willing to sacrifice their time and proudly serve as essential employees to fulfill the organization's mission because they felt valued and cared for by their leadership. P13 affirmed that employees who feel valued are more flexible and willing to contribute where needed, stating the following,

I love being on a winning team and so does my team. I have a store that is fluid.

COVID was a perfect example – people did whatever they could to help unload

trucks, help with lines in the morning, or pitch in where the organization needed.

The theme of care for employees aligns with Bass' (1990) transformational leadership theory tenant of individualized consideration. Each participant found ways to understand their employees and their challenges while leveraging their strengths and mitigating their opportunities. As shown in Table 3, three subthemes emerged from data analysis regarding care for employees: empathy for life challenges, compensation and benefits, and support of personal and career goals.

Table 3

Care for Employees Subthemes and Frequencies

Subtheme	Frequency	Percentages
Empathy for life challenges	85	32%
Compensation and benefits	67	25%
Support of personal and career goals	113	43%
Total	265	100%

Empathy for Life Challenges

The theme of care for employees expanded with the emergence of the subtheme of empathy during life challenges. All participants shared that their strategy for retaining employees and maintaining performance during personal hardships allowed space for grace and understanding. P2, P3, P11, and P12 described their commitment to working with their employees in times of need. P12 stated that their management staff focused on the individual needs of their team members and worked to learn what they valued during each facet of life. P12 reinforced this notion by stating, “We must understand how difficult it is. From kids to single parents to ones that take care of the elderly. When we understand and support each individual, there’s never a shotgun approach to a situation.”

P2 and P11 described instances where family issues caused some high-performing staff members to decline in performance or consider voluntarily leaving the organization. In both situations, employees had kids and elderly parents to take care of and felt ineffective on the job due to stress. P11 shared the following strategies to assist staff members with resolving conflict instead of letting them go,

If they have family issues or need help, quitting isn’t the only option. When people feel like they must quit but don’t want to – I think how can I accommodate them? Can they take a leave of absence? Can they take a couple of weeks off? How do we really take care of them? They need to feel like they are being invested in. A student going away to school has options and I work with them the best I can. We create flexible schedules and hours to be able to help them handle what they need to take care of.

Findings regarding care for employees support research by Top et al. (2020) that stated managers should care about their employees' problems in and out of the workplace as it can impact their performance. P3 recognized this as well, highlighting leaders must be flexible and operate in the gray. The participant noted that employees should follow guidelines and policies; however, leaders must recognize that staff members have bad days too. P5, P10, and P13 emphasized this by acknowledging that employees do not wake up with a plan to perform poorly. Additionally, P10 expressed that understanding the personal challenges staff face and allowing them to fix them and then return to the workspace can increase their productivity.

Participants ultimately shared that managers should separate employee missteps from the true character of the individual. Leaders should understand how conflict can influence behavior and create an environment that helps employees through their challenges. The hallmark of a transformational leader is balancing expectations with care for their team to achieve optimum organizational goals (Xu et al., 2021). P13 exemplified this behavior by sharing the following,

As leaders, we are there for people during tough times and support each other like family, doing as many one-on-one meetings as we can. This type of involvement must happen from the top down with managers across departments to promote operational success.

Compensation and Benefits

All participants in this study acknowledged each employee on their team as a valued member of their organization. Effective leaders recognize the necessity of

retaining their employees to make the organization successful (Soomro et al., 2021). P11 and P12 adamantly expressed that no job or position was more valuable than another. P12 emphasized the importance of employees with the following,

Leaders must make sure employees understand they are people too. We are on the same team; nobody is better, below or above. Our roles may look different, but the end goal is the same. They are people who help me do my job because they do the hard work to make us successful.

To increase engagement and recognize their employees' contributions, companies must offer competitive compensation and benefits (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021).

P3, P10, and P12 highlighted a culture of compensation and benefits that supported the employee, from COVID-19 essential employee pay increases to the approval of special leave of absences for staff not comfortable working during the pandemic.

Singh (2019) supported that compensation can be a key factor in reducing turnover and influencing employees to leave an organization. P3 and P10 described immediate support their company offered employees regardless of educational background, stating that high school graduates join their teams making \$17-\$18 an hour with the potential to earn more as they promote or earn performance bonuses within the company. The competitive wages helped to promote satisfaction and motivate productivity to reach company goals. P3, P4, P7, and P13 celebrated the stock ownership model offered to all employees within the organization and the 401K benefits provided to full and part-time employees that go beyond the paycheck. Managers also used recognition and incentives to benefit the company, a strategy also known to influence

retention (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). P9 stated that staff feedback was essential in developing a competitive spirit that drives results. The additional rewards inspired employees to be successful while also building appreciation and loyalty when managers intentionally show that they care.

Support of Personal and Career Goals

Successful managers commit to helping their employees obtain their goals in and outside of the workplace. Shafi et al. (2020) highlighted that leaders who stimulate their employees beyond their normal thinking construct by using inspirational motivation help their teams reach their personal goals. Findings supported the passion each participant had to help their employees find their path. P12 asserted that all employees desire to grow but may not know how to. Through connecting one-on-one and learning what they desire, employees can be placed on the right path to grow as an individual. P12 further emphasized the responsibility of the manager to provide learning experiences for employees that helped them reach their personal and career goals by stating,

Retail is not for everyone; for those who choose to make it a career, it can be satisfying. Oftentimes retail is an employee's first job. Even if they do not make a career out of retail, their time spent in the industry can help them realize personal value and experience for future growth.

P8 and P10 indicated that their most meaningful moments with their employees revolved around conversations about personal and career goals. By asking how they were doing or what they needed to reach their goals, a deeper level of understanding the

employee developed and led to intentional interactions beyond the execution of everyday tasks.

Findings suggested that demonstrating care for employees meant helping them find their path within the organization and helping staff members identify when they should separate for their well-being. P3, P7, and P10 shared instances when they helped their employees make the tough decision to leave their position for family, educational, or self-exploration needs. P3 highlighted that losing a high-performing employee is tough but encouraging them to do what is best for their family is most important. P3 also explained the advantage of transparent communication and teaching employees how to make career changes responsibly. P3 and P7's strategy of creating a supportive culture of development inspired their employees to leave their positions to find their personal and occupational purpose, which later influenced their employees' desire to return to the organization once they accomplished their goal. P7 culminated the strategy of supporting employee personal and career goals with the following,

I spend time with employees to help them get to where they want to go. I ask them what position they want and give them the autonomy to apply for that position or look for another store that offers the opportunity. I encourage them to visit a new store or department and see what is available and to experience the worst and best day in that position. It comes down to asking them questions and helping them find what they are passionate about. When you can do this, you can help them find the best fit within the company or beyond.

Correlation to the Literature and Conceptual Framework

Findings unveiled in the care for employees theme are consistent with relevant research on retaining employees. Kurdi and Alshurideh (2020) found that managers who cared for the holistic needs of their employees produced happier, more confident staff members who were more productive and desired to stay within their organization. The consideration of staff displayed within the organization created a culture of pride, acceptance, and congeniality that employees valued (Kurdi & Alshurideh, 2020). Employees must feel they are unique and essential to the organization and not just another number. According to Singh (2019), employees should be recognized as vital contributors to an organization's operational and financial success. To acknowledge this, leaders should leverage factors such as compensation and employee development to positively affect employee retention (Tirta & Enrika, 2020). Participants in this study demonstrated an uncompromising focus on taking care of their staff and in turn, benefited from having engaged teams.

Incentives and benefits combined with competitive pay are clear indicators of a commitment to care for employees. Singh (2019) found that compensation can significantly reduce employee turnover and increase commitment to an organization. Conversely, poor compensation and a lack of reward and recognition correlated to turnover intentions (Schaap & Olckers, 2020). Carter et al. (2019) found that expenses to recruit, hire, and train new employees far exceeded the cost of an effective compensation plan. Bonuses and intentional pay increases drive employees to achieve company goals and metrics due to increased engagement. Customers also benefit from extrinsic motivation as satisfied employees are more invested in company priorities.

A review of the turnover rates by participant reports and trends captured on the company documents and website pages reflect the care leaders have for their employees. With retention rates of more than 80%, participants proved their best practices of understanding and supporting the employee's needs in and out of the workplace, offering competitive wages, providing company stock options, and rewarding bonuses and hazard pay contributed to reduced voluntary turnover. With the retail sector grossing a national turnover rate of 69.7% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020), findings from this research tie to effective business practices that big-box retail managers should use to retain their employees.

The theme of care for employees correlates to the conceptual framework of this study. The participants demonstrated the necessity of individualized consideration when leading employees. As referenced in Section 1, transformational leaders commit to caring, valuing, and understanding their employees (Bass, 1990). Providing opportunities for personal and professional development and emphasizing employee worth through compensation and rewards inspires loyalty, engagement, and job satisfaction that motivates employees to stay. Transformational leaders recognize how to value and motivate their employees, thus enhancing performance and retention within their organization.

Theme 2: Ownership and Empowerment

The second theme that emerged from data analysis was ownership and empowerment. Organizations that encourage autonomy and decision-making amongst their employees experience increased operational performance. According to Sepahvand

and Khodashahri (2021), engaged employees are more involved in the organization due to their feelings of loyalty and empowerment. While ineffective leaders discourage empowerment due to fear of losing control, seasoned leaders understand the benefits delegation and shared responsibilities can have on the organization (Zhao et al., 2020).

P12 supported this by stating,

I give the responsibility from me as a tenured leader to the employee. This helps them learn new positions, transforms them as a leader, and teaches them how to fish. This may not be the fastest method at times, but it creates the most buy-in and satisfaction amongst employees.

Managers in this study not only embraced their employees finding solutions to meet customer or business needs, but they also promoted creativity and feedback to make processes better.

All participants in this study acknowledged that building a culture of ownership was engrained in their company values. P13 expressed that focus on cultivating an ownership mentality began as early as the hiring process. P4 and P13 described sharing the financial advantages of high performance, such as 401K, bonuses, and stock plans, to encourage employee buy-in at a deeper level. P4 stated,

When you get employees to buy into the mission, you help them see they are not just working for the company, they are the company. You help them see they want to do well because there is money given for the work you do. The better we do, the better the increase is for company performance and stock.

P3 reinforced this notion by stating,

With our company, we are all owners. Once employees become vested, I try to get them to see how their success not only benefits them financially but also benefits the company.

P8 and P14 highlighted that ownership influenced employee buy-in, feelings of importance, and courage to use their voice due to the direct impact they make on the company's financial success. P5 agreed, stating the following,

Employees want to feel a part of something. They are less likely to leave if they feel their voice means something. When they come to work and are included and empowered to make decisions to move the organization forward, they are more engaged and will be less likely to leave the company. They see firsthand how their voice is being heard.

In addition to driving ownership to help employees understand the impact of their performance, participants also empowered their employees to improve processes and create solutions to business challenges. P3 agreed with this strategy and stated,

I let my team know that I trust them and value their years of experience in this business. I ask them to tell me what they have seen, what works, and what we can do that if things are not working. I let my staff know I'm here to guide them while they run the business. I also let them know I'm up for trying anything because I trust them. This empowers them. When people feel that you as their leader trust and value their opinion, they're likely to do more.

Participants encouraged empowerment by asking questions or prompting employees to find solutions to their issues. P10 stated,

I empower employees to identify concerns and share feedback. I ask them the next step in the process and how they would handle it. I give it back to them and challenge them not to deflect. I want them to have dialogue and talk to other leaders from our store to encourage open conversations on the things that are slowing down efficiencies in our processes.

P2, P5, P9, P11, and P14 described how developing employees to lead meetings, propose ideas, or create department challenges to address financial or inventory opportunities helped foster value, creativity, and a greater understanding of the bottom line.

Empowering their employees to have a comprehensive lens of the company increased independent decision-making to do what was best for the customer or organization immediately. Participants accentuated the importance of making sure their employees knew their thoughts, concerns, and opinions mattered. Findings supported that inclusivity and shared decision-making produced staff innovation that moved the company forward. Employees also gained more confidence and self-esteem through empowerment and encouragement.

Empowered employees create efficient and sustainable processes that enhance the organization. P11 expressed that empowerment created a breeding ground for training and development through hands-on experiences. P7 agreed, describing how lessons learned generated new best practices that exceeded the status quo and contributed to operational excellence. P8 acknowledged that equipping employees with opportunities that stretched them created a bench for talent and freed the manager to do higher-level

tasks. Findings supported that managers who empower employees to operate as owners had more engagement, job satisfaction, and increased organizational commitment. Managers interviewed were able to tap into their employees' potential by amplifying their voice and creativity, which ultimately helped mitigate voluntary turnover.

Correlation to the Literature and Conceptual Framework

Findings unveiled in the ownership and empowerment theme are consistent with research on reducing employee turnover. AlKahtani et al. (2021) posited that employee empowerment improved individual performance and contributions within the organization. According to Andika and Darmanto (2020), leaders use empowerment to represent trust, involvement, and motivation when they extend decision-making and power to their employees. Al-Omari et al. (2020) found empowerment can enhance collaboration, team spirit, self-confidence, innovation, independent thinking, and entrepreneurial spirit amongst employees in an organization. Participants in this study confirmed the benefits of empowerment on their organization's overall success and reduced voluntary turnover. Company document and website information reinforced the impact of empowerment and ownership on employee retention and performance.

Good leaders permit their employees to immerse themselves in their company's business fully. Al-Omari et al. (2020) supported leaders should give employees autonomy to complete minor administrative tasks that correspond with their functional expertise and job role. Naz et al. (2020) affirmed that delegation of power should also allow creativity in employee task execution. Participants of this study demonstrated their belief in this practice through the drive of ownership with their employees. Managers allowed their

staff to use innovative ideas to find solutions to problems that impacted them. Managers also used questions and solicitation of feedback to ensure they embedded a culture of shared ownership in their daily routines and communication.

The theme of ownership and empowerment correlates to the conceptual framework of this study. Transformational leaders use intellectual stimulation attributes to empower their employees to use innovation to develop solutions to business problems (Yin et al., 2019). Researchers found that when business leaders allow their team members the freedom to execute their workload or delegated administrative tasks creatively, they are more satisfied and engaged (Amor et al., 2020). Participants in this study exemplified transformational leadership behaviors to maximize their employees' potential while also developing talent and organizational competency (Shafi et al., 2020). Transformational leaders embrace empowerment and ownership to increase buy-in to the organizational mission and stimulate their employees to strengthen individual performance. When employees own their contribution to operational success, they are less inclined to leave their organization.

Theme 3: Effective Leadership Communication

The third theme that emerged from data analysis was effective leadership communications. Establishing a good relationship between the manager and employee is essential to employee retention, as poor relationships often lead to more voluntary employee turnover (Kurdi & Alshurideh, 2020). Kundu and Lata (2017) further supported that when employees trust their leadership, they are more engaged and have lower intentions to leave the organization. Effective leaders carefully navigate employee

relationships and company priorities by remaining accessible and providing clear communication on expectations and processes. As shown in Table 4, two subthemes emerged from data analysis regarding effective leadership communication: open door policy and consistent communication.

Table 4

Effective Leadership Communication Subthemes and Frequencies

Subtheme	Frequency	Percentages
Open door policy	74	37%
Consistent communication	124	63%
Total	198	100%

Open-Door Policy

The first subtheme identified was the open-door policy. All 14 participants expressed the importance of being available for their employees whenever needed. Specifically, the use of an open-door policy encouraged employee engagement and immediate resolution to staff concerns. P13 affirmed the necessity of this policy by stating the following,

I also think the open-door policy is key. If you want to retain people, they must be engaged and feel that they can come and talk if something is up. Literally my door on many days is revolving with people going in and out. But I feel that is necessary because I must be approachable.

P7 agreed,

The open-door policy ensures every employee can feel comfortable with coming to us at any time. Employees leave because they are not sure about growth

opportunities. If they know their leader is accessible and wants the best for them, they will stay. People leave a boss not a company. Taking time for your staff goes a long way in letting them know they are not a number but a team member.

P5 extended the focus on creating a space for employees to use their voices by explaining the number of opportunities given to staff to share. Daily staff meetings, floor walks, and one-on-one touchpoints provided leaders with an opportunity to learn from their teams.

According to P5 and P6, the open-door policy extends employee morale and engagement through intentional invitations to share, then apply feedback. P5 stated,

Our team members are the ones on the floor, so we want to hear what they have to say so we can fix the problem and it make better. We want to give them the tools to make their jobs easier and this is done through our open-door policy and feedback sharing.

P6 emphasized the power of open-door policies with a reflection on what it does for inclusivity and retention,

Open communication is a huge part of inclusion. Your team must feel like they are included and a part of something bigger than a paycheck. I want my team at every level to feel comfortable talking to me about whatever is on their mind. If you make them feel like you are accessible and approachable, it helps them want to stay. If something happens that causes them to consider leaving, they know they can come to me, and we'll look at what we can do to keep them going. It is all about being available to your employees and keeping the lines of communication wide open.

Consistent Communication

The next subtheme identified was consistent communication. All participants passionately described ways they communicate with their teams daily. P11 and P13 highlighted their clear and direct messaging began with the hiring process to set the tone for expectations. P13 expressed that personal manager engagement was essential to living the mission of the organization, no matter the time commitment. P13 stated,

You have to lay the foundation early on, and I start with the hiring process. I'm involved with every hire as I do the final interview for anyone. I have 600 employees at my store- I do the final interview because it's important. I also do the orientation with my team. Onboarding is key because it starts there with setting a realistic picture.

P11 supplemented the value of setting the expectations for success from the onset with the following,

We have to hold people accountable and be clear and concise from the beginning on the expectations and processes. No one is perfect so we give coaching and constant feedback on the behaviors we expect. When they are new, we must give them tools, guidance, and resources. As they continue along, we give quick on the go feedback and coaching conversations to hold them accountable.

Communication is vital to motivating employees to align with the company's mission (Tian et al., 2020). P5, P9, P11, P12, and P14 reinforced the necessity of clear, frequent communication from managers to their employees when promoting financial and

operational priorities. Participants provided examples of routine group and one on one meetings facilitated with staff to deliver just-in-time information. P5 highlighted,

Our mission is to be the greatest retail company in the nation. You inspire and create buy-in to this mission by communicating as often as you can. It then becomes ingrained in your culture and your team fully understands what the priorities w drive. The more you communicate, the more the message is understood and practiced by the team. As a leader, you must reinforce by role modeling and setting the tone each day. This reinforces the mission to the team.

P9 supplemented, sharing the following,

I get my managers to buy into the company priorities. I have 15 managers below me and I let them know what they, the company, and the community can get out of it. The managers below me then relay the information to the rest of the team members. I focus on communication to convey what is needed and how it's important.

Findings confirmed that consistent communication allowed team members to connect to a focus greater than self through accountability and clear vision. P7 and P12 discussed weekly meetings that provided updates on company growth and strategies that aligned to customer service and financial performance. Both participants also used group and one on one interactions to drive awareness and commitment from staff. P7 described their approach to delivering visionary communication by stating the following,

You have to explain what the mission is and get people to understand a greater purpose than selling groceries. When I talk to employees about the company

mission, I tell them about how we are here to sell groceries so that we can do other things specifically in the communities that we serve. Once members understand the bigger picture, they are drawn to this. They know they are part of something special. We are committed to the community we serve and many of my staff feel this because they live within walking distance of our stores.

Frequent and direct communication reduced conflict and confusion amongst staff due to personalized support from management. P8, P11, and P14 agreed that word for word communication from the top down made the difference in their staff living up to the company's competing priorities and knowing what needed to be done to best serve the community. The use of meetings to celebrate cooperate responsibility inspired employees to complete tasks with precision and pride, which reduced employee turnover for participants.

Frequent communication breeds a culture of coaching and feedback for staff.

Participants described how their daily communication with staff helped define expectations and peer accountability that sustained beyond their influence. P13 stated,

A+ players don't like to play with C or D players. If they think that everybody's going to get away with things, you lose some of the motivation from you're A+ players. To that point, we are very clear on expectations. We hold people accountable, and we give them opportunities.

P14 agreed,

There's no such thing as overcommunication. The more I communicate with staff, the more they understand where we're going. I've been in stores where there's

been very little communication and it's hard for you to do your job. I've learned that you're only as strong as your weakest link. Many times, there's an issue with managers not setting the mission correctly and making it clear. As a leader, you must make it as clear as day.

Consistent communication also contributed to employees understanding the 'why' behind innovations and significant processes. P11 highlighted that tying practices back to the company mission helped staff overcome challenges with change and improved efficiency and productivity. Communicating routinely assisted participants with avoiding the trap of repeating cycles that are status quo and allowed them to roll out new initiatives with transparency and logical strategy.

Correlation to the Literature and Conceptual Framework

Findings confirmed the effective leadership communication theme was also consistent with research on strategies to retain employees. Organizations operate efficiently and effectively with good communication (Raja & Sinurat, 2020). Without strong communication, organizations are unable to sustain (Raja & Sinurat, 2020). In a study conducted by Tian et al. (2020) on linking communication and transformational leadership to employee retention, effective communication enhanced employee satisfaction. Raja and Sinurat (2020) found that communication was essential to influencing employee engagement and work discipline. Participants in this study demonstrated how effective communication from leadership created a cadence of accountability and alignment that improved organizational results.

The theme of effective leadership communication correlates to the conceptual framework of this study. Transformational leaders inspire their employees by providing a compelling vision, focusing on goal obtainment, fostering a sense of purpose, and training and developing their teams (Tian et al., 2020). These strategies create more organizational commitment and motivate employees to stay within the organization (Tian et al., 2020). Research by Mustika et al. (2020) found transformational leaders successfully managed change through their ability to influence improvements amongst the team and organization that aligned to the organization's strategic mission, structure, and culture. Transformational leadership also encourages employees to enhance their productivity through accountability and individual consideration of how tasks contribute to organizational goals (Bastari et al., 2020). Participants in this study demonstrated the transformational leadership tenants of idealized influence and inspirational motivation within their communication strategy to remain open, honest, and consistently connected to priorities needed to maintain profitability and retain their employees.

Theme 4: Positive Relationships

The final theme that emerged from data analysis was positive relationships. All participants emphasized their commitment and appreciation for knowing their employees on a personal level. The intentional relationships created with staff served as a foundation for development, recognition, and coaching. As P7 and P8 noted, this investment created mutual trust and understanding for decision-making and company priorities. P3, P10, P11, and P13 highlighted employees must know leaders are available for them and willing to provide realistic examples that showcase their professional journey, lessons

learned, and challenges. Participants relayed they had more success with increasing employee performance when their staff felt they were more relatable or had similar experiences. P4 and P6 explained their team relationships helped them be a better mentor and helped them understand what each staff member needed to move their career forward. This understanding resulted in better training and development for their staff.

Findings supported that strong leader-follower relationships also contributed to customer satisfaction and employee autonomy. Team members with positive relationships with their leader were committed to doing what was right for the organization. P11 explained this by stating the following,

Take care of your people, no matter the position so they take care of you. Build, open, honest, transparent relationships to get the best outcome. If my employees know how to take care of the customer, it frees me up to do larger things, making my life easier. If my team members are doing their job to the best of their abilities and doing the best possible by using tools, coaching, and guidance, I am not as needed as much.

Participants also revealed positive employee relationships created an opportunity for grace during times of inconsistent employee performance. Participants highlighted that undesirable behavior did not indicate the employee's character but mostly isolated to situational instances. P9 stated,

I try to understand where they are in their lives and what is impacting them.

People do not just come in and say, "I don't want to do this anymore." Something is typically going on outside of work. It is rewarding to help them be successful

outside of their job and discuss personal things. It is about being human beings, talking, and sharing things that are relatable. It's the building of personal relationships that may bring back the fire they lost. When employees see there's a manager that wants them to be successful on the job and personally, it makes a difference. It's up to us to identify what we are not seeing and to ask questions to peel back the layers.

P4 noted that connecting with employees allowed teams to become a second family that curbed turnover intentions before they influenced a member to leave. P4 explained further,

You know your employee's moods, when something is off, and when they aren't trying. That's when you have to start having those conversations on a personal level to ask how they are, what's going on, and how you can help them. You help them understand that if they want to leave, they need to separate the right way in case they want to come back. For those who do want to stay, you help them figure out the outside influences impacting their performance to get them back on track.

During times where employee improvement was not immediate, participants were able to have challenging conversations with their employees because of the relationship that had been built. P3 modeled the ability to balance respect and care with accountability and expectations with the following,

When I can't relate to an employee or they are unwilling to communicate why they are struggling, I try to help them understand where they lie within the perimeters of our guidelines. I convey that I need them here, but if they're not

able to commit to improving, there will be accountability. I start with talking to the person to understand their situation, then try to get them to understand why the guidelines are there and the goal behind it. Then I try to get them to see how their behavior is not conducive to organizational success and what we need to improve.

P7 and P13 captured the importance of listening to your employees and creating connections that cultivate purpose and inspirational motivation when retaining employees. P7 highlighted the lost art of managers getting to the core of employee desires, while P13 stated the following,

You must feed people's souls and figure out what motivates them. I push my department managers on this as we cannot treat each person the exact same way because what motivates one person may not motivate the other. If they feel important and appreciated, they will contribute more. It's important to always acknowledge ideas and discuss them. If it doesn't work tell them why.

Participants used their relationships with team members to meet the various needs of their diverse teams and incorporate targeted development opportunities that kept their staff engaged, even during times of conflict.

Correlation to the Literature and Conceptual Framework

Findings regarding positive relationships correlated to literature and conceptual framework as it complemented the deliberate focus of understanding and supporting the employee. Tian et al. (2020) found that leadership who took time to know and understand their employees experienced increased employee engagement. Additionally,

transformational leadership enhanced trust and positive employee output when strong leadership connections were present (Tian et al., 2020). Participants highlighted strategies that valued employees and focused on finding joint solutions to professional and personal problems. Basyir et al. (2020) found that transformational leaders reduced withdrawal behaviors of their employees because of their direct, developmental, and supportive style. This study proved that building positive relationships assisted in maintaining progressive communication with employees and reduced voluntary turnover during times of personal challenge or role dissatisfaction.

Applications to Professional Practice

The applications to professional practice involve offering managers within the retail industry strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover. To maximize profitability, productivity, and customer satisfaction, managers must engage and retain their employees. My research conclusions apply to professional business practices in the retail industry because it provides an understanding of big-box retail manager's knowledge, lessons learned, and effective strategies for retaining retail employees. Tian et al. (2020) stressed that employee retention is necessary for any business to obtain and maintain operational success. Thus managers must develop skills to reduce employee turnover. The knowledge acquired in this study from the 14 big-box retail managers who successfully established strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover added to the existing body of research on ways to retain employees through intentional leadership behaviors.

The information offered by participants on how to address turnover and maximize retention within their organization can apply across retail industries. Organizations who adopt attributes of transformational leadership experience more employee commitment and fewer turnover intentions (Manoppo, 2020). The findings from this study also revealed transformational behaviors within the tenants of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration reduced employee turnover. The four main themes of providing care for employees, employee ownership and empowerment, effective leadership communication, and building positive relationships are effective strategies leaders can use to reduce employee turnover. This study aimed to provide evidence to business leaders and stakeholders on the importance of using transformational leadership strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Leaders might benefit from the research identified in this study and use this knowledge to develop an improved work culture that contributes to increased employee engagement, which in turn might reduce employee turnover.

Employee turnover is a detrimental phenomenon that leaders must manage to ensure the sustainability of an organization (Ramlawati et al., 2021). Using proven strategies such as practicing care for employees, inspiring employee ownership and empowerment, delivering effective leadership communication, and building positive relationships with employees might reduce the costly effects of voluntary turnover, ultimately increasing profitability. Stressful and intense work environments require a leadership style such as transformational leadership to mediate turnover intentions (Manoppo, 2020). By focusing on transformational leadership behaviors that cultivate

trust, shared responsibility, and buy-in, big-box retail leaders can influence retention factors such as employee engagement, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. Increasing these factors can improve employee performance, loyalty, and mission alignment, which are essential for reducing voluntary employee turnover.

Implications for Social Change

This qualitative multiple case study on voluntary employee turnover contributes to social change by offering managers strategies to reduce voluntary turnover costs within their organizations. Retaining employees could increase gainful employment for staff members and improve the financial stability for citizens and companies in the community. Using strategies such as care for employees, employee ownership and empowerment, effective leadership communication, and positive relationships might help big-box retail leaders reduce employee turnover. Employee retention contributes to improved customer satisfaction, stronger service to the community, and lower organizational costs (Molahosseini et al., 2020). Profitability from reduced employee costs can generate additional employment opportunities, economic growth, and helpful community resources during times of crisis.

Findings from this study suggest that leaders who successfully reduce voluntary employee turnover create positive environments with employees who take pride in the roles they serve. Employees within these organizations strive to place brand integrity and reputation above self and understand the significance of their contribution on organizational goals. Managers must understand retention factors that inspire organizational commitment, increase job satisfaction, and reduce turnover intentions

(Schaap & Olckers, 2020). Leaders who effectively reduce voluntary employee turnover improve unemployment, increase employee well-being, and promote productivity that influences sustainable organizations.

Identifying methods leaders can use to respond to the competing priorities of leading teams and managing business processes can positively influence employees, their families, and the local community. The implications for social change include the potential to offer new insights on ways big-box retail managers can retain their employees, which may benefit existing and future retail managers. Reducing voluntary employee turnover decreases employee costs generated from hiring and training new staff, thus allowing more financial stability for organizations to support their team members and communities.

Recommendations for Action

The intent of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that big-box retail managers used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. The evidence uncovered by participants in this study might offer helpful information other retail managers can use to reduce voluntary employee turnover in their organizations. Encouraging care for employees, inspiring employee ownership and empowerment, delivering effective leadership communication, and building positive relationships are cost-effective strategies that organizational leaders can execute at every business level. Implementing effective strategies to reduce employee turnover may assist in retaining knowledge from experienced employees that the company will lose if they leave the organization. Further, embedding the strategies identified in this study may improve

profitability and overall culture within an organization, enhancing its competitive advantage within the retail industry.

To promote awareness of study findings, I will disseminate this research through several modalities. Corporate Human Resource Managers from the case organizations and participants will receive a two-page summary of study findings. This research will also be available through the Walden University ProQuest dissertation database to assist future scholars and relevant organizations. I will apply strategies from the findings of this study within my leadership role and work environment. I will also share this information with appropriate audiences by creating leadership and organizational training and development. Lastly, I will explore journal publishing and conference presentation opportunities to contribute to research on reducing voluntary employee turnover.

The findings from this study can extend knowledge to business leaders within the retail sector and potentially other business industries. Employee turnover is a challenge faced by organizations that leaders must manage to sustain profitability and success. Study participants highlighted themes supported in turnover research. Engaged employees have increased organizational commitment, higher performance, and reduced turnover intentions (Xiong & Wen, 2020). Recommendations for action to support big-box retail managers with reducing employee turnover include the following:

1. Incorporate a transformational leadership style to allow managers to produce a high-performing work environment by providing clear and supportive direction to their employees that focuses on developing and meeting individual needs.

2. Practice care for employees to develop an understanding that considers the individualized needs of their development and the external factors that may affect their work performance. Use empathy for life challenges, provide tangible recognition and benefits, and support personal and professional goals when possible.
3. Cultivate a culture that encourages employee ownership and empowerment to stimulate employees to buy in and create innovative solutions that move the organization forward. Help employees see the value of their voice and how their role contributes to operational success.
4. Utilize effective leadership communication that allows for open and honest feedback when employees need it most. Provide clear, immediate, and consistent guidance and direction to help employees meet organizational expectations and desired outcomes.
5. Build positive relationships with employees that allow for vulnerable and real connections. Leverage trust and respect to facilitate meaningful conversations about professional progress and accountability.

I recommend business leaders review the findings of this study and implement the above strategies in their business organizations to help reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study's aim was to explore strategies big-box retail managers used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Results of this study were consistent with existing research on employee turnover and offered vital insights business leaders can use to improve

employee retention. The use of a qualitative multiple case study approach led to a plethora of responses that answered the central research question. For future research, I recommend using a quantitative approach to examine the relationship between voluntary employee turnover and other variables that may exist between themes that emerged in this study. Further research in additional areas might equip leaders with new knowledge to reduce voluntary employee turnover and improve organizational effectiveness.

Recommendations for future studies include addressing some of the limitations. The first limitation was time restraints to conduct data collection. I recommend conducting data collection beyond the participant's work shift through a video conferencing tool to ensure research does not conflict with the customer and operational needs. Another challenge to consider was the limitation of participants being big-box retail managers in San Antonio, Texas, which might not represent big-box retailers nationwide. Creating geographic and demographic limitations may obstruct the ability to gain perspectives from other experienced employees. Lastly, I recommend future research considers additional industries beyond big-box retail with proven methods to reduce employee turnover or incorporate nonmanagerial staff to explore retention strategies implementation.

Reflections

My pursuit of the Doctor of Business Administration program derived from my personal and professional goal of enhancing my skills as a scholar and leader. As a former big-box retail manager, I desired to conduct meaningful research that would improve job satisfaction and productivity of retail staff. Additionally, I wanted to assist

managers with developing ethical and supportive approaches using intentional leadership practices to maximize profitability, performance, and operational success. Given Walden University's commitment to social change and enhancing academia through rigorous research, I selected this process to help me develop my expertise as a practitioner.

The DBA process was both challenging and rewarding. Throughout my seven years in this program, I have learned many resiliency, perseverance, and advocacy lessons. In addition to personal, family, and career challenges and transitions, I experienced multiple chair realignments during the prospectus and proposal process that created fear, frustration, and doubt. During my darkest moments in this program, I remained steadfast by relying on my faith and remembering my why. I used my daughter, my family, and my culture as my foundational commitment to accomplish this elite goal. Becoming a doctor was not just for me, but for every brown-skinned girl who felt it was impossible because of their race or gender.

During data collection and analysis, I maintained a neutral and professional approach that did not allow personal biases to influence the study. While I had a theoretical and working knowledge of big-box retail, this study's case locations and company composition presented new considerations that allowed for open and unbiased interactions and assessment. I used an interview protocol to maintain interview consistency, took copious notes of each participant interview, used effective software to transcribe interviews, and completed member checking with participants before finalizing data analysis and results.

My culminating thoughts on this journey would be the realization that delayed does not mean denied. I am humbled and proud to have accomplished this goal and believe the Walden DBA program has advanced my skills as a scholar. This process has improved my synthesis and research abilities while expanding my knowledge within business administration. The friendships gained, and lessons learned made the experience worthwhile. Despite every tear and hardship, I am grateful for the experience and recommend this scholastic pursuit to anyone who desires a higher level of self-actualization.

Conclusion

Organizations that do not demonstrate value for their employees are more likely to experience voluntary employee turnover (Alterman et al., 2020). Employee turnover has negative effects on any business industry and leaders must mitigate it whenever possible. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies big-box retail managers used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. The target population consisted of big-box retail managers who successfully used strategies to reduce employee turnover for 1 year or more within retail locations in San Antonio, Texas. The use of NVivo 1.0 allowed me to compile and analyze data efficiently.

The data from the research generated recurring themes that emerged during participant interviews. Data analysis reinforced themes that were relevant to the overarching research question and conceptual framework. This study revealed the following themes: care for employees, employee ownership and empowerment, effective leadership communication, and positive relationships. Study findings confirmed existing

literature and knowledge concerning strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

The use of transformational leadership proved to be effective in motivating employees to contribute to the mission and advancement of the organization while also creating a work environment that improved employee retention.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Research Question: What strategies do some big-box retail managers use to reduce voluntary employee turnover?

Interview Questions

1. What retail managerial strategies do you use to motivate your employees to stay on your team?
2. What strategy did you find worked best to minimize voluntary employee turnover?
3. Describe what strategies you use to inspire employee buy-in to the company's mission and its influence on employee retention.
4. Describe what strategies you use to stimulate employee creativity and its influence on employee retention rates.
5. How do you foster commitment from employees who become misaligned with your organization's mission?
6. What additional information regarding retail managerial leadership strategies and voluntary employee turnover would you like to share?

Protocol

- A. The interview session will begin with greetings, professional introductions, and an overview of the research topic.
- B. Thank participants for volunteering to participate in the study and provide time & process guidelines for our interview experience.
- C. Participants will be reminded of the details of the consent form (documented via email by replying 'I consent' before the interview) and will be allowed to ask questions or clarify concerns before beginning the interview.

- D. Code participant information by labeling each in numerical order (i.e., Participant 1, Participant 2, etc.) for sequential and confidential interpretation of the interviews.
- E. Notate on typed Word document that participants reviewed and signed a copy of the consent form via email before the interview date.
- F. Interviews will last approximately 25-30 minutes for responses to the six interview questions, to include any additional follow-up questions.
- G. Upon the conclusion of each interview, participants will be informed that I will reconnect with them later (considerate of both of our schedules-goal within 1 week of interview) to verify information gathered and check for errors.
- H. Before concluding each interview, I will thank each research participants for participating in the study and ask if there are any questions.
- I. Results from themes coded and analyzed from each interview will be shared with company leadership to highlight wins and best practices within the organization.