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Employee Retention Strategies in the Fast Food Industry

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MS, Ashford University, 2016

BS, Morgan State University, 1991

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

The annual employee turnover rate in the fast-food industry is 73%, resulting in significant financial losses to the fast-food industry across the United States. The fast-food managers who lack strategies to improve employee retention; risk reduced organizational performance and effectiveness. Grounded in the eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to identify strategies managers in the fast-food industry used to improve employee retention. The participants were five senior fast-food managers in Baltimore, Maryland, who successfully improved restaurant employee retention. Data were collected through semistructured interviews; and documents (e.g., employee handbook, training manual, and vision and mission statements). Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Three central themes emerged: communication, organizational support, and training. The recommendation to managers in the fast-food industry is to create a better working environment that encourages effective communication, positive reinforcement, and training. The implications for positive social change include the potential to expand employment opportunities, increase income, and stimulate the economy through increased spending.

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Dedication

This doctoral research study is dedicated to my parents, family, and friends that have been of encouragement during this doctoral journey. I am thankful for your love, support, and urging me as I worked hard to become Dr. Patrick Umezurike. I give special thanks to almighty God for keeping me safe and healthy without whom this milestone would not have been achieved.

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First, I acknowledge my family that have stood by me during this doctoral journey. Special thanks to my lovely wife Apostle Josephine Umezurike, and my lovely children Portia, Chelsea, and Ashton for your steadfast love and support even during difficult times. My special thanks to my parents Chief, Sir, Alpheaus and late Lolo, Lady Cicelia Umezurike for inculcating in me the virtues of discipline, hard-work, perseverance, and endurance to withstand life challenges. To my siblings and friends that showed me support during this stormy doctoral journey, I say thank you. Special thanks to my Chair, Dr. Deborah Nattress, for your guidance, support, and encouragement that helped me achieve this success. You have made an indelible impression in my life professionally and personally. Your mentorship and attention when needed led to this accomplishment. To my second committee member Dr. Tim Truitt, and URR, Dr. Christopher Beehner, I thank both for support and guidance without which it could have been difficult for me to achieve this milestone of being referred to as Dr. Patrick Umezurike.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The fast food industry plays a significant role in enhancing the economy in terms of employment, economic generation, and human resource capability (Gosser et al., 2018). The fast food industry has over 240,000 locations in the United States with billions of dollars in sales, clusters of sites, startups owned by entrepreneurial franchises, and moreover as an industry, is among the world's most accessible employer (Gosser et al., 2018). According to the IBIS-World Industry Report (2017), the U.S fast food industry is a significant contributor to the U.S economy, with about $240 billion and 4.4 million employees in 2016 (Harun et al., 2018). The NDP Group (2016) reported that the fast food business represents 80% of the restaurant industry in terms of market share (Harun et al., 2018). Companies compete with employee retention, particularly in the fast food industry. A business's ability to be successful is contingent on its organizational performance, which suggests its ability to effectively implement strategies to achieve institutional goals (Almartrooshi et al., 2016). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that some fast food managers use to improve employee retention. In Section 1 of this qualitative multiple case study, I presented the background of the problem, problem and purpose statements, the nature of the study, research and interview questions, conceptual framework, operation definitions, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, the significance of the study, and the review of the professional and academic literature.

Background of the Problem

Employee turnover negatively affects organizational productivity and profitability (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Fast food managers must develop strategies to retain skilled employees because high voluntary employee turnover adversely affects organizational performance and effectiveness (Cho et al., 2017). Approximately 15% of the workforce intend to leave their job, which result in actual turnover without mitigating retention strategies (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). In 2016, the fast food industry's annual employee turnover was 73% (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). 1n 2018, an estimated 3.3 million employees voluntarily withdrew from their jobs in the different industries in the United States (U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics Report, 2018). Employee job satisfaction is paramount and vital in reducing voluntary turnover (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). The implementation of effective retention strategies is essential to organizational retention of skilled and experienced employees with an institutional background (Aamir et al., 2016). Employee turnover is a significant issue every business organization contend with in today's competitive and global market (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017; Kraemer et al., 2016).

Problem Statement

The employment opportunity in the fast food industry is at its optimum because many workers leave the occupation yearly, resulting in job openings (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). The job prospects in the fast food and related industry have a projection to grow 14% from 2018 to 2028, much faster than jobs in other sectors (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). The general business problem is that some fast food managers lack control over the retention of the employee. The specific business problem is that some managers in the fast food industry lack strategies to improve employee retention.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to identify strategies that some managers in the fast food industry use to improve employee retention. The population targeted consisted of five senior managers from the fast food industry in Baltimore, Maryland, of the United States. These five senior managers had successfully implemented strategies to improve employee retention. The implications for positive social change include creating new jobs for citizens in the local communities and increasing tax revenues for benefiting local populations.

Nature of the Study

The three research methodologies are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method (Yin, 2018). The applicable method for this study is qualitative. The qualitative approach is used by researchers to identify and explore themes and perceptions of a phenomenon; it is equally essential to identify potential factors that relate practices, cases, cultures, or theories (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Researchers use the quantitative method to test the probability of a significant pattern or hypothesis, for example, examining the significance of a relationship among variables. However, the quantitative approach does not facilitate the exploration of practices or phenomena (Saunders et al., 2015). Mixed method studies consist of quantitative and qualitative methods and include research questions that require an in-depth exploration of the phenomena and the examination of variables' significance

(Thiele et al., 2018). The mixed and quantitative methods were inappropriate for this study because there was no measurement of the relationships between the variables involved. I choose the qualitative methodology for this study because, according to Yin (2018), the qualitative method is best suited for an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon. I explored successful strategies fast food managers use to improve employee retention in this study.

Some of the qualitative research designs include case study, phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative inquiry. Among these designs, I used a multiple case study because researchers use the multiple case study as a design to facilitate the exploration of events in various organizations (Yin, 2018). The case study design was the best approach to identify strategies to improve employee retention in the fast food industry. The multiple case study was preferred for this study to enable an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon. Researchers use phenomenology designs to identify and explore the personal meanings of the participants' lived experiences with phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Researchers use ethnography designs to describe people's experiences and answer *why* and *how* questions about cultural practices (Yates & Leggett, 2016). Employing the narrative inquiry design involves considering participants' personal stories related to life experiences (Astroth & Chung, 2018). The phenomenology design was not appropriate for this study because the primary focus was not on managers' lived experiences but strategies for employee retention. The ethnography design was not suitable for this study because the social or cultural practices of participants or groups was not the focus of this study. Finally, the narrative inquiry design was not appropriate because there were no participants' personal stories to explore, only employee retention strategies.

Research Question

What strategies have some managers in the fast food industry use to improve employee retention?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies have you implemented to improve employee retention?
2. What strategies have you used to support employee realization of career opportunities within the organization?
3. Based on your organization's experience, what strategies are the most effective in reducing employee turnover?
4. Based on your organization's experience, what strategies have you used that are least effective in reducing employee turnover?
5. How did your organization address any critical barriers to implementing successful employee retention strategies?
6. What additional information would you like to share regarding your organization's strategies to improve employee retention?

Conceptual Framework

The study's conceptual framework was the eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). Maertz and Griffeth introduced the eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover in 2004. The eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover synthesized both process-oriented and contentoriented turnover theories into eight categories. According to the eight forces model, the eight general types of forces that can influence employees' decisions to stay or quit their jobs are: (a) affective forces, (b) alternative forces, (c) behavioral forces, (d) calculative forces, (e) constituent forces, (f) contractual forces, (g) moral forces, and (h) normative forces (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). The eight motivational forces model of voluntary employee turnover applies to this study because it represents the synthesis of all the elements and strategies that managers can develop and implement to promote employee retention in the fast food industry. The conceptual framework consists of potentially significant variables for explaining employee turnover and sound retention strategies the participating managers may have used to enhance organizational effectiveness and productivity.

Operational Definitions

Employee retention: Employee retention is management's ability to increase the duration of an employee's stay in an organization for organizational success (Aguenza & Som, 2018).

Job embeddedness: Job embeddedness is the degree of connection that an employee has with the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction is employees' feelings of contentment towards their job (Collie et al., 2015).

Organizational commitment: Organizational commitment is an employee's psychological bond with an organization (Jun-Cheng et al., 2015).

Voluntary employee turnover: Voluntary employee turnover is employees' termination of their appointment with an organization without any involvement or pressure from the employer (Terason, 2018).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

The researcher's aim in this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the retention strategies fast food managers use to improve employee retention. Delimitation involves challenging the researchers' assumptions and openly exposing preventable shortcomings (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). The study has assumptions, limitations, and delimitations because, realistically, all issues concerning employee retention in the fast food industry cannot be captured and expounded in a singular research study.

Assumptions

Assumptions are underlying statements the researcher believes are true but cannot verify (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). Assumptions involve risks; therefore, data were verified carefully as a matter of practicality. Assumptions are presumed facts that are unverified in a study (Yin, 2018). This study's first assumption was that the data gathered from interviews were honest, accurate, and complete. The second assumption was that telephone or virtual Zoom interviews was the best method to collect research data from interview participants.

Limitations

Limitations refer to the study's potential weaknesses beyond the researcher’s control (Akaeze & Akaeze, 2017). In this qualitative study, some the participants were cautious and not responsive to the research questions. Participants might not answer interview questions truthfully or correctly if they do not feel comfortable answering the questions or feel their answers to the research questions might not be in their organizations' best interest. Another limitation was the research biases involved in the study. The participant and the interviewer may have their prejudices in the research study, affecting the study's results.

Delimitations

Delimitations refer to the bounds or scope of the study. Delimitations are the researcher's set boundaries that limit the study's scope in research (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The first delimitation was limiting the sampling pool of fast food business leaders to five participants. The content of the study was identifying evidence-based strategies used by the fast food manager to improve employee retention. The context of fast food is different from other working environments, limiting the generalization of results to other industries. The second delimitation was the geographic area of the study. This study was conducted in Baltimore, Maryland, in the United States and might not be applicable in other sectors or geographic locations.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

This study may contribute to business practice by identifying the causes of employee turnover in the fast food industry, and strategies managers must implement to prevent or mitigate employee turnover. The rate of employee turnover in the fast food industry is significantly high when compared with other sectors. The cost of replacing an employee is estimated to cost the organization approximately 40% to 400% of the worker's annual salary in lost productivity, rehiring, and training costs (Palanski et al., 2014). Most organizational leaders' main goal is to maximize profit, but high employee turnover can disrupt organizational goals, objectives, and operations (Toti & Lekoloane, 2018). As businesses retain their employees, they achieve higher profitability (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Implementing the study results may encourage business sustainability and provide managers with potential strategies for reducing employee turnover in the fast food industry with derivative cost decreases.

Implications for Social Change

The fast food industry is among the world's most significant employer of people in the labor force (Gosser et al., 2018). Therefore, positive social change implications include the potential for new job opportunities and stimulating the economy through increased spending incomes for local communities. Providing new jobs opportunities and raising revenues are urgent challenges to the communities and government to promote positive social change (Haugh & Talwar, 2016). Implementing this study's findings can enhance the local economies by increasing tax revenues, alleviating poverty in the local communities, and building a beneficent social environment from income generated by new employment.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies some fast food managers use to reduce employee turnover. In the literature review, I featured the background and critical analysis of the eight principal elements of voluntary employee turnover's motivational forces that grounded the study's conceptual framework.

In the academic literature review, I reviewed turnover theories related to employee retention as a synthesis of the literature that contradicts and supports the eight motivational forces of employee turnover. The literature review also included critical analysis and synthesis of articles about the strategies some fast food managers use to improve employee retention. This section summarized the comparisons and contrasting views of what procedures were successful based on different geographical locations. The research question for this study was, “What strategies have some managers in the fast food industry use to improve employee retention?”

I discussed other attributes a business leader must understand to achieve low employee turnover. Business leaders must understand how to use motivational elements such as pay, benefits, and recognition to improve employee turnover. Business leaders must also understand the environmental and situational factors such as the working environment, organizational factors, engagement, leadership, corporate support, and respect that effect job satisfaction to reduce cost and turnover. In the literature review, I also explored other factors and strategies that helped managers improve employee retention in the fast food industry.

Documentation

The research databases that I used for this study included: Business Source Complete, Google Scholar, ProQuest, EBSCO host, Emerald Management, ResearchGate.net, SAGE Premier, and the Walden University Library. Some of the search criteria and themes included: (a) *retention*; (b) *small businesses*; (c) *employees*; (d) *small business challenges*; (e) *voluntary employee turnover*; (f) *turnover intentions*; (g) *employee retention*; (h) *hiring strategies and* (I) *the eight principal elements of the motivational forces*. Among the journals reviewed were 140 peer-reviewed journal articles from academic and scholarly journals, seminal work, and reports from government and business sources. I used Ulrich's Periodical Directory website to ascertain that the materials reviewed were peer-reviewed articles. 85% of the literature review sources are current peer-reviewed articles published within 5 years from completing this study in 2021.

Eight Motivational Forces of Voluntary Turnover

The eight motivational forces of voluntary turnover were introduced by Maertz and Griffeth (2004) to conceptualize and distinguish the factors that may influence employees' turnover decisions. The eight motivational forces incorporate a comprehensive synthesis of traditional and modern models that aggregate voluntary turnover (Maertz et al., 2012). Maertz and Griffieth developed the eight motivational model on the premise that events, memories recalled, and other cognitions trigger conscious deliberations about organizational membership that involve cognitive self-questioning and responding. The eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover are: (a) affective forces, (b) alternative forces, (c) behavioral forces, (d) calculative forces, (e) normative forces, (f) moral forces, (g) contractual forces, and (h) constituent forces (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). Maertz and Boyar (2012) developed the Turnover-Attachment Motive Survey (TAMS) consisting of 18 scales based on the eight motivational forces framework that facilitates the review of the research models and systematic diagnosis of turnover causes. The eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover best conceptualize most distal and proximal antecedents and elements that correlate to voluntary employee turnover (Maertz et al., 2012). The eight motivational forces model of voluntary employee turnover applies to this study. The model represents the synthesis of all the elements and strategies that managers can develop and implement to promote employee retention in the fast food industry. The conceptual framework consists of potentially significant variables for explaining employee turnover and sound retention strategies the participating managers in this study used to enhance organizational effectiveness and productivity.

Affective Forces

Maertz et al. (2012) described affective forces as an employee's positive and negative feelings towards an organization that causes emotional comfort that motivates an employee to stay in or discomfort that inspires the avoidance or quitting from an organization. Affective forces are employees' emotional arousal towards their organization and their membership interest (Zimmerman et al., 2019). Affective forces are attributes of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Maertz et al., 2012).

Job Satisfaction

Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) considered job satisfaction as an essential factor that determined turnover intention. Job satisfaction is a critical component to consider when examining employee turnover intentions (Baykara & Orhan, 2020). Job satisfaction was evident in the desirability component of March and Simon's (1958) theory. Job satisfaction portrays an employee's perception of how desirable it is to leave a job. Researchers have used employee job satisfaction as a predictor of employees' intention to voluntarily leave an organization (Edwards-Dandridge et al., 2020). Mobley (1977) included job satisfaction as a vital element of the intermediate linkages model. Employee job satisfaction enhances productivity and reduces turnover (Sabbagha & Ledimo, 2018). Maintaining a high level of job satisfaction with the highest product quality goals, combined with lower employee turnover, are essential elements for an organization's success (Tarasov, 2019). Job content and autonomy are two significant factors that increase employee job satisfaction (Al Mamum & Hassan, 2017). When motivated, employees put forth their best efforts toward productivity when involved in the organization's decision-making process (Al Mumum & Hassan, 2017). Most organizations' leadership neglects job satisfaction as a significant factor for organizational success (Warrier & Prasad, 2018). Job dissatisfaction can lead to job absenteeism, high turnover rates, demoralization, and polarization in relations with employees and managers, leading to reduced productivity (Baykara & Orhan, 2020). Job satisfaction is associated with affective factors, alternative forces, and calculative forces that influence organizational commitment (Maertz et al., 2012).

Organizational Commitment. Organizational commitment reflects an employee's psychological bond with an organization (Jun-Cheng et al., 2015). Saliminen and Miettinne (2019) described the organizational commitment as the psychological link between the employee and the organization that makes an employee's probability of leaving the organization voluntarily less significant. Umamaheswari and Krishnan (2016) opinioned that organizational commitment is a vital determinant of employee retention and work environment. According to Sepahvand et al. (2020), supervisory support, training, and employee development are essential factors that enhance organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is an attribute of employee central work-related attitude and is a significant factor in human resource management (Salminen & Miettinen, 2019). Brown et al. (2019) opinioned that most of the issues that confront social resource organizations included job satisfaction, burnout, and organizational commitment. Salminen and Miettinen (2019) inferred that some researchers considered organizational commitment a single dimensional concept; others viewed organizational commitment as a multidimensional construct consisting of affective, normative, and continuance components. Umamaheswari et al. (2016) encouraged human resource managers to promote a better work environment, supervisory support, training development, and enhance employee relationships and retention. Organizational commitment is a major motivational factor that secures and strengthens safe and high-quality performance appraisal for employees (Sepahvand et al., 2020).

Guzeller and Celiker (2020) conducted a study on the relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention in the tourism and hospitality industry. Guzeller and Celiker synthesized and analyzed individual studies via a meta-analysis and examined the relationships between organizational commitment and turnover intention and determined the relationships' validity and reliability. Guzeller and Celiker analyzed 13 scientific papers that met the inclusion criteria and found a moderate negative correlation between organizational commitment and employee turnover intention in the tourism and hospitality industry. According to Guzeller and Celiker, individuals who had emotional obligations to their institutions had lower turnover intentions than others.

Guzeller and Celiker concluded that the right personal selection, performance evaluation techniques, promotion, training, talent management, secure communication, trust, and justice reinforced organizational commitment and attracted talented individuals to the organization that ensured employee retention.

Affective Organizational Commitment. The affective organizational commitment is an attribute of employees' mindset to stay with an organization (Loi et al., 2018). Employees with a positive attitude felt attached and identified with the organizational shared values (Loi et al., 2018). According to Philippaers et al. (2019), employees' desire to stay led to beneficial actions to the organization, while their feeling of employability warranted independence and autonomy from their employers. The employees' freedom encouraged perceived control that enhanced their performance (Philippaers et al. 2019). According to Philippaers et al., the affective organizational commitment was significant in the relationship between perceived employability and employee performance, regardless of perceived justice. Transformational leadership significantly impacted employees' psychological attachment to their organizations (Philippaers et al., 2019). Peng et al. (2020) did a study and examined the condition transformational leadership translates into employees' affective organizational commitment. Peng et al. used a moderated mediation model and found a relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment through perceived work impact. Peng et al. suggested that an organization's centralization moderated the indirect effect of transformational leadership on affective commitment through perceived work impact. Affective organizational commitment constitutes both personal and corporate characteristics.

Personal Characteristics. According to Yang (2011), most motivational theories did not address employees' unique features such as gender, age, educational level, working experience, occupation, or marital status. Still, they managed work motivation related to individual factors. Yang posited women were more satisfied with their job than men, and female managers were more motivated by recognition and profitable relationships with their supervisors. Their male counterparts were more motivated by responsibility (Yang, 2011). Yang asserted that employees with higher education were less likely satisfied with their job than those with less knowledge; employees with significant working experiences were more dissatisfied with promotional opportunities. Those with fewer experiences were less satisfied with their salaries (Yang, 2011). Yang asserted that there was no significant difference in attitude towards benefit between the management and employees; single employees acknowledged a more beneficial effect on job performance than married employees, and employees of different ages perceived different benefits' impacts.

Adebayo et al. (2020), in their study, examined the gender differences and job satisfaction of the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria employees. Adebayo et al. used a multistage sampling procedure and selected 226 (160 male and 66 female) employees in an organization. They collected primary data on the respondents' characteristics and job satisfaction through a structured questionnaire. Job satisfaction was constructed around Herzberg's (1959) motivation theory and measured through employee perceptions of extrinsic and intrinsic job characteristics. Adebayo et al. used percentages, means, and paired sample *t* tests for data analysis. The results showed that the mean age of the employees, their household size, work experience, and annual income were 40 years, 4 persons, 9 years, and 1,272,635, respectively, while 87.2% were married (Adebayo et al., 2020). Adebayo et al. inferred that the findings revealed that age, household size, income, extrinsic (hygiene factor) motivation, and job satisfaction had significant variance between female and male employees**.** Adebayo et al. advised the organization to consider employees' characteristics, motivation factors, and job satisfaction as positive organizational results because gender correlates with enthusiasm and fulfillment.

Organizational Characteristics. According to Burnaz et al. (2017), the function of authority and responsibility in an organization is allocated to qualified personnel to achieve the organization's objectives. Organizational characteristics that influence affective commitment include organizational structure, corporate culture, executive leadership, and working conditions (Zohar & Polachek, 2014).

Organization Structure*.* Organizational structure is an essential factor in employee turnover (Fath et al., 2017). Organizational structure is the breakdown of workforce activities into different tasks and the coordination between them to achieve the organizational goals (Burnaz et al., 2017). The organizational structure consists of employees with various personal and cultural characteristics, different ethnic backgrounds, and living conditions; consequently, employees with unique feelings, thoughts, attitudes, and perceptions are prone to exhibit rude and discourteous behaviors (Demirsel & Erat, 2019). Centralization, as an attribute of organizational structure, affects the emergence and functioning of leadership (Burnaz et al., 2017). According to Burnaz et al., centralization is the distribution of power, authority, and control among different organizations, emphasizing centralized management and managerial flexibility across the departments. Centralized decision-making authority in a public organization reduces work autonomy and increases work alienation and employees' perceptions of organizational goal ambiguity and role; however, decentralized structural management involves all the elements of power concentrated on one person in the organization (Burnaz et al., 2017). The decentralized structure focuses on all the decision-making power from one source (Burnaz et al., 2017). The decentralized organizational hierarchy was the most significant structural form for the Burnaz et al. (2017) study. Organizations that structured themselves into hierarchy were more effective at coordination, delegation, and efficiency than those who did not (Fath et al., 2017).

Alternative Forces

Alternative forces involve employees' perceptions and belief in their abilities to find another employment rather than continue to work with their employer (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz et al., 2012). Organizational success depends on its ability to create and maintain a diverse workforce that identifies and favorably responds to the external environment (Thompson, 2019). Employees who left their organization perceived a higher probability of getting a better job with another organization (Maertz et al., 2012). Alternative employment was prevalent and contingent on external environmental factors, such as job availability and the current rate of unemployment (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). However, people with higher educational backgrounds and qualifications could upgrade their positions more readily than less-educated employees, using their skills as a competitive advantage (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Alternative forces relate with self-efficacy beliefs about the level, quality of job alternatives obtainable, and the certainty of obtaining an alternative job by an employee (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz et al., 2012). 2012).

Saleem and Qamar (2017) inferred that dissatisfied employee had a high tendency to leave an organization; however, satisfied employees do not necessarily stay with an organization. Saleem and Qamar empirically investigated turnover intention and job-hopping antecedents simultaneously. The study included an examination of perceived alternative employment, job satisfaction, and involvement on turnover intention job-hopping behavior, with organizational commitment as a mediator (Saleem & Qamar, 2017). Saleem and Qamar used established questionnaires to measure the variables and analyzed the results through a structural equation modeled on a sample of 250 faculty members from both public and private universities. The study indicated that faculty members did not intend to leave or hop jobs with job satisfaction, mediated by organizational commitment. The variable of perceived alternative employment also showed a positive relationship with employees' intentions to quit, while faculty members' job hop, if not satisfied, despite lacking substantial alternative employment opportunities (Saleem & Qamar, 2017). Saleem and Qamar inferred from the study results that monetary consideration was not the only factor that affected employee retention, even in developing counties. Instead, the satisfaction an employee derives from his/her job or the employee's environment serves as a significant antecedent of employee retention (Salem

& Qamar, 2017). Well-planned perks and rewards served as a source of extrinsic and intrinsic motivators for employee retention (Saleem & Qamar, 2017).

Behavioral Forces

Behavioral forces are the psychological or tangible costs associated with an employee leaving an organization (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz et al., 2012). The behavioral forces are related to the employee's embeddedness to the organization, as indicated by Mitchell et al. (2001). When an employee perceived no opportunity cost in leaving an organization, the employee left the organization. When the employee had a motivating attachment embedded with the organization, the employee had an emotional tendency to stay and stayed (Maertz et al., 2012). Eradicating adverse business outcomes and exploring behaviors that reduced turnover was encouraged in an organization (Montani et al., 2020). Hom et al. (2012) related continuance commitment to employee behavior regarding leaving or staying with the organization and as an attribute of behavioral forces.

Continuance Commitment

Continuance commitment portrays the degree to which the employees believe they are leaving the organization as cost-effective (Yao et al., 2019). Continuance commitment is a vital aspect of organizational commitment related to employees' perception of the costs associated with leaving their job (Hadian, 2019). According to Hadian, commitment is a significant factor in various relational exchanges between firms, employees, suppliers, customers, and other organizational stakeholders. As evidenced by the theoretical approach associated with discontinuation costs, employees with high continuance commitment stayed with the organization because they believed that they must remain with the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). However, employees with low continuance attachment left their jobs very quickly because there was no cost, emotional attachment, or psychological impact associated with quitting the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). Retention of talented employees has become a significant concern to organizations worldwide (Ohunakin et al., 2020). Researchers have focused attention previously on reduced employee retention by improved economic incentives, but recently psychological motivations have received more research attention (Yao et al., 2019).

Continuous commitment is a cognitive-based commitment that emanates from a rational calculation of comparing the advantages of continuing individual membership with the associated costs of terminating the membership (Hadian, 2019). A study was conducted by Yao et al. (2019) that analyzed the psychological mechanism affecting the attitudinal and behavioral loyalty of employees in the hotel industry sector. Yao et al. used organizational commitment theory and regarded the hotel employees as internal customers to construct and verify a conceptual framework. Yao et al. observed the following essential factors. First, affective, normative, and continuance commitment had apparent and varying effects on employees' attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. Second, the attitudinal loyalty of employees significantly promoted behavioral belief. Third, employees' trust and satisfaction in the hotel sector were vital elements that took preeminence of the three dimensions of organizational commitment. According to Yao et al., these (2019) findings have significant implications for managing hotel employee turnover and improving employees' psychological enhancement of attitudinal and behavioral loyalty.

Calculative Forces

Calculative forces represent both favorable and unfavorable employees' self-interest instead of the goal of staying employed with an organization (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz et al., 2012). An employee has a high tendency to stay in an organization when the employee's calculation is favorable; however, an employee can quit with unfavorable predictions (Maertz et al., 2012). According to Maertz and Griffin (2004), other considerable factors influencing employees' calculation includes pay satisfaction, employee benefits, and employee recognition.

Pay Satisfaction

Pay satisfaction is associated with the overall assessment of employee's positive and negative feelings related to pay (Onuoha & Idemudia, 2018). Employees' compensation was significant with work attitudes, and the rewards are an essential factor in every organization (Chng & Wang, 2016). Employees' salaries and allowances are attributes of their capabilities that enabled them to stay with an organization (Zhang, 2018). Employee's pay had a positive relationship with the employee's behavior and attitude (Chng & Wang, 2016; El Baroudi et al., 2017). When employees were satisfied with their pay, they displayed positive behavior and attitudes towards the organization, and they stayed with the organization (Ucho et al., 2015). However, when the employees were not satisfied with their pay, they displayed hostile behavior and attitudes towards the organization, and they quit (Ucho et al., 2015).

Haynie et al. (2016) established a negative relationship between pay satisfaction and job insecurity. Pay satisfaction was not a prerogative of an employee who was scared and threatened with job security, because losing a job meant losing important personal and social valuables that adversely affected the employee's well-being and mental health (Mauno et al., 2017). However, Onuoha and Idemudia (2018) established a positive relationship between pay satisfaction and job insecurity; and that employee increased their efforts when informed about an impending job loss. The high probability of perceived job instability and limited access to job alternative opportunities mandated a positive evaluation of employees' current earnings (Onuoha & Idemudia, 2018). The fear of job loss induced employees to have positive attitudes and behavior, and they maintained a good relationship with their organization (Li & Ahlstrom, 2016).

However, El Baroundi et al. (2017) affirmed a positive relationship between employee ambition and pay satisfaction. El Baroundi et al. also posited that pay positively moderated the mediation. The relationship between employee ambition and taking charge behavior was more robust when ambitious employees received an increase in income, leading to increased career satisfaction (El Baroundi et al., 2017). However, a pay decrease did not moderate ambitious employees and negatively impacted their career satisfaction (El Baroundi et al., 2017). According to Onuoha and Idemudia (2018), employees who were aware of job insecurity reported higher pay satisfaction and a favorable psychological climate perception.

Employee Benefits. Other factors, such as employee benefits, serve as a motivational force that influence an employee's decision to leave an organization.

Organizations should increase their efforts and capacities and offer benefits that satisfy their employees (De la Torre-Ruiz et al., 2019). Employees' salaries and compensations correlated with their qualifications and encouraged them to stay in the organization (El Baroundi et al., 2017). According to Purdon (2018), most organizations in the United States retained their employees by offering them excellent benefits. Among the benefits businesses provided their employees to increase retention were vacation pay, sick leave days, health insurance, 401-k plans, incentive bonuses, disability insurance, and life insurance (Purdon, 2018; Zhang, 2018). Small business leaders and managers that recognized their employees' outstanding performances through monetary incentives and increased payroll were more successful with profits and employee retention than business leaders and managers who spent their money on product research development (Ledbetter et al., 2018). In most cases, employees who were satisfied with intangible benefits such as companionship, cooperation, sense of belonging, and equitable treatment did not desire to leave their employer (Zhang, 2018). Therefore, a job offer with more money was not favored to galvanize an employee's loyalty to change employment; the employee stayed with the original employer (Zhang, 2018).

Employee Recognition. Employees tend to stay with the organizations that recognize their efforts and performance irrespective of monetary incentives. Financial remunerations like a paycheck are not the only motivational factor to employee work satisfaction; they need recognition for outstanding job performance (Salvant et al., 2020). Furthermore, employees' non-monetary attention has contributed positively to employee psychological well-being (Merino & Privado, 2015).

According to Montani et al. (2020), employees were motivated and productive in accomplishing tasks when they received accolades from their managers for efforts and accomplishments. Krawcke (2018), in an extensive study, surveyed 2,415 employees from 10 different countries, and the results indicated a positive correlation between loyalty and acknowledgment. Managers' appreciation and recognition of employees' synergy and work accomplishment has been found essential and valuable (Montani et al., 2020). According to Montani et al., managers acknowledged employees' exceptional performances by recognizing employee expertise, providing work assignments following their qualifications, providing professional practice awards, and implementing programs that rewarded innovation. Moreover, effective managers recognized employees' efforts by thanking them for their involvement in work projects, recognizing employees' ideas regardless of their future utilization, highlighting the time invested in a team project, and appreciating perseverance in pursuing difficult tasks (Krawcke, 2018).

It is also imperative for coworkers to recognize their colleagues for outstanding performance. The benefits of managerial recognition were meaningful and significant only when employees received consistent credit from their colleagues (Montani et al., 2020). To foster a positive environment in the workplace, managers would benefit from establishing and nurturing a positive climate of recognition among peers. For example, managers could sponsor initiatives such as encouraging positive feedback on a colleague's professional qualifications or the spontaneous acknowledgment of a colleague who had significant work challenges (Montani et al., 2020). Implementation of these actions helped the managers enhance recognition practices in promoting job meaningfulness and employee behavioral involvement (Montani et al., 2018). Among the 512 U.S. employees who said their companies had healthy recognition practices, 87% felt a strong relationship with their direct managers (Krawcke, 2018). Contrarily, 51% reported a lack of such practices at their organizations (Krawcke, 2018). The organization's human resource department should implement training programs to promote employee recognition since such action enhanced employee retention. Management should show consistent support for their workforce's career development, economic stability, and professionalism (Ohunakin et al., 2020). Such practices were highly essential in gaining full employee attention and positive workplace behavior (Ohunakin et al., 2020).

Constituent Forces

Constituent forces relate to employees' perceptions and commitment towards their leaders and coworkers (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz et al., 2012). According to Maertz et al. (2012), employees who had good relationships with coworkers and leaders were encouraged to stay in an organization; however, employees with negative relationships with coworkers and leaders desired to leave the organization. Small businesses enjoyed better employee satisfaction and retention due to non-financial face-to-face relationships and daily family experiences (Bhattacharyya, 2017). Constituent forces relate to the concept of foci of commitment (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004).

Foci of Commitment

According to Cafferkey et al. (2018), the concept of foci of commitment was based on the principle of employee commitment and paid allegiance. Cafferkey et al., in their 2018 study, extended the understanding and basis for foci of employee commitment and conceptualized the premise that the foci of employee commitment were employee-centric rather than an assumed organization basis of engagement. Cafferkey et al. collected survey data of over 300 employees from various organizations in the Republic of Ireland. The foundation of data collected was on worker orientations and their foci of commitment. The findings confirmed a more pluralistic and mixed basis to the antecedents of worker commitment, as opposed to an assumed human resource management unitary ideology often promoted by organizational managers. At the individual workers' level, a dominant focus for engagement is related to career development and an immediate workgroup's milieu. Cafferkey et al. narrated three implications of the study. First, mutual gains possibilities were not straightforward, and there were practical pitfalls that employee interests may get squeezed should managerial, and customer interests take precedence. Second, the competing elements of job security, flexibility, and autonomy impacted performance. Finally, line managers were models of commitment and especially psychological contract outcomes. The research found that traditional orientations and foci of commitment were deficient and that simplified individualistic interpretations of the employment relationships were complex and required more critical scrutiny (Cafferkey et al., 2018).

Another perspective of the constituent force of turnover was the linked job embeddedness construct presented by Mitchell et al. (2001). Basford and Offererman (2012) conducted another study that impacted the relationships between coworkers. Basford and Offererman posited that positive coworker relationships independently increased employee motivation and intent to stay more than did immediate supervisors and senior management's support. Basford and Offererman asserted that the impact of coworker relations on the intention to stay was more significant for high-status employees. However, the job status was not vital with the relationship between coworker relations and motivation because employees at both low and high spectrum reported higher motivation when coworker relationships were good (Basford & Offererman, 2012).

Contractual Forces

Contractual forces relate to employees' obligations to stay or leave an organization under a psychological contract (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). A psychological contract consists of emotional and spiritual links between organizations and employees; a psychological contract is a subjective implicit contract and different from the explicit economic agreement (Lu & Chen, 2020). The norms of reciprocity of employee-employer relationships are present in a psychological contract (Hannah et al., 2016). The employee's psychological contracts relate to the employee's beliefs and the organization (Hannan et al., 2016). According to Hannan et al., when an employee considers the consequences of breaching the agreement with an organization, the employee decides to stay; however, the organization must fulfill its contractual obligation to the employee and encourage the employee to stay. When employees believe they breached their commitment to their organizations, they leave the organization. Some employees were motivated to resign when they did not uphold the contractual psychological obligation (Maertz et al., 2012). According to Montani et al. (2020), employees continued their loyalty to an organization when their inducements were tremendous or higher than their expected contributions. The psychological contract entails the perception and belief that both the employees and organization are in the employment relationship for their responsibilities and obligations, including managerial liability and employee responsibility under managers' and employees' perspectives (Ozcelik & Uyargil, 2018; Sunday et al., 2018).

While employees believed that organizations have long-term, relational obligations, they perceived that they also have long-term, relational commitments (Ozcelik & Uyargil, 2018). According to Hannah et al. (2016), breaking psychological contracts had two critical implications; first, when employees perceived that their employers had violated their obligations, they responded by lowering their perceptions. Second, when individuals felt that their employers had violated their responsibilities, they adjusted their behavioral intentions and behaviors in ways that were detrimental to their functionality (Hannah et al., 2016). According to Sunday et al. (2018), defaulting in a psychological contract hinders the expected performance and voids the contract’s terms and conditions.

Moral Forces

Moral forces relate to internalized perception values about the phenomenon of turnover (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz et al., 2012). Employees have autonomy over their turnover decisions. According to Maertz et al. (2012), employees considered leaving their jobs as weaknesses in character, especially when embedded with the organization or considering changing jobs as an advancement and right decision. In either case, employees felt they were morally right with their choices; however, what was morally wrong for one employee might be the right decision for another because people have different intuition, beliefs, and values (Maertz et al., 2012). Moral forces were synonymous with employees' values and trust, whether favorable or unfavorable regarding leaving the organization (Maertz et al., 2012). When employees' appraisals were consistent with those of their organization, they stayed in their organizations without turnover intention (Zhen, 2020). Some employees were highly moral and liked maintaining consistency. They believed they were doing the right thing by acting consistently with their intrinsic values (Maertz et al., 2012). Psychological capital influenced employees to become more confident and stimulated their positive thinking, fostered better job performance, job satisfaction, and reduced turnover intention (Zhen, 2020). Moral forces encompass reasonable job satisfaction and organizational commitment with relevance to employee turnover (Maertz et al., 2012).

Normative Forces

Normative forces consist of employees' motivations to comply with family or friends' expectations to stay or leave an organization (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz et al., 2012). When employees were motivated to stay in an organization, they remained with the organization (Maertz et al., 2012). When employees were encouraged to leave an organization, they left the organization (Maertz et al., 2012). According to Hom et al. (2012), normative forces were the predictive elements that motivated employees to abide by friends' expectations to stay in or leave an organization. Normative powers were more predictive than attitudinal (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). Work-family conflict and stress in the workplace were best related to normative forces' effect on turnover intention (Maertz et al., 2012).

Work-Family Conflict

Balancing work and family life were instrumental in ameliorating retention problems when the organization allowed employees to control their commitment at home and work (Al Mamun & Hassan, 2017). Managers should offer their employees’ flexible working hours for a better work-life balance and reduced job stress (Al Mamun & Hassan 2017). Employees should devise opportunities to effectively balance work and personal life (Suryanto et al., 2019). Employee burnout is a consequence of work-related stress due to the high level of stress associated with organizations (Hetzel-Riggin et al., 2020).

Neto et al. (2018) asserted that work-family life conflict is linked to the employees' well-being because work-family life conflict is one of the most important predictors of well-being after job characteristics adjustment. Sirgy and Lee (2018) inferred that the conflict between work and family roles is associated with symptoms of low mental well-being and stress-related outcomes, such as emotional exhaustion, anxiety and depression, affective parental distress, irritability, and hostility. According to Sirgy and Lee, most of the research on the work-life conflict showed a consistent pattern of decreased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, life satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and emotional well-being as work-life strife increased.

Cazan et al. (2019) reported negative correlations between the work-family conflict, job, and life satisfaction. The results from their study showed significant negative associations between the work-family conflict dimensions and all other variables, except affectivity. The study results by Cazen et al. also indicated a positive and significant association with negative affectivity with participants who experienced higher work-family conflict levels.

Nurse Managers work in complex healthcare conditions that expose them to significant workplace stressors that pressure them to succumb, leave for other opportunities, or leave the profession entirely (Boitshwarelo et al., 2020). Nurse Managers' role has become complicated, uncertain, and deals with competing demands (Adriaenssens et al., 2017). According to Boitshwarelo et al. (2020), the stressors experienced by nurse managers relate to staffing patterns, resource availability, professional relationships, managing staff expectations, leadership skills, and inability to provide quality care. The study conducted by Boitshwarelo et al. explored and described the strengths that resilient nurse managers employ when dealing with work-related stress. Using 42 resilient nurse managers who measured moderate to high resilience participated in the study and purposive sampling; the study revealed that the identified resilient nurse managers utilized their strengths and other resilient characteristics in dealing with workplace stressors (Boitshwarelo et al., 2020). Boitshwarelo et al. concluded that nurse managers' strengths help them cope with workplace stressors, enabling them to overcome difficulties and provide quality nursing services.

According to Lan et al. (2019), burnout is a consequence of work-related stress due to the profession's high level of stress. A study by Lan et al. explored the relationship between job stress, organizational climate, workplace burnout, and pharmacist retention. They used a cross-sectional design and conducted a questionnaire survey of pharmacists working at three teaching hospitals. Lan et al. indicated a significant correlation between organizational climate, job stress, workplace burnout, and retention. The results from the study with pharmacists showed that organizational climate had a meaningful positive relationship with retention. Lan et al. inferred that the research findings helped hospitals create a friendly and conducive work environment. The study also encouraged managers to improve their organizational environment by reducing work stress, burnout, and employees' intention to stay (Lan et al., 2019).

Job Embeddedness Theory

Job embeddedness theory is one of the more recent content theories introduced by Mitchell et al. (2001). Job embeddedness reflects people's attitudes toward their jobs, organizations, and consideration of other employment opportunities in the community (Zimmerman et al., 2019). Mitchell et al. (2001) introduced two crucial elements that augmented March and Simon's (1958) turnover model. These two essential elements distinguished the new idea from traditional thought (Mitchell et al., 2001). The first significant theoretical contribution by Mitchell et al. was the accentuation of non-affective factors that might prevent people from leaving their employments and help them stay in their employment. The facts remain those employees who are more embedded with their jobs are less likely to leave the organization than those who are less embedded (Zimmerman et al., 2019). The job embeddedness premised on what made people stay in their jobs rather than what caused them to quit (Mitchell et al., 2001). The second significant contribution of job embeddedness theory was that other non-job-related attributes could have a considerable influence on employees' decisions (Hom et al., 2017). Accordingly, events and activities within the employees' employment environment were not the only factors determining employees' turnover decisions (Hom et al., 2017). Still, other external factors associated with the community where the employees resided can contribute to that decision (Zimmerman et al., 2019). These off-the-job external factors encompassed relationship dynamics with the families, friends, and other associates of the employees in their communities (Zimmerman et al., 2019).

Mitchell et al. (2001) defined job embeddedness theory as a composite variable that captured the employees' links to people, organizations, and the community. The three-dimensional constructs that composed job embeddedness are (a) links, (b) fit, and (c) sacrifice (Mitchell et al., 2001). Relationships are the connecting factors between employees, organizations, and the community (Mitchell et al., 2001). An employee with excellent embeddedness to the organization had an increased intent to stay employed with the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). Fit refers to employees' perceptions of their compatibility with an organization and associated community (Mitchell et al., 2001). Employee embeddedness enhances when employees felt more compatible with an organization or the associated community (Mitchell et al., 2001). Finally, the sacrifice was the loss that employees associated with leaving a job or an associated community (Mitchell et al., 2001). When employees perceived more significant damage associated with quitting a company, their embeddedness to the company was greater (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Job embeddedness has become an essential variable in turnover research. Leupold et al. (2013) asserted job embeddedness as a composite variable related to employees' links with people, the organization, perceived job fit, and the sacrifice associated with a job change. Leupold et al. researched the relationship between job embeddedness and turnover intention. That analysis of the survey of the data from a national sample of 143 retail pharmacists indicated a significant negative correlation between job embeddedness and intentions to leave. Leupold et al. affirmed that proactive organizational efforts to enhance job embeddedness mitigated employees' intentions to leave. A positive relationship between job embeddedness with corporate support and job satisfaction was also a significant finding (Leupold et al., 2013).

Shibiti (2019) inferred that one the significant challenges organizations face in the American contemporary competitive work environment was retaining talented and productive employees. Shibiti sought to establish the relationships between retention factors and job embeddedness. Shibiti also sought to determine whether retention factors positively and significantly predicted job embeddedness. Shibiti conducted a non-experimental, quantitative survey with 278 teachers working in the Tshwane Municipality public schools. Pearson's correlation statistically revealed positive and significant relationships between retention and job embeddedness (Shibiti, 2019). Multiple regression analyses indicated that retention factors positively and significantly predicted job embeddedness (Shibiti, 2019). According to Shibiti, the results of this study afforded concrete implications for employers in search of effective employee retention strategies. The study's main practical contribution was demonstrating how retention factors related to and predicted job embeddedness (Shibiti, 2019). According to Shibiti, this study's findings contributed to employee retention theory by proposing that employees with desired retention factors are more likely to be embedded in their jobs and community.

Two-Factor Theory

In his two-factor theory, Herzberg (1959) argued that employees were motivated by internal values rather than external ones. In other words, motivation was internally generated and propelled by variables intrinsic to the work, which Herzberg called motivators. These fundamental variables included achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. Conversely, certain factors (extrinsic) caused dissatisfying experiences to employees; these factors primarily resulted from non-job-related variables. Herzberg referred to these variables as hygiene factors, which, although not motivating employees, must be present in the workplace to make employees happy. The dis-satisfiers were company policies, salary, co-worker relationships, and supervisory styles (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). Herzberg argued further that eliminating the causes of dissatisfaction (through hygiene factors) would not result in a state of satisfaction; instead, it would result in a neutral state. Motivation would only occur because of the use of intrinsic factors. In their empirical study, Maertz and Griffeth (2004) revealed that employees cited extrinsic factors such as competitive salary, good interpersonal relationships, friendly working environment, and job security as key motivational variables that influenced their retention in the organizations. However, employees who had the motive to leave their current organizations attracted other organizations (Herzberg, 1965). Therefore, the implication of this is that management should not rely only on intrinsic variables to affect employee retention; instead, the combinations of intrinsic and extrinsic variables were effective retention strategies (Samuel & Chipunza, 2009).

Samuel and Chipunza (2009) conducted a study to examine the extent to which identified intrinsic and extrinsic motivational variables influenced the retention and reduction of employee turnover, in both public and private sector organizations, in two public and two private sector organizations in South Africa. The total population of the research comprised 1800 employees of the surveyed organizations with a sample size of 145 respondents. Samuel and Chipunza used a self-developed questionnaire, measured on a Likert Scale, to collect data from respondents. The questionnaire demonstrated a Cronbach alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.85$, indicating that the instrument was reliable. Using a Chi-square test, the results showed that employees in both public and private sector organizations were, to a considerable extent, influenced to stay in their respective organizations by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. The following motivational variables significantly changed employee retention in both the public and private sector organizations: training and development, challenging/interesting work, freedom for innovative thinking, and job security. Samuel and Chipunza inferred that, given the growing need for organizations to retain the best employees in the face of competition, the study's findings indicated that certain variables were crucial in influencing employees' decisions to either leave or remain in an organization. Such variables included training and development, recognition/reward for excellent performance, a competitive salary package, and job security (Samuel & Chipunza, 2009). Nonetheless, other variables should be taken into consideration when formulating a retention policy. It is only a comprehensive blend of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational variables that can enhance retention and reduce employee turnover in our various organizations (Samuel & Chipunza, 2009).

Ease and Desirability

March and Simon (1958) were among early researchers that devised voluntary employee turnover theories with the ease and desirability theory. The ease and desirability theory were among the old content models of turnover. According to March and Simon, the ease and desirability theory emanated from the premise of two different motivational forces: (1) the perceived desirability and (2) the perceived ease of movement out of the organization. March and Simon inferred that perceived desirability influences job satisfaction. The ease of movement was the individual perception of the availability of jobs in the external job market. Employees had the free will to leave an organization based on the understanding of satisfaction with their jobs (desirability) and what other job alternatives were available to them in the job market (ease) (Mobley, 1977). Mobley expanded the ease-desirability theory by linking the negative job attitude with actual voluntary turnover. Mobley presented a heuristic model approach of employee withdrawal decision process that identified possible intermediate linkages in the relationship between satisfaction and turnover. Mobley proposed links between an employee's evaluation of their current jobs and actual turnover in his theoretical model. Mobley's intermediate linkage model had the following components: (a) evaluation of the existing job, (b) experienced job satisfaction–dissatisfaction, (c) thinking of quitting, (d) evaluation of the utility of search and cost of quitting, (e) intention to search for alternatives, (f) search for alternatives, (g) evaluation of options, (h) comparison of the alternative to present job, (I) intention to quit/stay, and (j) intention to stay/quit.

Wittmer et al. (2014) carried out a study using Mobley's intermediate linkage model by testing several full-time employees, classified based on demographics. These groups represented personal attachments and outside of work roles that were likely to influence employee turnover. According to Wittmer et al., recent research supported full-time employees' heterogeneity based upon demographics and outside of work roles. These factors are related to many employees and organizational outcome, specifically, the constructs found within Mobley's intermediate linkages model of turnover (Wittmer et al., 2014). Wittmer et al. used structural equation modeling to hypothesize and test the differences between full-time groups in Mobley's model relationships. The results generally supported Mobley's model and differentiated the connections for different full-time groups (Wittmer et al., 2014). Wittmer et al. used the study results and demonstrated how full-time workers were not alike in their attitudes and behaviors and what impacted turnover. Being conscious of the turnover of the different groups of full-time workers may allow practitioners to design targeted retention strategies (Wittmer et al., 2014).

Employee Retention

The values of an employee are immeasurable in any organization. Anitha and Farida (2016) inferred employees are vital asset of any organization because employees add value to organizational growth and sustainability. Employee retention involves the management's ability to increase the duration of an employee's stay in an organization for organizational success (Aguenza & Som, 2012). Anitha and Farida (2016) described employee retention as various policies and practices that galvanize employees to stay in organizations for a durable period. Sheraz et al. (2019) described employee retention as the act of motivating an employee to stay with an organization for a considerable period or until the fulfillment of the employee's contract under human resource practices. For an organization to achieve a competitive advantage, it must be efficient to maximize and utilize its resources to retain its employees (Anita & Farida, 2016). When employees were not satisfied with the organization, they found employment with another employer (Zhen, 2020). Organizations should have the capacity and capability to absorb, retain, and maintain their employees. Employee retention encourages employee loyalty to the organization (Sheraz et al., 2019). A good organizational structure facilitates career development programs that support the employee in achieving organizational goals (Lan et al., 2019). Sheraz et al. (2019) indicated a significant relationship between employee retention, job satisfaction, and career development.

Voluntary and Involuntary Turnover

Many researchers have studied and analyzed the phenomenon of turnover from many perspectives (Zhen, 2020). Some researchers regarded turnover as a model, while others viewed it as an indication of employees' organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Terason, 2018). Voluntary employee turnover occurs when an employee terminates an organization's appointment without any involvement or pressure from their employer (Terason, 2018). Hom et al. (2012) described voluntary employee turnover as the voluntary cessation of membership in an organization by an employee who received monetary compensation for participation. According to Sharma (2016), voluntary employee turnover is the consequence of an employee's resignation from an organization's services.

Voluntary turnover happens because an employee may leave to return to school, start a family, complete a degree, take a different job, or care for a sick family member (Corbin, 2020). Employees may also leave their jobs due to a lack of room for growth or hostilities and discrimination (Corbin 2020). Voluntary turnover negatively impacts the organization and is a significant problem confronting business leaders and organizations. Voluntary turnover poses a substantial threat to business profitability and sustainability (Schlechter et al., 2016). Voluntary employee turnover is costly and disruptive to business organizations (Boyd, 2017). According to Sharma (2016), an organization can maintain a low voluntary employee turnover; however, a high voluntary employee turnover necessitates a severe threat to its sustainability.

Business leaders may resolve this problem by keeping employees satisfied to sustain high job retention (Boyd, 2017). Engaging employees to share information about their daily functions can reduce knowledge loss when an employee retires or leaves employment (Corbin, 2020). Employees are the most critical asset of any organization; therefore, business leaders should gain their trust, loyalty, and commitment by involving them in the decision-making process (Boyd, 2017). Employees who were satisfied with their jobs stayed with their organizations (Zhen, 2020).

Transition

In Section 1, I introduced the foundation and background of the problem relating to employee retention. I also discussed the problem and purpose statements, nature of the study, research and interview questions, conceptual framework, operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study. Section1 also featured the significance of the study and a review of professional and academic literature.

Section 2 consists of the actual project. In Section 2, the practical steps I used to complete the research include the purpose of the study, the role of the researcher, participants, the research design and method, population, and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments and technique, data organization technique, and data analysis. In section 2, I featured an explanation of how these steps helped to ensure the reliability and validity of this study. Section 3 include a presentation of the findings, the impact of the findings on business practice, and how it will bring positive social change. Recommendations for future research concluded this section.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 includes the purpose of the study and the components of design pertinent to the study. This section includes information relating to the population and sampling to represent the study's targeted population. In Section 2 I also discussed the methodology, data collection techniques, and data analysis procedures used in the study. Section 2 concluded with the reliability and validity of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to identify strategies that some managers in the fast-food industry use to improve employee retention. The population targeted consisted of five senior managers from the fast food industry in Baltimore, Maryland, of the United States. These five senior managers have successfully implemented strategies to improve employee retention. The implications for positive social change include creating new jobs for citizens in the local communities and increasing tax revenues for benefiting local populations.

Role of the Researcher

Research can be complicated and demanding because research must follow the research process's rigors (Sigurdardottir et al., 2020). As a researcher, it is my responsibility to uphold the rigors involved in the quality research process to make the research valid and reliable. The researcher is instrumental in achieving all the steps involved in the qualitative research process (Yin, 2018). The researcher facilitates the exploration and understanding of the research topic and maintains a balance within the research process (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The researcher's role includes selecting a methodological design, recruiting participants, collecting data, exploring new knowledge, and analyzing the data through an objective and personal perspective (Cumyn et al., 2019).

The researcher must seek participation from the respondents and maintain a collaborative relationship during the research process to achieve validity (Thomas, 2017). My knowledge and experience in the fast food industry were limited because I have never worked in a fast food restaurant. I also have limited knowledge about the research topic. I do not have any known relationships with the chosen participants of this study.

As the researcher, I ensured and maintained high ethical considerations throughout the research and data collection process. I abided by the principles of the Belmont Report (2016) to treat the participants with respect and dignity. Confidentiality and anonymity were essential in gaining access to corporations or participants (Saunders et al., 2015). Participants' rights were maintained once they consented to participate in the interview. I continued my objectivity by collecting data thoroughly and accurately. Data collected shall remain confidential and stored in a safe location. I maintained confidentiality by ensuring that I conducted and protected all research information by storing data in a secure place and reporting all findings without bias.

It is paramount for researchers to be cognizant of their assumptions and biases as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis in qualitative research (Clark & Veale, 2018). The researcher can minimize participants' biases by asking open-ended questions and participants' review of the interview summaries through member checking when in doubt of the participant's answers (Callegari et al., 2017). Researchers can reduce potential researcher bias by adopting a specific protocol for each interview (Jorgensen et al., 2016).

Participants

Choosing an adequate sample size of the population is relevant to the researcher's ability to gather vital information for the study (Ingham-Broomfield, 2015). Sampling involves selecting participants who provide valuable information and rich data about the phenomenon of study (Polit & Beck, 2017). Qualitative researchers draw samples from the targeted population using the general qualitative sampling methods according to the size, variability, and targeted population's willingness to participate in the study (Asiamah et al., 2017). Participants in this study consisted of five senior managers from the fast food industry in Baltimore, Maryland, of the United States. These five senior managers must have successfully implemented strategies to improve employee retention. Lucero et al. (2018) inferred that single or multiple units of analysis are ideal when conducting a study in qualitative research. To qualify for this study, managers must have successfully managed their restaurants for 3 years. The participant's restaurants must also be leading other restaurants in employee retention in their district. I used the internet Goggle Search and the Real Yellow Pages for Baltimore, Maryland businesses to select the fast food managers for the interviews and contacted them through the telephone. I also used Baltimore chambers of commerce directory to identify the five senior managers that have successfully implemented strategies to improve employee retention. Establishing participants' criteria and standardized requirements were paramount while designing high-quality research protocols (Patino & Ferreira, 2018).

Establishing credibility with the participants and company is vital to gaining access for an interview. I used the informed consent form through email as the official invitation of participants for the interview. The participants that consented and met the criteria for the study were contacted by telephone and asked for their willingness to participants in the research study. After the initial telephone conversation, I scheduled the interviews. The signed consent forms avail the researcher permission to continue with the interviews or provide the participants the opportunity to decline the interviews (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). The selections of experienced and knowledgeable participants who can answer the research questions are vital for reliable and valid research (Callegari et al., 2017). It is crucial to confirm the assumption that the strategies used by these managers had a positive influence on employee retention in their restaurants.

Research Method and Design

The three methodologies to choose from in a research study are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (McLaughlin et al., 2016; Yin, 2018). Additionally, some of the qualitative research designs include case study, phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative inquiry (Delost & Nadder, 2014). The researcher must be cognizant of the various research methodologies and designs to select the best approach to a research problem and question (Saunders et al., 2015). I enumerated the justification for the chosen methodology and design in the following sections.

Research Method

The researcher uses the qualitative method for a more in-depth and better understanding of phenomena from a broader perspective (Yin, 2018). The researcher also uses the qualitative method to explore and understand events, organizations, phenomena, or processes and provide evidence on how to address a problem or a situation (Cardon, 2018). The researcher who conducts qualitative study depends on the participants' opinions, vivid experiences, and perspectives to collect and analyze data and generalize the findings for a specific population (Jamali, 2018). According to Yin (2018), the qualitative methodology is an interpretative philosophy where the researcher uses inductive reasoning to infer meaning about the phenomena of study. The qualitative method is most appropriate for this study because it is the best method used by researchers to explore a phenomenon and answer how and why questions in a study (Yin, 2018). Researchers use quantitative methods to test hypotheses or compare relationships between variables (Saunders et al., 2015). In this study, I did not test the hypothesis or analyze relationships between variables, so the quantitative method was not appropriate. Mixed methods research consists of a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods and includes research questions that require in-depth exploration of the phenomena and the measurement of relationships between variables (Archibald & Gerber, 2018). The researcher uses a mixed method approach to understand and resolve complex social phenomena using both inductive and deductive reasoning to address the phenomena with a single research method approach (Mekki et al., 2018). The mixed method was not appropriate for this study because there was no measurement of the relationships between variables or resolving complex social issues involved.

Research Design

Some of the qualitative research designs include case study, phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative inquiry (Yin, 2018). Among all these designs, I used the multiple case study. The multiple case study design was the best approach to identify strategies to improve employee retention in the fast food industry. The multiple case study design allows for an in-depth study of a phenomenon and findings replicated across cases (Saunders et al., 2015). Researchers use the case study as a design to facilitate the exploration of events in multiple organizations (Yin, 2018). Researchers use the phenomenology design to seek and identify the lived experiences related to the research interest (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, the phenomenology design was not appropriate because there was no identifiable lived experience interpretation. Researchers use the ethnography design to explore the understanding of the phenomenon of an ethnic or cultural group (Yates & Leggett, 2016). The ethnography design was not suitable for this study because it did not involve the culture or social world of a group. The researcher uses the narrative inquiry design when considering the stories of participants related to life experiences (Astroth & Chung, 2018). The narrative inquiry design was not appropriate for this study because there was no story of the participant's life experiences explored.

Researchers often use multiple data sources in a case study (Yin, 2018). I used semistructured interviews and documentation methods to collect data for this study. Methodological triangulation involves using multiple sources to collect data for in-depth research of phenomena (Heesen et al., 2019). The use of numerous sources of data enhances the validity and reliability of the study. A researcher achieves data saturation when there is enough information to replicate the study, and additional coding is no longer possible (Fusch & Ness, 2015). A researcher can also notice data saturation when no new themes or patterns emerge in a study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data saturation enhances the quality of the information in a research study.

Population and Sampling

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to identify strategies that some managers in the fast food industry use to improve employee retention. The population targeted consisted of five senior managers from the fast food industry in Baltimore, Maryland, of the United States. These five senior managers were from different fast food restaurants in the Baltimore, Maryland, metropolitan area. I used the purposeful sampling method to select the participants for this study. The researchers prefer a purposeful sampling method in qualitative research because of the identification and selection of reliable information related to the study (Palinkas et al., 2015). I used the purposeful sampling method to facilitate that competent and experienced participant were selected to answer the research questions. Among the advantages of purposeful sampling is the researcher's ability to interview a smaller number of participants (Robinson, 2014). Researchers use purposeful sampling to reach data saturation and focus on the research question (Robinson, 2014). According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), the researcher uses his or her initiative with the purposeful sampling method to choose participants based on the phenomenon of study. Palinkas et al. (2015) asserted that purposeful sampling facilitates effective and efficient data collection and analysis. Data effectiveness and efficiency are achieved by eliminating irrelevant data and focusing on relevant data to answer the research questions (Palinkas et al., 2015). I achieved data saturation quicker with purposeful sampling than random sampling (Yin, 2018). As a researcher, I used the purposeful sampling method because it was more effective and efficient in achieving data saturation (Robinson, 2014).

Sim et al. (2018) asserted the four methods to determine the appropriate sample size in a qualitative study are: rules of thumb (based on a combination of methodological considerations and past experiences), conceptual models (based on specific characteristics of the proposed study), numerical guidelines (derived from the empirical investigation), and statistical formulae (based on the probability of obtaining a sufficient sample size). Choosing an adequate sample size of the population is relevant to the researcher's ability to gather vital information for the study (Ingham-Broomfield, 2015). The ideal sample size is the number of participants necessary to reach data saturation when data becomes redundant and repetitive (Dworkin, 2012). In this study, I interviewed fast food managers from different restaurants, experienced and proven to improve employee retention. The researcher collects data faster in a case study because of its design and research questions (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The criteria for choosing participants include that participant are over 18 years. The participants must have successfully improved employee retention in their different restaurants in Baltimore, Maryland, for over 3 years.

Researchers must ensure data saturation in a qualitative study. Data saturation is the parameter used to determine the sample size in qualitative research (Morse, 2015).

Valuable sample size principles, guidelines, and adequate tools are paramount for researchers to justify their sample size and enhance qualitative research (Vasileiou et al., 2018). Researchers achieve data saturation when there are no new codes, new information, or a new theme in their research findings (Hennink et al., 2017).

Methodological triangulation involves the use of multiple sources for data. I used methodological triangulation to reach data saturation in this study. The sample size for this study was the number of participants it took to achieve data saturation. I conducted a telephone or virtual interview through Zoom online meeting format from a conducive and comfortable setup. Turner (2010) inferred that the best outcome of an interview is when the interview is conducted in a comfortable and conducive environment, where the participants can be focused and share pertinent information.

Ethical Research

The ethical consideration of participants was paramount in this study. I obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Walden University. I adhered to the three ethical tenets of research involving human subjects: (a) the principles of respect for the individual, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects in Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). The principal purpose of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) is to uphold the ethical consideration of participants (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). I emailed the participant's the consent form inviting them to consent to participant in the study. After they consented through email, I contacted the participants by telephone to introduce myself, explained the intent of the study, answered their questions, or concerns and later scheduled the interview appointments. The researcher has the responsibility of controlling the interview and must initiate a favorable initial tone for the discussion to be successful (Yazan, 2015).

The informed consent form is considered the contract between the researcher and the participants and the foundation of ethical research (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). The consent form served as a recruitment letter and included the study's purpose, that participation was voluntary, and that there were no benefits, compensations, or incentives attached to participation. The participants can withdraw their participation at any time without consequences by using the consent information made available to them to inform the researcher. I deleted and destroyed the data collected after the withdrawal of participants. I notified the participants that the interviews were audio recorded. I also informed the participants that the documents they provided and public records were sources of data.

The public demand for upholding ethical standards during research activities has increased and broadened for greater accountability (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). Maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of participants' rights is of utmost importance during research data collection, storage, and analysis (Yin, 2018). To preserve the confidentiality of the participants, I stored data electronically on a personal, secure, password-protected, external hard drive. I also locked the hard copies of the information in a file cabinet. To protect the rights and privacy of the participants, I will delete the electronic and hard copies of data and written data shredded after 5 years. To maintain the privacy and confidentiality of participants, I coded the participants as *Participant 1* through *Participant 5.*

Data Collection Instruments

In this qualitative multiple case study, I was the primary data collection instrument as the researcher. The researcher serves as the dominant instrument in collecting, analyzing, and managing data in a qualitative study (Austin & Sutton, 2015). The researcher must use his acumen, skills, and expertise to produce a knowledgeable research outcome (Rowley, 2012). According to Yin (2018), the six sources for data origin in case studies are: (a) archival records, (b) direct observations, (c) documentation, (d) interviews, (e) participants-observations, and (f) physical artifacts. The researcher may choose two or more of these sources for a case study (Yin, 2018). In this study, I used open-ended semistructured interview questions by telephone or virtually through the Zoom, and the participants' documents as data sources. The researcher uses semistructured interview questions to obtain useful data from the participants in a qualitative case study (Doody & Noona, 2013).

I used the telephone or virtual interviews through the Zoom online meeting format to collect data from the participants. The semistructured interviews consisted of prepared questions with themes and probes that were consistent and systematically fashioned for a positive response. I developed and followed the interview protocol (Appendix A). An interview protocol is paramount for multiple case study design because it enables the researcher to focus on the research topic and to achieve reliability in a research study (Yin, 2018). The interview protocol consists of an overview of the study and the interview questions. The researcher uses the interview protocol to ask the same interview questions to all the participants and minimizes biases (Silverman, 2018). The use of documentation as a data collecting method is essential for understanding the participants' real-life situations relating to behavior, actions, and roles (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

The alignment of semistructured interview questions with the protocol was essential for the researcher to obtain the required information from the participants. I used member checking to consolidate the reliability and validity of data collected during the research process. Member checking is a technique used by the researcher to follow up with participants after the interview to review and verify that the researcher's summaries reflect their views and responses (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I entered the verified interview transcripts and the observed data into computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) known as NVivo 12. I used NVivo 12 for coding, word frequency, emerging themes, and data interpretation.

I did not conduct face-to-face but gave the participants the option of telephone interviews or virtual interviews through the Zoom. I used the phone to schedule the interview with the participants. Before the telephone or virtual interview through the Zoom online meeting format, I emailed the participants a copy of their electronically signed informed consent form to review. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), interacting with the participants before asking the first interview question will build rapport and make the participants comfortable. I adhered to the interview protocol (Appendix A) during the semi-structured interview. I collected data by using a recording device and note-taking during the meeting. The semistructured interview process was the best approach for participants to express their lived experiences, perceptions, attitudes, and values about the phenomena (Turner, 2010). The telephone or virtual interviews through Zoom was time-limited; each of the selected fast food managers within the Baltimore, MD, area had between 30 to 45 minutes allocated for the interview. The qualitative multiple case study consisted of one research question and six interview questions (Appendix A).

Data Collection Technique

The data collection techniques for this qualitative multiple case study included telephone and semistructured virtual Zoom online meeting format interviews and organizational documentation. The research question for this study was posed as "What strategies have some managers in the fast-food industry use to improve employee retention?" I conducted semistructured, telephone or virtual online meeting interviews through Zoom according to the interview protocol (Appendix A). Interviews are the most suitable platform for studies dealing with complex issues, but the interviewer usually helps the participants understand the situation better (Davis et al., 2019).

I scheduled a convenient time and place for the interview with the participants with the telephone. I made accommodations for unforeseen circumstances such as participants' lateness or interruptions by allocating a longer time for the meetings. I confirmed the date, time, and interview's setup by calling the participants a day before the scheduled interviews. Once I started the interviews with participants, I documented the time, date, and participants' interactions with a reflective journal that adds to my participants' documentation data. I allowed the participants to review their electronically signed inform consent form before the interview. I conducted the interviews by telephone or virtually through Zoom and audio recorded each participant during the discussions. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), it is advisable to start a conversation with the participants before the semistructured interview to build rapport and make them feel comfortable.

The anticipated time limit for each interview was approximately 30 to 45 minutes. After the interviews, I collected documentation made available by the senior managers through email. I avoided the use of the participants' and real organization names because of confidentiality. I labeled the participants as *Participant1* to *Participant 5.* After transcribing the recorded interviews, I emailed the participants a summary of the discussions for member checking. According to Birt et al. (2016), the trustworthiness of results is fundamental in achieving high-quality qualitative research. Member checking is essential to the researcher because it is a mechanism used to verify the accuracy of the information rendered by the participants during the interviews and a technique for exploring the credibility of results in a research (Brit et al., 2016).

Data Organization Technique

As a researcher, I kept track of data and relevant documents for this study. The research question for this qualitative multiple case study was “What strategies do fast food managers use to improve employee retention?” I collected data from the participants during the interviews using the player audio record option on my HP laptop during the meetings and a handheld Sony audio recorder for backup. I tested both devices to ensure they were in good working condition before I commenced the interviews with the participants. I also used a reflective journal to document my observations and participants' responses to interview questions. After collecting the company's documentation data, I labeled them *Document 1*, through *Document 5*.

After I achieved data saturation, I inputted the data sources into NVivo 12 software for coding and analysis. Researchers use NVivo for coding, online storage, and data analysis; researchers prefer NVivo over other software because of its ease of use (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Researchers use data coding during the grouping process because codes are vital in organizing the first groups of data that emerge (Pierre & Jackson, 2014). The collection and storage of all data must align with IRB requirements (Yin, 2018). I stored the electronic data on a personal, password-protected, external hard drive, and delete all stored data after 5 years. I kept all the paper documents in a locked cabinet drawer and shred those 5 years post-data collection.

Data Analysis

According to Yin (2018), the data analysis stage of research consists of the following: (a) compiling of data, (b) disassembling of the data into groups, (c) reassembling the data into pattern themes, (d) interpreting the data, and (e) developing conclusions. Azungah (2018) asserted that data analysis is complicated, arduous, and time-consuming with limited theoretical attention in a qualitative study. The research question was "What strategies have some managers in the fast food industry use to improve employee retention?" The interview questions must be in alignment and address the central research question (Yin, 2018). This study included the use of all the data collected during the interviews and the documentation presented by participants that pertains to employee retention for data analysis.

Triangulation is a vital concept used in the qualitative study for data analysis (Fusch et al., 2018). Triangulation entails getting more reliable answers to the research question from different approaches, and each approach has a different source of potential bias independent of other sources (Lawlor et al., 2017). The researcher uses triangulation to improve the research study (Carter et al., 2014). I used methodological triangulation to analyze data. Methodical triangulation involves using many sources by the researcher to collect data (Heesen et al., 2019). Methodological triangulation consists of collecting data from recruiting material, retention activities, policy manuals, and overall voluntary termination reports (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I also used the participants' document as source of data. Observation data involves systematic viewing, recording, description, analysis, and the interpretation of people's behavior (Saunders et al., 2015).

After the interviews, I uploaded the collected data into the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) tool, NVivo 12. Researchers use software to code, interpret, organize the text, and perform keyword searches (Rowley, 2012). I listened and transcribed the audio recorded data using NVivo's transcribing feature. NVivo is a software program used by researchers to organize qualitative data and has an advantage of high compatibility to research designs (Zamawe, 2015). I used NVivo to regroup dominant themes in the participants' understanding regarding employee retention. Qualitative researchers predominantly use data coding during the grouping process and thematically organize the first groups of data that emerge (Pierre & Jackson, 2014). The emerging themes that were dominant represent the elements that contribute to the phenomenon of study, as it relates to the perspective of senior managers who have successfully implemented employee retention strategies in the fast food industry.

Reliability and Validity

Validity and reliability are essential tools for quality research. Validity and reliability are the researchers' principal factors in achieving good quality research (Jordan, 2018; Yin, 2018). The researchers use validity and reliability for the study's accuracy, replicability, and trustworthiness (Cyprus, 2017). Validity and reliability are valuable tools to measure qualitative research (Cypress, 2017; Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Reliability

As an essential requirement in research, reliability is the reproducibility and consistency of the data produced by the research instruments (Jordan, 2018; Saunders et al., 2015). Conducting data audits enhances better judgment about biases, distortions, and qualitative research (Jordan, 2018). I collected interview data and asked interview questions to improve reliability by following the interview protocol (Appendix A). Asking the same open-ended interview questions in the same order to each participant improves reliability (Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018), seeking permission from the participants to audio record the interviews increases the study's reliability.

Dependability

Dependability is associated with data consistency and stability in a study (Jordan, 2018). I used the member checking technique to ensure trustworthiness and this study's dependability. Member checking is a process where the researcher presents the interview summaries to the participants for verification and data accuracy (Anderson 2017). To achieve member checking, I emailed the participants the findings of the research summaries and requested their feedback to indicate that the summary reflects their viewpoints and opinions.

I also used triangulation as another measure to foster the dependability of the study findings. There are three triangulation techniques used in qualitative research. Investigator triangulation occurs when two or more researchers with different and divergent backgrounds and expertise work together for the integrity of the research finding in a study (Anney, 2014). Data triangulation involves using many sources of data that foster strengthening the reliability and credibility of the research study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data triangulation consists of the researcher’s use of various data sources or research instruments, including interviews, focus groups, or participant observations, to augment the quality of the data from different sources (Anney, 2014). Methodological triangulation is when the researcher uses two or more methods for data collection, and each technique has the same research tradition (Anney, 2014). Researchers use methodological triangulation to gain an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon (Heesen et al., 2019). The data sources I will use for methodological triangulation are documentation and interview protocols.

Validity

Validity is the appropriateness of the measures used in research, the accuracy of the data collected related to the phenomenon of study, and the generalization of the findings (Jordan, 2018). The researcher must understand the importance of the method of analysis to determine the research (Kozleski, 2017). Using a representative sample of the population is paramount in safeguarding validity and presenting an accurate reflection of study (Jordan, 2018). According to Yin (2018), the validity of research occurs through member checking and methodological triangulation. I used both member checking and methodological triangulation to check the validity of the study. Member checking involves participants' ability to review and verify the collected data's accuracy with the participants before analysis (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The researcher also uses triangulation to improve the validity of a research study (Carter et al., 2014). Validity is a complex concept in qualitative research. Researchers measure research quality and validity through credibility, transferability, confirmability, and data saturation (FitzPatrick, 2019).

Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research is the believability and trustworthiness of the study findings and a fundamental criterion (Messner et al., 2017). To ensure the credibility of this study, I used member checking. Member checking is a protocol used by the researcher to verify the accuracy of interviews from the participants' perspectives (Anderson, 2017). Consequently, I emailed the participants the summaries of the interview data for review and to verify that what they stated were properly interpreted. The data verification, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions with research participants are accepted techniques to enhance research credibility (Anderson, 2017).

Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research is the ability to compare a study's result with another review in a different context (Bengtsson, 2016). The generalization of research findings is applicable to quantitative research but not applicable in qualitative analysis (Saunders et al., 2015). In qualitative research, the burden of the transfer of research findings rests on the reader rather than the original researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Using accurate descriptions allows the reader to understand the characteristics, data collection, and analysis methods on how the findings are transferable to other situations, settings, and populations (Hadi & Closs, 2016). To ensure transferability, I confirmed that the study avails enough information to enable readers to interpret and implement the study's results in other settings.

Confirmability

Confirmability in qualitative research involves the accuracy of data and how others could corroborate results (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Conducting data audits enhances better judgment about potential bias or distortion in qualitative research (Jordan, 2018). Confirmability involves establishing data and is used to assure the researcher that the interpretations of the research findings are not fictitious but derived from the data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). To ensure confirmability in this study, I used triangulation to augment the findings of this study. Data triangulation involves using multiple sources of data for an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Data Saturation

Data saturation is achieved when no new theme or information emerges in a research study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data saturation is derived in data collection when patterns and ideas become repetitive, and further data collection becomes redundant (Hennink et al., 2019). I adhered to the same interview protocol (Appendix A) for each interview with participants until I attain data saturation. I also used data saturation technique during coding and data analysis.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I restated the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study, the researcher's role, the criteria used to select participants, as well as the research methods and design. I also discussed the data sources, data collection techniques, organization, and interpretation of the data. Also included in Section 2 were the population sampling and discussion of research reliability and validity. In Section 3, I discussed the findings of the qualitative multiple case study, its application to professional practice, and implications for social change. I concluded with recommendations for action and future research.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to identify strategies that some managers in the fast food industry use to improve employee retention. Implementing the study results may encourage business sustainability and provide managers with potential strategies for reducing employee turnover in the fast food industry with derivative cost decreases. Providing new job opportunities and raising revenues are urgent challenges to the communities and government to promote positive social change (Haugh & Talwar, 2016). Implementing this study's findings can enhance the local economies by increasing tax revenues, alleviating poverty in the local communities, and building a beneficent social environment from income generated by new employment.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question for this study was: What strategies have some managers in the fast food industry used to improve employee retention? To discover some themes that some managers used as their strategies to retain employees, I conducted a semistructured interview with five managers in the fast food industry in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, whose retention strategies have improved employee retention. I completed the interviews by telephone or virtually by Zoom. In addition of conducting the interviews, I used methodical triangulation by reviewing relevant documentation data made available by the participants and public records to support the validity and reliability of the study (one training handbook, employee handbook, and mission and vision statements). I employed member checking to validate the accuracy of data collected from the interviews.

I used data analysis software NVivo 12 to store, organize, code, and analyze all the collected data. The emerging codes were sorted and categorized into themes. I identified the emergence of three themes relevant in answering the research question, and in alignment with the literature review, and the conceptual framework of this study, the eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). The five participants in the research were coded and identified as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5, for privacy and confidentiality. The three emergent themes from the data analysis were: communication, organizational support, and training.

Thematic Findings

Theme 1: Communication

The first theme that emerged during the data analysis was communication. Most businesses will not function effectively and would fail without effective communication, which describes the process of sharing and understanding a message (Conaway & Laasch, 2012). The communication theme emanated from participants' interview responses and documentation. The five participants acknowledged that effective communication was paramount to every organizational success and helped them improve employee retention in the fast food industry (P1-P5). In addition, effective communication facilitates success by initiating trust that fosters good relationships between employees and the organization, although small businesses implement more internal communication than big businesses (Ljajic & Pirsl, 2021).

The internal communications strategy influences and determines employees' actions, observations, and maintaining good relationships in their respective workplaces (Ljajic & Pirsl, 2021). The five participants, P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5, agreed that effective communication was paramount in the employee recruitment process and helps improves employee retention. P1 stated:

> When it comes to employee retention, I use effective communication during the employee's interview process, and daily as a team to get the task accomplished. I pay close attention to the person's attitude and pick up the social cues to make an educated guess if the person is a long-lasting, productive employee.

Effective communication can be implicit because it can affect other employees who witness the communication between an employee and the organization (Lee & Seltzer, 2018).

Today's employees expect a consumer-like communication experience that is time-efficient, meaningful, easy to assimilate, delightful, and consistent (Gonclaves, 2017). According to P2, "As a senior manager, I have not fired any employee in the last 7 years. The strategy for my successful employee retention is flexibility, tolerance, and asking the employees what they want or what their problems are”. P2 asserted that the employees must communicate and discuss a pay increase, vacation, scheduling, or personal issues with their managers because when managers meet employee needs, they improve productivity and retention. In addition, internal communication may enhance an employee's performance and behavior (Kang & Sung, 2017). P3 asserted that effective communication is essential for employees to relate to the customers, take customer's orders, improve customer service, and relate to coworkers as a team, resulting in employee satisfaction, profitability, and increased retention. P4 inferred that "communication is important for employee retention, I talk with my employees as a manager and not as their boss; we work as a team assisting each other, when they have issues, I sort it out with them". P5 indicated that the implementation of an open-door policy improves employee retention. Employees should have access to their manager to discuss their issues with him, relating positively with the employees as a manager helps them stay with the company. People leave their organizations because of poor relationships with their bosses rather than the job or pay. Manager's roles include coordinating a team, having good leadership skills, and, most importantly, communicating effectively for organizational success (Bucata & Rizescu, 2017).

Theme 1: Correlation with Peer-Reviewed Studies. The participants' notation of communication as a vital tool to improve employee retention in the fast food industry correlates with different peer-reviewed articles. The participants (P1-P5) opined that communication in the workplace was an essential function in the fast food industry and consistent with reviewed literature. Communication plays a significant role in an employee's decision to stay with an organization (Baciu & Virga, 2018). Internal communications are vital elements in the ethics management system of a company and ensure effective feedback of information on an individual's moral aspect relating to the employee or the company (Akhmmetshin et al., 2020). Communication creates the opportunity for management, managers, supervisors, and employees to interact and enhance employee retention. Effective communication is vital to employees because it inspires information flow that creates opportunities for learning and development (Naim & Lenka, 2017). The essential part of communication is the leader's ability to listen to an employee and the leader's reaction (Valaei & Rezaei, 2017). All the participants concurred with Gazzola et al. (2017) that communication at the workplace is an avenue to relate to organizational goals, values, mission, and vision statements. Employees must communicate effectively to achieve their objectives as the world becomes one economic unit (Lovin & Capatina, 2021).

Theme 1: Alignment with Theoretical Framework. The theme of communication aligns with the conceptual framework, which was the eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). Maertz and Boyer (2012) affirmed that job satisfaction as an affective force is a consequence of employee retention. Affective forces relate to emotions, feelings and the manager's relationships with their employees that encompasses communication. All the participants (P1-P5) affirmed that they communicate with employees verbally or informally through observation and other informal cues. P1 stated that he looks at the employee's faces to tell when they are happy or sad. He reaches out to them when they have bad days at work and asks them the problem. Communication is imperative for business leaders and employees to express concern, give feedback, and improve the overall work environment for a positive outcome (Tan et al., 2019). P2 asserted that when employees are acknowledged as an essential part of the team by their manager, they put forth their best efforts and retention is improved". P3 stated that she relates and communicates with the employees with mutual respect based on their ages and generational gap to achieve a positive joint outcome." P4 inferred, "some of the employees are students that need flexibility, supervision, and redirection to accomplish tasks. I have to be nice and be patient with them to encourage them to stay". P5 stated, "communication is the key to retaining your employees; talking with them one on one is essential because you do not want to lose them; replacing them costs the company a lot of money". Managers use effective communication to understand employee goals and desires, sharing information that will benefit the business, enhance employee job performance, and improve retention. The conceptual framework consists of potentially significant variables for explaining employee turnover and sound retention strategies the participating managers may have used to enhance organizational effectiveness and productivity.

Theme 2: Organizational Support

Organizational support was the second theme that emerged from the data analysis. Organization support emerged from managers' documentation and interview responses as the second theme fast food managers use to retain employees. The need for fast food managers to provide a supportive environment for their employees is very imperative. Managers that support a conducive working environment create employee job satisfaction, increased productivity, and improved employee retention. All the participants (P1-P5) acknowledged organizational support as a retention strategy used to improve employee retention. P1 inferred that he always takes care of the employees by asking them what they need; he solves their problems by giving them flexible schedules, vacation time, and increased salary. Employees have granted vacations when requested and may resume work when available without losing their job. P2 stated that providing a good working environment to employees enhances their productivity, profitability, increased pay, and employee retention. According to P3, "providing a low to no stress workplace is a strategy that works for me to improve retention. When a manager always asks an employee to achieve unattainable goals, the employee is discouraged and might leave the company. P4 stated:

> High employee turnover is not good for the company; I am patient with my employees, I help and give them time to learn and be productive. If the employees knows that the manager cares and looks out for their interest, they stay with the company.

P5 asserted that it is essential to divide responsibilities fairly, and not let anyone feel overworked. When one person feels they are carrying the team's weight, they are overwhelmed and may start calling out of work. When employees are overworked, they leave the company. When working for any company, it is essential for everyone to feel appreciated to improve themselves and workplace.

Theme 2: Correlation with Peer-Reviewed Studies. Organizational support correlates with the literature reviewed for this study. Positive reinforcement is an essential element of employee retention. Positive reinforcement is associated with a favorable reward stimulus package given to employees to recognize outstanding job performance and excellence above other workers (Esteves et al., 2018). P2 inferred that his company offers an employee a reward program that includes gift cards, a parking space, paid vacations, and other incentives to improve employee and job satisfaction. When employees are satisfied and happy with the organization, they stay with the organization. Managers that accord positive reinforcement to outstanding employees enable a competitive working environment (Fan-Chen et al., 2017). P3 stated, "our company has a REAP program which stands for restaurant, employee, advancement, program. All of our team members learned during orientation that there is always room for improvement and progress". Pathak and Srivastava (2017) inferred that employee recognition and overcoming challenges encountered during career paths enhance the employee's commitment to stay with the organization. All the participants reported that they used incentives to motivate employees, improve employee performance, increase employee commitment, and improve employee retention. According to Pathak and Srivastava, employee's significant commitment level enhances employee retention. Organizations can render support, align members, and foster good relationships among members (Fang et al., 2021). According to Paul and Vincent (2018), it is imperative for business leaders to accord respect, recognition, and incentives to improve employee satisfaction and retention. Positive reinforcement can be used as a retention strategy by managers to encourage employees, enhance productivity and profitability, and improve employee retention. Mangers use positive reinforcement to achieve organizational goals and objectives (Potter et al., 2018).

Theme 2: Alignment with Theoretical Framework. The theme of organizational support aligns with the theoretical framework of the eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover. According to Maertz et al. (2012), affective forces are employees' positive and negative feelings towards an organization that cause emotional comfort that motivates an employee to stay in or discomfort that inspires the avoidance or quitting. All the participants (P1-P5) acknowledged the practice of affective forces by providing a conducive working environment for their employees to stay. P1-P5 confirmed that when employees are satisfied with their job, they stay and do not quit their jobs. P3 inferred that "most people leave their jobs not because of pay but because of their managers or supervisors" Affective forces are employees' emotional arousal towards their organization and their membership interest (Zimmerman et al., 2019). According to P3, "when the employee is constantly overworked, they leave the company due to low morale and lack of motivation". P4 stated, "Some employees come to work late or call off most times due to lack of interest with their jobs, managers need to keep their employees motivated to remain with the company". Affective forces are attributes of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Maertz et al., 2012). According to P1, "when managers treat their employees with respect and help them accomplish tasks, they create better working relationships with the employees; the employee remains with the company because of the managers' support".

Mobley (1977) reiterated job satisfaction as a significant factor to improve employee retention. Constituent forces identify with employees' perceptions and commitment towards their leaders and coworkers (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz et al., 2012). According to P1:

> Teamwork is critical and essential for organizational growth and retention; I work on the floor with my team to satisfy customers, I work with them as a lead team member, and not as a boss. When the employees see me taking the lead and showing them what to do, they are motivated and stay with the company.

P3 alerted that "when employees are involved in the decision-making process that involves them and the performance of their duties, they own responsibility and part of the organization". According to Maertz et al. (2012), employees who had good relationships with coworkers and leaders were encouraged to stay in an organization; however, employees with negative relationships with coworkers and leaders desired to leave the organization.

Theme 3: Training

Employee training was the third central theme that emerged during the data analysis of this study. Four of the five participants (P1, P3, P4, and P5) mentioned employee training as an essential element of improving employee retention. The results of the study signify those managers that provide training to their employees can improve employee retention. P1 stated that training employees correctly and carefully are paramount for employee retention. An employee with non-proper training is unproductive and less used to the company and likely will not want to stay. P3 inferred, "training is essential for employee's personal development provides customer service. The company provides training at least twice a year to our employees to better equip and update them with tools for better customer services" P4 asserted that "proper training will help the employee learn the technics and skills they need to perform their jobs. In our program, we train employees for 14 days after which they perform their duties and help reduce turnover". P5 stated that his company provides both online and hands-on training before an employee can resume work. Employees must be tested and certified on each section before they can work in that section. The company's recruiting document indicates that employee training and development are paramount for employee career advancement, personal growth, and employee retention strategy for business leaders. The company's handbook aligns with the manager's assertion that employee's proper training is positively significant to improved employee retention.

Theme 3: Correlation with Peer-Reviewed Studies. The theme of employee training emanated from the analysis of participants' interviews and organizational documentation and is in alignment with the study literature. Cross-functional training and development enable an effective workforce and positive employee outcomes (Murphy et al., 2018). P1 stated that when employees have trained adequately, they can perform their duties effectively and efficiently, thereby satisfying their customers. P3 noted that:

> We have to let our employees know that there is always room for improvement through our Restaurant, Employee, Advancement, Program (REAP). The REAP program is in the employee training handbook. All of our team members were taught the REAP program during their orientation at work the first day.

Employees function more proficiently in a friendly work environment where their work is appreciated and given room for improvement (Ojwang, 2019). New employees should have the skills to answer the telephone, take customer's orders, and provide other customer services (Employee Training Manual, 2020, p. 7). Progressive organizations require rapid training and development to achieve the career goals of their employees (Murphy et al., 2018). Employee's continuous training enhances employees' knowledge and general performance (Ojwang, 2019). P4 stated that employees that advance their training with the company get promoted and stay with the company. Training provides employees the necessary skills and knowledge needed to competently execute their work effectively with confidence (Nelesh et al., 2018). Training is an essential tool used by managers to sustain, commit, and retain employees in an organization (Hadi & Ahmed, 2018).

Theme 3: Alignment with Theoretical Framework. The theme training aligned with the theoretical framework, the eight motivational forces of voluntary employee turnover (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). Employees' perceptions of achieving their goals are evident in the calculative force that influences job satisfaction and employee retention (Maertz & Boyar, 2012). Training as a calculative force represents both favorable and unfavorable employees' self-interest instead of the goal of staying employed with an organization (Hom et al., 2012; Maertz et al., 2012). Employees may also leave their jobs due to a lack of room for growth or hostilities and discrimination (Corbin 2020). P3 and P5 inferred that adequate training of employees facilitates professionalism, personal growth, and improves employee retention. An employee has a high tendency to stay in an organization when the employee's calculation is favorable; however, an employee can quit with unfavorable predictions (Maertz et al., 2012). According to P3, when employees have trained adequately, they have a favorable interest in growing with the company. P4 acknowledged that acquiring knowledge and skills through training is the most outstanding factor. The participants acknowledged training as an effective strategy they used to improve retention in the fast food industry.

Applications to Professional Practice

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to identify strategies that some managers in the fast food industry use to improve employee retention. The findings of this study aligning with the literature review and conceptual framework conform to professional business practices. This study's employee retention strategies findings may apply to professional business practices and serve as an essential reference to fast food managers. The three main themes that emerged from the data analysis of this study were: (a) communication, (b) organizational support, and (c) training to support the effective retention strategies managers use to improve business practices. Most fast food managers lack the strategies to improve employee retention. Still, the implementation of themes identified through interviews and documents will equip managers with the strategies for retaining skilled employees.

Managers that have an effective communication strategy in place achieve organizational success. Effective communication between managers and employees encourages retention and advances organizational success (Kundu & Lata, 2017). Training could be an effective business practice used by managers to enrich the workers' knowledge and skills positively; these attributes enhance employee performance and retention on the job (Prentice et al., 2017). Organizational support is an essential strategy used by managers for business sustainability and improved employee retention. The implementation of the findings of this study could improve employee retention by fostering the relationships between employees and management. Employees are the most vital element for any organizational success. When employees are part of the decision-making process in an organization, they put forth their best performance and achieve a better outcome for the organization (Prince et al., 2017). When the organization values employees, they stay. Organizational support encourages employees' job satisfaction and retention. Job satisfaction is significant with employee's intent to stay with an organization (Yelamanchili, 2018). Training could be an effective business practice used by managers to improve the workers' knowledge and skills positively; these attributes enhance employee performance and retention on the job (Prentice et al., 2017). Training opportunities are paramount for employee engagement (Johnson et al., 2018). Business managers achieved a positive business outcome by developing training opportunities for their employees (Johnson et al., 2018).

The findings of this study apply to professional business practices by identifying the causes of employee turnover in the fast food industry and strategies managers must implement to prevent or mitigate employee turnover. The rate of employee turnover in the fast-food industry is significantly high when compared with other sectors (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Most organizational leaders' main goal is to maximize profit, but high employee turnover can disrupt organizational goals, objectives, and operations (Toti & Lekoloane, 2018). As businesses retain their employees, they achieve higher profitability (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Implementing the study results may encourage business sustainability and provide managers with potential strategies for reducing employee turnover in the fast food industry with derivative cost decreases.

Implications for Social Change

The fast food industry is among the most significant employment providers globally and vital to the world's economic growth and sustainability (Gosser et al., 2018). For the business to be profitable and successful, business leaders need the acumen to hire and train people with special skills to improve employee retention (Saker & Ashrafi, 2018). Employees who received training acquire more skills, provide better customer service, become team players, and enhance productivity and profitability (Lavy & Littman-Ovadia, 2017). When businesses are profitable, they hire more people, thereby providing employment opportunities to the community. Business responsibility includes giving back to the community where they operate the business in through employment, providing infrastructures and other amenities to the community. Business leaders that execute effective employee retention strategies achieve reduced employee burnout, increase economic growth, and foster economic development.

The themes identified from the data analysis of this study: communication, positive reinforcement, and training formulate the retention strategies that support manager and employee relationships, fostering team building and personal development, which increases employee engagement, commitment, and improves retention. According to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018), most people leave their organization due to the poor leadership abilities of some managers to create better relationships between managers and employees, a lack of organizational support, poor treatment of employees, and ineffective communication. The implication for social change is for managers to implement effective retention strategies such as effective communication, positive reinforcement, and training that can enhance organizational productivity, boost employees' morale, and add to the overall success of the fast food industry. The positive social change implications include the potential for new job opportunities and stimulating the economy through increased spending incomes for local communities. Providing new job opportunities and raising revenues are urgent challenges to the communities and government to promote positive social change (Haugh & Talwar, 2016). Implementing this study's findings can enhance the local economies by increasing tax revenues, alleviating poverty in the local communities, and building a beneficent social environment from income generated by new employment.

Recommendations for Action

Mangers in the fast food industry should follow the recommendations of this study to improve employee retention. The recommendations for managers in the fast food industry are (a) managers should create a better working environment that encourages effective communication; (b) managers should develop positive relationships between managers, employees, and the community; and (c) managers should encourage training and recognition programs to foster organizational support. Organizations with transparency and effective communication embedded in their culture and core values could help improve employee retention (Irwansyah et al., 2018). Managers should encourage a better working environment for their employees by encouraging open-door policy, meetings, and other avenues through which employees are valued and understood. Managers should implement the use of 'suggestion boxes' to enable them to understand employee's needs, concerns, and values. Managers should also have a feedback mechanism and performance appraisal system to respond to the demands of their employees effectively. Employees must be involved in the decision-making process to keep their loyalty to the organization (Woodall et al., 2017). When employees perceive a balance between their professional and work life, they become effective, productive, and adapt to different roles (Braun & Paus, 2018).

The implementation of training and recognition programs by managers' helps employees expand their knowledge and skills base and acknowledge that their contributions are appreciated (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018). Therefore, managers should examine the outcomes of this study to identify and develop strategies to retain employees in the fast food industry. The research findings are in ProQuest Dissertation and Theses Database for other researchers and businesses. In addition, business leaders can access the study's findings in business forums, executive training sessions, and leadership seminars.

Recommendations for Further Research

Limitations refer to the study's potential weaknesses beyond the researcher's control (Akaeze & Akaeze, 2017). This study was limited to managers in Baltimore, Maryland, in the United States. Future researchers should explore employee retention strategies of fast food managers from other cities in Maryland, other parts of the United States, and other parts of the world. Future researchers should also research different food chains from the fast food industry and other industries to validate if the various sectors have common themes. The sample size for this study was limited to five fast food managers. Future researchers may explore other populations like the employees in the fast-food industry or use more participants to validate the study results. Another limitation to this study was participant's biases and prejudice, which was mitigated by the researcher asking the same interview questions to the participants. I interviewed five managers to achieve data saturation and included documentation in triangulation during data analysis to achieve results. Finally, I recommend that future researchers conduct a quantitative study on employee retention strategies in the fast food industry to determine the relationships between communication, organizational support, training, and employee retention.

Reflections

My experience within the DBA Doctoral Study process has been engaging with mixed emotions that involved perseverance and endurance, but very challenging. I learned that effective time management, paying attention to details, and being patient over things that I do not control was essential for me getting through the program. The criticism and support from my chair and colleagues inspired me to focus on my goal of becoming Dr. Patrick Umezurike. After completing the study, I got a better insight and understanding about retention strategies managers used to improve employee retention in the fast food industry. I have a better experience about businesses in the fast food industry and how they are prone to fail or withstand competition without employee retention strategies that are cost derivative for sustenance.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to identify strategies that some managers in the fast food industry use to improve employee retention. I conducted semistructured interviews with five fast food managers from Baltimore, Maryland, in the United States. I collected and analyzed data applying methodological triangular including documentation. The themes of communication, organizational support, and training emerged. These themes are in alignment with the conceptual framework and the works of literature reviewed for this study. This study concludes that effective communication, organization support, and training are paramount for improving employee retention, business profitability, and sustenance.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the research study. The interviews will include fast food managers discussing the strategies utilized to retain employees in the fast food industry. I want to identify several strategies fast food managers have successfully implemented to retain employees. I would also like to identify any challenges incurred in the process and how you addressed them. As a follow-up, I would appreciate it if you reviewed the data and my interpretations for accuracy after the interview. I will send you an email with the interview summaries and will respect your feedback or suggestions. Please return your feedback within one week of receiving the email.

Interview Questions

1. What strategies have you implemented to improve employee retention?
2. What strategies have you used to support employee realization of career opportunities within the organization?
3. Based on your organization's experience, what strategies are the most effective in reducing employee turnover?
4. Based on your organization's experience, what strategies have you used that are least effective in reducing employee turnover?
5. How did your organization address any critical barriers to implementing successful employee retention strategies?
6. What additional information would you like to share regarding your organization's strategies to improve employee retention?