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Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Workers in Rural Areas

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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2023

Abstract

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MBA, Herzing University, 2017

BS, Herzing University, 2013

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Health care worker shortage is a global problem and is challenging for human resources managers. Human resource managers need more strategies to recruit and retain healthcare workers in rural areas to decrease healthcare worker shortages, unemployment rates, patient morbidity, and mortality rates. Grounded by Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies human resource managers use to recruit and retain healthcare workers in rural areas. The participants were three managers from Southern Louisiana rural area medical facilities with at least 5 years of experience developing and implementing successful recruitment and retention strategies. Data were collected and analyzed from semistructured interviews, interview transcript summaries, journal notes, results from employee exit surveys, Gallup surveys, and job announcements. Data were analyzed using Yin's five-step qualitative data analysis process; four themes emerged: (a) communication, (b) compensation, (c) recognition, and (d) effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies. A key recommendation for managers is to provide employees with timely, relevant, and effective communication, including feedback, recognition, and rewards. The positive social change includes potentially increasing employee retention rate, college and university partnerships, and providing education and preventive measures to patients, which benefits the community.

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Dedication

This doctoral study is dedicated to my children, Toi Arielle Jackson, my daughter, and Ty Joseph Wilson, my son. "Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward" (Psalms 127:3). I would like to thank both of you for your understanding and support, and most importantly for allowing me to take my computer along on our many vacations, and for giving me some private time to complete the required assignments. I thank both of you for keeping me focused and motivated when I wanted to give up. I thank you Toi for regurgitating the words "quitting is not an option;" as much as I did not want to hear it, I am thankful that you listened and were able to give them back to me when you felt I needed to hear them; much appreciated. Ty, I thank you for constantly asking me "why are you doing this to yourself?" It made me put things into perspective and think about my "why"; It was to show both of you that you are never too old to further your education and to let you know that the sky is the limit. With hard work and dedication, you can accomplish anything, YOU just have to do it! I LOVE you BOTH with everything in me!

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Health care worker shortage is a global problem and is challenging for human resources managers. Health care facilities with a shortage of workers may risk decreasing overall organizational quality to include care for patients. Implementing and restructuring human resource management (HRM) practices may aid organizational leaders to improve employees' skills, opportunities for career advancement, rewards, recognition, hiring of the right people for the job, and overall satisfaction with the organization (Aranha & Venkateswaran, 2020). My aim and purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore successful strategies HR managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas.

Background of the Problem

Reducing health care worker turnover rates and recruiting candidates with talent is challenging for HRM in the United States. Organizations operating with a shortage of health care workers are a persistent problem in rural areas. Health care worker shortages may influence and increase burnout, negative work environment, and cost of health care, and may hinder patients' quality of care. According to the American Hospital Association (2021), shortages will increase to 3.2 million by 2026. Declining patient care, increasing employee stress, job burnout, and financial burden on medical facilities are factors of health care worker shortages. According to Gelle-Jimenez and Aguiling (2021), implementing and incorporating policies according to HRM practices and guidelines helps leaders to enhance organizational goals' effectiveness and achievement. HRM practices reinforce organizational outcomes by anchoring the organization's goals, vision,

and mission to positively influence employees' behaviors and performances and increase patient satisfaction with care.

Managers may implement strategies targeting individuals' needs relating to Maslow's hierarchy of needs to recruit and retain employees. Leaders with an understanding of factors and who implement successful strategies that target individual needs may recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas and may positively influence health care workers' intention to work and remain in rural areas. Decreasing employee turnover rates helps HRM contribute to the creation of a better employee work-life balance, affordable, accessible, quality care, and services for patients. Organizational leaders can use monetary savings to provide patient education when there is a reduction in turnover rates and costs.

Problem and Purpose

Health care worker shortages are a challenge for managers in medical facilities in rural areas. The shortage of health care workers poses many challenges for HRM such as a decline in patient care, job burnout, and stress, and poses a financial burden to medical facilities (Wei et al., 2019). The World Health Organization (2019) estimated a shortage of about 18 million health care workers by 2030. The general business problem was the shortage of health care workers in rural areas to provide quality care, education, and catalyze preventive measures. The specific business problem was some managers lack strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas.

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore successful strategies some managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. The

targeted population included managers with 5 years of experience who were successful in implementing strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural area hospitals or medical facilities in Louisiana. Increasing HRM's strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas may aid in preventing and reducing morbidity and mortality rates. The findings in this study may increase recruitment and retention strategies in rural areas and may minimize emergency room visits and hospital admittance, which will enhance health care in rural areas.

Population and Sampling

Managers who work in rural Louisiana hospitals or medical facilities were the specific population for this study. Purposeful sampling was the method used to select three managers. Purposeful sampling according to Campbell et al. (2020) helps researchers with improving the quality and reliability of the data and results of the study by selecting participants who will present appropriate and pertinent information. To be eligible to participate in this study, managers must work in a rural area health care system in Louisiana and were successful in implementing strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas within the last 5 years. Data sources used in this study consisted of interview transcript summaries, journal notes, highlights of findings from employee exit interviews, and results from employee feedback surveys that were initiated by employers and shared by participants, job announcements, and recruiting materials.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative multiple case study was the research method and design used for this study. Strijker et al. (2020) identified qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods as

three research methods. According to Yin (2018), researchers use the qualitative method to identify, explore, and observe lived experiences to gather a deeper understanding of a phenomenon. I asked open ended questions to explore human resource managers' successful strategies for recruiting and retaining health care workers in rural areas. Researchers use close ended questions in quantitative research focusing on testing hypotheses on variable relationships or differences (Tenny et al., 2021). Testing hypotheses was not the focus of this study. Researchers use a mixed method consisting of a blend of quantitative and qualitative attributes to collect and analyze data (Yin, 2018). The mixed method was inappropriate as no quantitative components were used for this research.

Case study, phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative are four possible qualitative research designs researchers consider using for a qualitative study to explore HRM strategies for recruiting and retaining employees. Using a case study design allows researchers to explore a phenomenon through various data sources, collect data from participants, and identify emerging themes (Saunders et al., 2015). A multiple case study design is appropriate for researchers to explore human resource managers' strategies to recruit and retain employees. According to Tenny et al. (2021), researchers use phenomenology design to capture the participants' lived experiences. The phenomenology design was not the best option, as the information is solely from the participant's experience; some data or fundamental facts may be left out and pose bias. Using the phenomenology design for this study was inappropriate. Ethnography design, according to Fusch et al. (2017), allows researchers to explore social and cultural aspects.

Even though ethnography interprets participants' behavior in cultural aspects, this design was not appropriate for the study, as I did not study a particular cultural group. Narrative design helps researchers to tell a story with details from the participant's perspective (Saunders et al., 2015). The narrative design was also not the objective and purpose of this study.

Research Question

What successful strategies do human resource managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies and incentives do you use to recruit or retain health care workers?

2. How do you measure the effectiveness of the strategies and incentives to recruit and retain health care workers?

3. What strategies were not effective for the recruitment and retention of health care workers?

4. What barriers did you encounter when implementing, recruiting, or incentive strategies?

5. How did you overcome any barriers?

6. What additional information would you like to share regarding your recruitment or retention strategies that were not previously discussed?

Conceptual Framework

The concept that grounded this study was Maslow's hierarchy of needs; developed by Maslow in 1954. I expected Maslow's hierarchy of needs motivational theory to provide a possible framework and lens for focusing on the physiological and psychological needs of humans to explore strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas and to help managers motivate and guide employees' behaviors. According to Stefan et al. (2020), Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides insight for policymakers and managers to implement motivational strategies to increase professional performance. The logical connections between the framework and the nature of the study included the introduction of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to meet various physiological and psychological personal needs to satisfy and motivate employees. The model is like a pyramid; employees' motivation increases as each requirement is met. Maslow's hierarchy of needs model, according to Terry et al. (2021), helps managers to understand various needs to target as motivators to recruit and retain employees.

Meeting higher level needs, especially the need for self-actualization, motivates health care employees. Maslow's theory helps to provide insight for policymakers and managers when designing and implementing motivational strategies to increase professional performance (Stefan et al., 2020). Using Maslow's theory, I expected to provide a framework to explore and understand human resource managers' strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas.

Operational Definitions

Human resources management (HRM): Human resources management adopts functions and activities to influence employees in an organization to achieve organizational goals (Opatha, 2021).

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction is the positive behaviors, attitudes, emotional behavior, and performance of employees while on the job (Sheraz et al., 2019).

Laissez-faire leadership: Laissez-fair leadership is a delegating style of leadership affording employees to make decisions (Gemeda & Lee, 2020).

Recruitment strategies: Recruitment strategies are a hiring plan of action explaining the organization's recruiting process and evaluation strategies to select top candidates to fill vacant positions (Bhagia, 2022).

Retention strategies: Retention strategies are variables such as education, training, recognition, rewards, pay, and job security that influence employees' decisions to leave or remain in an organization (Hines et al., 2020).

Rural areas: Rural areas are a measurement from a variety of areas, including population density, travel or distance, geographic isolation, resources, socioeconomic characteristics, local perceptions or culture, and amenities (Bennett et al., 2019).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

To improve the quality of their findings and interpret the evidence, researchers should report limitations, delimitations, and assumptions. Researchers risk jeopardizing the validity and reliability of the study if there is no mention of limitations, delimitations, and assumptions. Addressing limitations, delimitations, and assumptions aids researchers

in improving the quality, interpretations, and presentation of findings. Exposing all assumptions, limitations, and delimitations helps researchers to establish rigor and trustworthiness. I would like for this study to be a benchmark for others to use and cite in future research (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). To avoid jeopardizing a study, researchers address limitations, delimitations, and assumptions so that the findings can be helpful and offer support to others.

Assumptions

Assumptions are elements that researchers take for granted and accept as justification for the truth without proof (Yang et al., 2018). Assumptions in completing this study are that I assumed the participants would provide honest answers to the interview questions. I also assumed that the collection of data and the participants' responses would provide moral and meaningful support.

Limitations

Limitations are design flaws and restrictions researchers do not control (Miles, 2019). Limitations to this study were the responses from participants that may not be applicable or true. Another limitation was conducting a study with three participants in rural areas of Southern Louisiana; the results may not be transferable or applicable to other areas.

Delimitations

Delimitation implies a population limitation in which the study can be generalized (Miles, 2019). Delimitations that affected my research were my choice of problem and

purpose statement. The literature choice and methodology are other delimitations to my research.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because study results may guide leaders in implementing strategies to retain employees and recruit new talent to increase performance, productivity, and patient quality of care. When exploring successful strategies HRM uses to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas, the findings may contribute to business practice and promote positive social change in rural areas by reducing turnover rates, increasing profit, and patients' access to care. When facility staffing is stable, the financial savings from turnover costs, recruiting, and training new employees could aid leaders in health care facilities in educating patients, decreasing morbidity and mortality rates, and emergency room visits to positively affect the community.

Contribution to Business Practice

Health care workers are valuable assets to health care facilities. HRM should be strategic when developing and implementing policies to recruit and retain health care workers. Job satisfaction and recognition aid managers in increasing employees' motivation, performance, and productivity. Managers who implement successful recruitment and retention strategies may influence employee turnover intentions and may influence candidates' decisions to apply for available positions. Hiring employees to fill vacant positions, and retaining current employees help to decrease health care facility recruiting and retention costs. Building a collaborative relationship between health care workers and the rural community aids in beneficial results. Mentorship programs

including the health care organization, mentor, mentee, and the rural community help with success and sustainability (Lozano et al., 2021). HRM with a focus on increasing recruitment and retaining health care workers in rural areas help to provide patients with reasonable access to quality care and promote a positive outcome for patients and overall community health (Rohantinsky et al., 2020). Managers could stimulate and motivate employees by assessing and implementing strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Recruiting and retaining health care workers in rural areas may allow patients to receive affordable, quality care and education to help reduce morbidity and mortality rates.

Implications for Social Change

When the recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural areas are higher, patients receive more quality care (Hines et al., 2020). Hospital savings could aid managers to provide education and prevention measures to patients in rural areas. Increasing employee recruitment and retention in rural areas could create a positive work environment and better work-life balance for employees. Patients would receive better quality of care and education to reduce emergency room visits, which positively affects society.

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A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

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The objective of this literature review was to explore relevant literature previously related to the strategies to recruit and retain employees with an emphasis on health care workers and rural areas. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was the conceptual framework for this study to provide insight for policymakers and managers to implement motivational

strategies to retain and recruit health care workers. The logical connections between the framework and the nature of this study included Maslow's hierarchy of needs for managers to focus on employees' physiological and psychological personal needs to guide and motivate human behavior.

Using Maslow's theory, I provided a framework and lens to explore and understand human resource managers' strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. According to Snyder (2019), a literature review is researchers systemically collecting and synthesizing previous research to show evidence and identify areas needing more research. Literature support for this study consisted of various peer-reviewed articles on the conceptual framework, which was the basis and lens of the phenomenon for this study. Previous theories relating to employee motivation and job satisfaction, employee recruitment and retention, strategies and factors that influence the recruitment of health care workers, recruitment and selection, leadership skills and traits, reward system and motivation, human resources policy, health care workers, and rural areas are additional categories that comprised this literature review.

Literature Search Strategies, Databases, and Reference Material

Strategies to identify relevant literature about recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural areas included a search for articles that related to recruitment and retention, health care, and rural areas. After reviewing the various articles available about the search topics, I set the publication date filter to 2019 to retrieve articles within 5 years of anticipation of my approval date from the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) doctoral committee for my doctoral study program.

To help explore and yield the maximum number of articles, information was obtained by using Walden University's Library databases which included ProQuest, EBSCO, ABI/Inform collection, Business Source Complete, Science Direct, and Scholar Works. Additional resources to conduct research are Health Care.gov and Google scholar. The following keywords and phrases were used as search terms: *recruitment, retention, recruitment of health care workers in rural areas, retainment of health care workers in rural areas, retention strategies, recruiting challenges, human resources, leadership, leadership and employee engagement, strategies, job retention, employee recruitment, and recruiting in rural areas*. In completing an in-depth review of literature relating to the recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural areas, I found 141 articles related to the recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural areas, of which 131 are peer-reviewed and have been published in academic sources within the last 5 years. 93% of the total references are peer-reviewed sources with a publication date 5 years from my anticipated CAO approval date of 2023. Researchers use Ulrich's Global Series Directory to ensure each reference is peer-reviewed. Table 1. List the summary of reference types, the currency of the year, and the percentage of age groupings.

Table 1
Literature Review Sources

Sources	Total #	< 5 years old	> 5 years old
Peer-reviewed	77	70	7
Books	5	0	5
Total	82	70	12

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

A motivational psychological theory developed by Abraham Maslow in 1954 may help leaders and managers motivate employees. Maslow's theory consists of a hierarchy of needs, from low to high, which employees focus on to achieve satisfaction. Maslow's intent for the order of needs was to introduce various personal needs of individuals that must be met and satisfied for employee motivation (Maslow, 1954). The model is like a pyramid, completing each level of needs increases motivation.

Motivation is the driving force to achieving a goal or objective that fills the needs and desires of individuals. Forces within individuals; guide their voluntary behavior and performance (Prasetya et al., 2022). Because of the complexity of humans, motivating employees is a challenge for some leaders, as each employee is biologically, developmentally, and psychologically different and learns in various manners. Leaders must establish a rapport with employees to implement Maslow's hierarchy of needs properly and have a knowledge and understanding of factors to help motivate employees

to increase performance and achieve organizational goals. Stefan et al. (2020) conducted a study using Maslow's theory to provide insight for policymakers and managers in implementing strategies to motivate and increase employees' professional performance. When surveying 824 employees in a health organization, Stefan et al. (2020) found that meeting higher level needs, particularly the need for self-actualization, increased employee motivation. Managers use creative approaches to address factors that motivate and inspire employees when implementing policies. The organizational culture and employee performance increase when employees meet each level of need.

The five levels addressing humans' satisfactory needs comprise Maslow's hierarchy of needs triangular model. Each level dominates the next. The five levels of this pyramid are physiological, safety and security, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualizations (Mohite et al., 2022). The bottom level is the physiological need; this level is the critical need of employees to survive and consists of food, water, breathing, shelter, and clothing. Once physiological needs are met, employees advance to the next level of safety and security, encompassing employees' financial, health, and wellness needs.

Varying slightly from Stefan et al.'s (2020) perspective, Shapiro et al. (2019) proposed a wellness hierarchy model to modify Maslow's hierarchy of needs to guide leaders on how to address the essential physical and mental health of providers first, secondly safety for physicians and patients, and thirdly higher order needs such as respect from colleagues, patients, electronic health records, and the time and resources to heal patients and contribute to the greater good. Shapiro et al.'s (2019) assessment and modification proposal of Maslow's theory will help leaders prioritize interventions and

improve physician wellness. The next level is social needs, the addressing of love, belonging, and acceptance of employees, as these behaviors drive employees' behavior. The next level is esteem needs, which addresses the appreciation and respect for the employee. The last level is the self-actualization need, in which employees are more self-aware and working toward personal growth and self-fulfillment.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid model helps leaders to focus on addressing the basic needs of employees at the lowest level and increasing the needs to the highest level. The design of each level of the pyramid is to aid leaders in improving employees' motivational levels to obtain overall performance and satisfaction with the job, decrease the cost of turnovers and increase retention. Leaders' roles in health care are crucial. Having an understanding and knowledge of employee needs helps leaders to implement strategies to recruit and retain employees in rural areas.

Al-Qathmi and Zedan (2021) investigated factors that affected employee turnover. The authors assessed satisfaction with an existing incentive management system to motivate employees. When reviewing the results from the data collected from 100 of the 250 questionnaires, Al-Qathmi and Zedan (2021) found that factors such as wage allocation, limited promotion opportunities, continuing education, and professional growth opportunities were successful incentives leaders used to retain employees. Recruiting and retaining health care workers in rural areas can be challenging, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Criscione-Naylor and Marsh (2021) recommended that health care leaders use creativity in recruiting and retaining employees amid COVID-19,

as retention is important to organizational success, competitive advantage, and sustainability.

Leadership styles in crises such as COVID-19 according to Harrington (2021) are important to leaders' effectiveness in the involvement of employees and the community. Leaders' styles and approaches affect the recruitment and retention of employees. Leaders who are strategic with their approach and behavior inspire, foster trust, and respect with community members and leaders as well as motivate their team. Effective communication is key to building a relationship with internal and external customers. The benefits of building a relationship with community members and leaders can promote positive social change by obtaining an understanding of concerns and needs within the community to improve residents' quality of life.

According to Northouse (2019), leadership is an individual's ability to influence a group to achieve goals. Heathfield (2019) shared that employees who receive recognition from leaders for their efforts are more confident in their abilities. Strategy is a comprehensive activity in determining crucial guidance in achieving the organization's long-term goals (Soeherlan, 2022). Building trust, respect, inspiring and including employees in the decision-making process aids leaders to achieve organizational goals and success.

Criscione-Naylor and Marsh (2021) posited that by enhancing commitment to the organization, leaders can establish a relationship of trust to improve employees' job satisfaction. Abelsen et al. (2020) shared that team cohesion helps leaders overcome challenges in recruiting and retaining health care workers. The organization is more

productive when professionals communicate, work together, and learn from each other to create a learning environment and identify theories, strategies, and tools to inspire, motivate, recruit, and retain employees in achieving organizational goals. Maslow's pyramid-designed hierarchy of needs is one of several theories to help managers and leaders retain and recruit employees by increasing employees' motivation levels and candidates' interest in open positions within the organization. Maslow's hierarchy of needs received criticism and support from theorists and researchers. The next section is comprised of criticism and supporting theories of Maslow, identification of additional theories, and an explanation of why neither was chosen for this study.

Criticisms of Maslow's Hierarchy of Need

Theorists, as well as researchers, criticized Maslow's theory. In an argument by Fox (1982), Fox (1982) argued that Maslow's (1943, 1954, 1965, and 1970) received minimal support based on the findings. Fox (1982) further argued that Maslow received rejections of some propositions; the other propositions were received as mixed or questionable. Fox (1982) reported that Maslow's theory is inconsistent with observed behavior. Heylighen (1992) conducted a cognitive-systemic reconstruction of Maslow's theory of self-actualization. In the reconstruction process, Heylighen (1992) described self-actualization as fulfilling the highest need, a never-ending developmental process. In referencing Mallow (1970), Heylighen (1992) shared that their eclecticism of Maslow is insufficient in thoughts, confusing, and contradictory. Maslow received criticism for lacking the integration of conceptual structure and heterogenous writings based on papers published in the 1940s and 1950s (Heylighen, 1992).

Heylighen (1992) further expressed that Maslow's concept of actualization is simple and consistent but does not have a clear definition. Maslow (1970) acknowledged that self-actualization sometimes is a derivative of frustration of needs rather than gratification. Using McClelland's (1955) view, Fox (1982) posited that the need for affiliation is not biologically, but socially acquired. Maslow's theory received criticism from many theorists and researchers; although many have criticized Maslow's view, there are just as many that support Maslow's theory.

Support of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Theorists and researchers support Maslow's hierarchy of needs; throughout the years, some have modified or redeveloped their version of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. According to Stefan et al. (2020), Maslow itself and Alderfer (1969) further developed Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Alderfer (1969) posited that Maslow's theory significantly influenced individuals' thought processes and searches and was becoming known as the most well known theory mechanism to explain human motivation. Alderfer (1969) developed and improved on the needs such as existence, relatedness, and growth. A need exists for motivation intervention and quality improvement strategies to achieve job satisfaction, quality of health care, and patient safety (Alhassan et al., 2013). When reviewing DeVoe et al.'s (2002) secondary analysis of the Community Tracking Study (CTS) Physician Survey (1996-1997), the results from the data received from over 12,000 non-federal practicing physicians in the United States, validated Alhassan et al.'s concept that career satisfaction and dissatisfaction were related to the quality of care patients received. The lower the level of employees' satisfaction

with their jobs, the higher the turnover rates; increasing the rate of poor performance and decreasing the quality of care for patients. Reviewing researchers' and theorists' views on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, I was able to conclude that when employees' satisfaction with their jobs are low, turnover rates increases, employee performance is poor, and the quality of care for patients is low. Maslow's theory positively affects the motivation of health care workers the most in public organizations.

<div align="center">**Additional Theories**</div>

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

A two factor theory was created in 1959 by Frederick Herzberg; Herzberg's theory aids managers in identifying factors to maintain, stimulate, and reward the work environment as needed to motivate and retain current employees and attract and recruit new employees. According to Terry et al. (2021), Herzberg's theory helps leaders to understand individuals' behavior and decision-making process. Herzberg's theory is a two pillar model identifying internal and external motivators and hygiene factors that affect the work attitudes of individuals. Hygiene factors are the external factors that are consistent or equivalent to basic needs such as job security, salary, and benefits associated with the job; these are like the lower level needs in Maslow's hierarchy of needs model.

Al-Qathmi and Zedan (2021) contributed that motivation, job satisfaction, and performance are interrelated to hygiene factors. Hygiene factors are job security, compensation, workplace relationship, work conditions, and management, along with factors relating to the job, such as recognition, achievement, responsibility, and growth

opportunities in satisfying and motivating employees. Organizations risk losing employees if the needs in Maslow's hierarchy of needs model are unmet. Herzberg's motivation factors are internal motivators such as recognition, rewards, and advancement potential, which align with Maslow's higher level needs. Each model provides a lens for employees and managers to emulate and is a critical factor for employees deciding to work in, remain in, or leave an organization.

Intrinsic factors according to Herzberg et al. (1959), when present, aid in increasing motivation, while extrinsic factors reduce employee motivation when they are not present. Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are contingent on the organizational culture, leadership, and management styles to motivate employees and create a sense of belonging, ensuring they fit and belong in a particular environment. Herzberg's theory is the use of rewards and recognition to motivate employees. I focused on the individuals' needs in determining what drives their level of motivation; therefore, I could not use Herzberg's theory as the conceptual framework.

Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA)

A person's fit or sense of belonging in an environment alters their behavior. A 1984 theory created by Dawis and Lofquist focused on a person's fit within an environment. TWA is a model of vocational adjustment concerning a person's (P) characteristics, such as values, goals, and personality fit in a work environment in an organization (E). The work environment consists of job requirements, work conditions, interpersonal relationships, performance appraisal systems, payment systems, and incentives systems. TWA consists of the psychosocial needs and abilities of the worker as

a form of reward for successful job performance. In conducting a study to examine the effects of the hierarchical plateau on turnover intention and person-job fit, a component of the Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) framework, Kumar et al. (2021) defined a hierarchical plateau as the point in an individual's career where the chance or probability of getting promoted is low; the findings revealed that hierarchical plateau positively influences turnover intentions.

To foster turnover intentions, leaders should heed the recommendation of Kumar et al. (2021) by implementing proper recruitment, development strategies, and training programs. If an individual is unsatisfied with the job, their performance will be poor, and the individual is more likely to leave the job. When conducting a systemic review, Herkes et al. (2019) reviewed 28 articles to identify and synthesize a person's organization fit and person group fit in health care to determine association with staff outcome. Aligning with Herzberg's theory regarding the relationship and way managers and leaders strategically meet the individual needs of employees, there is an increase in employee satisfaction with the job and overall performance. Herkes et al. (2019) found that 96% reported a positive association between the perception of fit and staff outcomes, including job satisfaction and retention. Employees having a sense of belonging and fitting in at work improves the overall outcome and wellbeing of employees within the organization, aids in employee retention, reduces turnover costs, and provides quality care to patients (Johnston et al., 2020). TWA is not the best theory option for this research because the focus is on employees' connection and relationship with others within the organization and not on satisfying employees' personal needs.

McKinsey 7S Model

The McKinsey 7S Model framework is a tool to assist organizations in successfully implementing their strategy and aligning core values to obtain goals to achieve a competitive edge. The seven elements of McKinsey's 7S model, according to Dyer et al. (2020), is a framework consisting of 7 factors made up of hard and soft elements to help achieve organizational goals. The seven elements are strategy, structure, systems, staffing, skills, style, and shared vision.

Every leader's goal is to be productive, profitable, and sustain a competitive advantage. According to Dyer et al. (2020), the strategy element is the most critical as it is the overall outcome and achievement of the organization. Using tools such as McKinsey's 7S Model and Maslow's pyramid designed hierarchy of needs helps managers and leaders retain and recruit employees by increasing employees' organizational knowledge, motivation levels, and potential candidates' interest in open positions within the organization. In a study to identify and address the workforce challenges that leaders face in health care, Parsons (2019) explored innovative approaches to recruiting, retaining, and developing employees. Parsons (2019) found that leaders who carefully plan and execute their plans are ready to handle and address future challenges. Workforce planning, diversity and inclusion, technology, training, preparing for the future, work-life balance, new office (virtual or remote), and flexibility were challenges identified for leaders to address.

Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment and retention are human resource management's selection process that contributes to gaining and retaining skillful employees for available jobs. Reviewing, screening, interviewing, and selecting the most qualified candidate that will make the best use of their skills and strengths to assist with achieving organizational goals and objectives by filling vacant positions is Kapur's (2022) definition of recruitment. Khalid and Nawab (2018) defined retention as a process to encourage employees to remain with the organization, this process aids in organizational success. According to Kuuyelleh (2021), personal and work-related factors were key contributors to employees' intention to leave. Assessing stakeholders' views on the acceptability and feasibility of policy options and outcomes to increase health care workers in rural and remote areas by improving retention, Ajuebor et al. (2020) found that stakeholders' advocated revising and updating the World Health Organization (2010) guideline to develop relevant and effective policies to improve the recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural and remote areas.

Recruiting and retaining health care workers is challenging. Current shortages, involuntary and voluntary turnovers, fundings, and facility locations increase challenges in recruiting and retaining health care workers (Brzostek & Domagała, 2019). An adequate number of employees that do not require training and motivation increases the patient's quality of care. The lack of or shortage of health care workers is concerning as it relates to the stability of the health care system.

Brzostek and Domagała (2019) conducted a study in which eight stakeholders; four men and four women from various levels of health care, including managers, providers from in-patient and outpatient facilities, and regional and self-governments to focus on the effects of quality management on improving the health care system. When reviewing the results from the five questions, Brzostek and Domagała (2019) found that retaining an adequate number of health care workers was the biggest challenge, along with retaining older workers with adequate skills. Patient and employee satisfaction, employee motivation, commitment, and finances had the most significant influence on improving the health care system's quality (Brzostek & Domagała, 2019). Brzostek and Domagała (2019) also identified accreditation, adapting to the demographic need of the local community, implementing new HRM tools, programs for promoting patient health, implementing continuous education for employees, career progression paths, and conducting regular staff meetings in which managers and employees could exchange information were additional strategies that can be used to recruit and retain health care workers and improve the health care system.

When employees feel that they belong and fit in at work and receive recognition, acknowledgment, compensation, and rewards for their contribution, they are happy and productive (Suryosukmono et al., 2022). Retaining employees and providing managers with training are requirements for organizational success. Strategic planning is a requirement to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas; managers should implement strategies, policies, and efforts that focus on factors to attract and retain employees in rural areas.

Retention and Turnover

Employee turnover affects the economy, the community, and the organization's success. When investigating and exploring employee retention and turnover intention, researchers focus on factors such as employee commitment to the organization, satisfaction with the job, stress level, burnout, motivation, and behavior. According to Gorde (2019), an organization's assets are the employees; retaining employees is a major goal of organizations. Duru and Hammoud (2021) explored strategies and identified effective strategies from senior leaders to reduce voluntary turnovers and retain employees, particularly nurses, and found that job satisfaction, financial compensation, and effective communication were the main contributors to retaining employees. Supporting and recognizing nurses, offering sign on bonuses, incentives for preceptorship, and tuition assistance, were successful strategies to improve employee retention (Duru and Hammoud, 2021). Retaining health care workers is challenging for organizations.

Several factors increase an employee's decision to leave a job, such as an increase in work hours, workload, lack of satisfaction with the job, and organizational culture. Several reasons, such as attending school, starting a family, finding a new job, and caring for a family, may contribute to employee turnover (Corbin, 2020). Leaving a job because of the lack of or no opportunity for promotion, relocation of a spouse or retirement are additional reasons employees leave an employer. Turnover intentions can be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary departure is an employee's decision to leave or quit the job.

Involuntary departure is the employer's firing or terminating of an employee (Belete, 2018). Employees may voluntarily leave or quit a job, or managers may fire employees.

If employees' needs are met, and they are happy and satisfied with the job, the employee does not leave. If any needs are lacking or there is a deficiency, the employee considers leaving the job. When employees leave their place of employment for whatever reason, so does their job knowledge, increasing the need to engage staff to share job duties and roles with others. Implementing policies and procedures to provide job shadowing and on the job training helps to reduce the costs of retraining coworkers or new employees (Corbin, 2020). Khalid and Nawab (2018) posited high turnover costs result from issues with retaining employees; a critical factor in organizations not achieving objectives and goals. Turnovers and retentions are costly for organizations.

To combat and reduce employee turnover intentions, leaders should implement strategies to ensure the environment is conducive to recognizing, training, and rewarding health care workers. Lyons and Bandura (2020) shared that there is a cost when employees leave and when organizations recruit, hire and train new employees. Turnovers may harm an organization's productivity and sustainability. The relationship between employees and employers can influence employees' turnover decisions and intentions.

Factors That Influence the Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Workers

HRM should successfully address driving factors to attract, recruit, and retain health care workers; this process is critical in attracting and retaining quality talent to meet health care system demands, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hiring

candidates willing to commit to the organization's vision and mission is challenging. The challenge is the development and implementation of beneficial strategies (Mukhuty et al., 2022). Ingenuity and innovation in the recruiting process should be specific regarding the job and the need for recruiting health care workers.

To attract and retain skillful employees and to reduce costs from turnovers, Al-Qathmi and Zedan (2021) suggested managers use an Incentive management system (ICS), a system to help managers in enhancing employees' skills, knowledge, and abilities. Satisfying organizational goals by developing a relationship between employees and organization leaders may create an atmosphere that is conducive to organizational culture and beneficial for patients. Factors such as education, professional training, salary, motivation, rewards and recognition, leadership style, organization culture, and promotion and location potentially affect employee recruitment and retention in rural areas (Elma et al., 2022). Some of these factors can aid in pushing employees away and pulling them into the organization.

When determining the effects of several factors on employee motivation, Le et al. (2021) found that pay, benefit, supervisor, work conditions, training, and promotions were some factors that influenced employees' motivation. Le et al., (2021) also discussed the importance of implementing policies to increase employee motivation. Le et al. (2021) shared that when implementing practical strategies to motivate employees, leaders should address salary, fairness in salary offers, leadership skills, training to develop employee skills for promotion, and setting specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and

timely (SMART) goals. Strategically addressing and implementing strategies may aid in retaining employees on a long term basis.

While exploring the push and pull factors explaining doctors' decisions to work in rural areas, Jamil (2021) found that decision-making factors were relevant to work, rural living conditions, education, finances, and personal. Embedding personality and growth factors, education, and service aid stakeholders with their recruiting and retention strategies by emphasizing the importance of health care in rural areas (Jamil, 2021). Employee turnover because job burnout, workload, and staffing affect patient quality of care, organizational productivity, quality of the organization, and operational cost. Managers should tailor their recruiting and retention strategies to address salary, educational and promotional opportunities, and personal items of interest within the community to foster group, networking opportunities, and social interactions for employees and their families.

Leadership Styles

The style of the leader can dictate the outcome of the organization. Leaders help execute the organization's vision, mission, and goals while guiding and leading employees. Oubrich et al. (2021) postulated that leaders' roles are critical and affect the organization's outcome as the leaders regulate the attitude and behavior of employees. The full range leadership model is Avolio and Bass's (2001) description of leaders; transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles make up the full range leadership model. Perez (2021) examined leadership styles that aid in influential leadership roles. Using The Path-Goal theory framework to conduct the study, Perez

(2021) found that transformational and authentic leadership increased employee retention, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Romi et al. (2022) conducted an assessment to understand the relationship between leadership style and employee turnover intentions and found that working in health care during a crisis increases mental and physical burnout and the risk of infections; additionally, Romi et al. (2022) found that different leadership styles, especially in a crisis, positively affect employee relationships and productivity. In the health care industry, the most effective and productive leaders are the ones who are caring, nurturing, and protecting employees during a time of crisis.

Hulooka et al. (2021) reviewed existing studies regarding the relationship between transactional, transformational, and collaborative leadership styles and the innovative culture of employees in a health care setting. Hulooka et al. (2021) found that effective leadership styles and using distinctive characteristics helped to inspire, motivate, guide, and manage employees in completing tasks and achieving overall organizational goals. To find the relationship between managers' leadership styles and job satisfaction among health care workers, Alqahtani et al. (2021) conducted a cross-sectional study that consisted of 25 primary health care center managers and 300 primary health care center providers. When reviewing the results from socio-demographic and job satisfaction survey questionnaires, Alqahtani et al. (2021) found that the laissez-faire leadership style highly influenced employees' job satisfaction, followed by Transactional leadership and Transformational leadership style.

Bhatti & Alyahya (2021) shared that leaders who display laissez-faire leadership styles motivate employees to work independently and improve job performance. Leaders have various effective and ineffective styles when leading others to achieve organizational goals. Leaders and managers should examine and hone their styles. Each leader is different and uses multiple styles to inspire, motivate and influence employees to obtain personal and organizational goals to achieve profitability and sustainability.

Transformational Leadership

A leadership style in which leaders lead by setting an example for others to follow; promotes a positive employee and leader relationship. Four dimensions of the transformational leadership model are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individual consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Idealized influence is the employee's realization of the value of the leader. Inspirational motivation is the leader's articulation of the vision and mission to motivate and inspire employees. Intellectual stimulation is the way leaders challenge and encourage employees. Individualized consideration is leaders acting as mentors by providing emotional support for employees (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Transformational leaders inspire employees to become better. Team and individual performance are the focus of transformational leaders. Showing others how to do a particular job motivates Transformational leaders.

Transactional Leadership

A leadership style in which rewards are contingent on an employee's performance. Young et al. (2021) noted that transactional leadership is one type of leadership style that is common in organizations to predict the performance of followers;

it is the linkage between leaders and followers. Transactional leaders from Bass and Avolio's (2001) perspective reward employees based on their performance. Transactional leaders concentrate on task completion, increasing performance, and rewarding and punishing employees as a strategy to inspire and motivate employees. According to Raveendran (2022), Transactional leaders encourage and motivate employees to increase performance; enhance job satisfaction and job commitment.

Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leaders afford employees the ability and opportunity to make appropriate decisions as the situation arises. Laissez-faire leaders are delegators and offer little to no direction to employees. Gemeda and Lee (2020) examined and investigated the relationship between leadership styles, employees' work engagement, and outcomes. Although Gemeda and Lee's (2020) purpose was unique and specific to technology professionals, the findings and results are relevant to all professionals. Gemeda and Lee (2020) posited that laissez-faire leaders do not involve themselves in tasks and are never present when there is a need. Laissez-faire leadership was found to be significantly negative concerning employees' behavior in performing tasks (Gemeda and Lee, 2020). Laissez-faire leaders' delegates duties to employees. Laissez faire leaders may be conducive to supporting and motivating employees to be more self sufficient and productive, and in certain organizations may affect job satisfaction and organizational culture as there is no leadership or support for employees. Leadership style is one factor that hinders recruiting and retaining health care workers.

Location

The geographical area of the job is one of many vital factors that affect recruiting and retaining employees. Allen et al. (2020) shared that location was the most significant factor in an employee's decision to stay in or leave a job in a rural area. Paladine et al. (2020) conducted a qualitative study to explore community characteristics that encouraged the recruitment and retention of women physicians and influenced successful rural practice. Employee fit within the community, spouse or partner fit within the community, family ties, training experiences, social networks, and investment in the community according to Paladine et al. (2020), are positive factors employees consider before deciding to begin working in rural areas.

If the location is not right and conducive for the employee and their family members, the employee may change their decision to work or remain in a rural area facility. The location may also contribute to successful recruitment as many individuals do not want a long commute or work in a busy, high-traffic area. To attract and retain health care workers in rural areas, managers should consider the candidate, the family, and the community. Some considerations may include ensuring amenities such as schools, culture, art, and other activities for entertainment and support within the community and ensuring the pay is fair and commensurate with the roles and duties of a specific position in each location.

Burnout

Staff shortages, lack of resources, and working during a crisis increase employees' workload and stress levels. Burnout is a psychological syndrome in which

one reports having physical and mental stress with the job that causes a reduction in personal accomplishment (Leo et al., 2021). Various levels of dissatisfaction with the job can aid in increasing burnout for employees. Employees under perform and plan to leave the job if they are unhappy. When employees are not motivated, they tend to be dissatisfied with their job and may miss several days from work, which in most cases affects job performance (Girdwichai & Sriviboon, 2020). Employees that are not happy with their job underperform. Quality of care and organization success and culture are at risk. To increase employees' job satisfaction and reduce turnovers, HRM and leaders should be creative and strategic when implementing strategies, policies, and procedures.

Expounding on Leo et al.'s (2021) thoughts, Maglalang et al. (2021) explored the compounding effects of career and family demands among nurses and patient care associates. Maglalang et al. (2021) further explored workplace flexibility and the need and demands of family and job burnout and found that health care workers with a heavy workload felt strained; workers with the perception of low flexibility in the workplace experienced burnout. Wigert and Agrawal (2018) posited that employee burnout affects the performance of individuals and the organization. Reith (2018) found that burnout had a decreasing effect on the quality of care patients received and an increase in physician shortage. The consequences of job burnout were medical errors, increased mortality rates, hospital transmitted infections, alcohol abuse, unethical behaviors, poor patient satisfaction ratings, and an increase in workers' turnover intentions (Reith, 2018).

To help combat or minimize job burnout in health care workers, leaders should communicate with workers, support them, and promote self-care and wellbeing

incentives. Wigert and Agrawal (2018) identified unfair treatment at work such as favoritism, bias, lack of pay, a workload that is not manageable, unclear roles, lack of communication and support of managers, and time constraints and deadlines for the job and task completion as five top leading factors of employee burnout; confirming that managers should set and communicate their expectations, remove barriers, and collaborate with employees to offer support and motivation to ensure employees do their best. Implementing strategies and preventive measures beforehand can prevent or reverse burnout. Addressing job burnout and alerting health care workers of potential barriers, and factors leading to job burnout, and introducing strategies and coping skills may reduce medical errors, and negative personal and professional qualities such as substance abuse and low patient quality of care (De Hert, 2020). To help improve workers' burnout with the job and increase patient quality of care, managers should implement policies that modify several factors that are a priority for workers by creating workplace flexibility.

Generational Differences

Motivation levels, needs, and values differ because of the various ages of employees in the workforce. Using Herzberg's two-factor theory as a variable to discover which motivational factors best predicted senior employees' job satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and turnover intentions, Ann and Blum (2020) hypothesized that recognition and doing the job had a positive significant effect on job satisfaction; Significantly affecting job satisfaction were technical supervision, personal life, status, and job security (Ann & Blum, 2020). Job satisfaction negatively influences employees' turnover intentions. Smith and Garriety (2020) conducted a study to understand

generational differences and similarities by examining diversity from each generation's perspective to explore ways to engage those employees and bridge the five generational needs in the workforce. Strategically implementing policies and designing incentives and rewards targeting each generation is important for HRM to help retain employees. To help motivate and influence employees' behaviors to increase performance and job satisfaction and reduce turnover rate, managers should have a knowledge and understanding of preferences, needs and drivers as it relates to each generation (Bussin et al., 2019). Leaders that understand and engage each generation can help to retain and reduce turnover in the organization. Incorporating policies that address flexibility and understanding the needs and values of all generational perspectives in the workplace promotes diversity and sustainability.

Organizational Culture

Lack of resources and poor leadership poses negative organizational behaviors and attitudes. According to Schein (1985), culture guides and directs employee behaviors. Leaders in various roles can dictate culture; culture may also dictate leaders' roles (Schein, 1985). Norman and Johnson (2022) like Schein posited that when managers create a sense of belonging for employees, provide an environment to educate and train employees on culture, and be mindful of their own bias creates an atmosphere that is inviting, and may help to attract, engage, and retain candidates and employees from various backgrounds.

Effective communication aids in building trust, respect, and engaging employees. Communication has many functions in organizations. Verbal or written communication

helps leaders to relay important tasks, activities, roles, and responsibilities to employees; aids in team building, explaining, and implementing policies to address rewards and recognition; and may reduce or increase turnover intentions (Holzwarth et al., 2020). When sharing similar thoughts, Kuuyelleh (2021) stressed communication of all forms creates an opportunity for open communication in which employees have a voice to build commitment, loyalty, and trust within the organization. Open communication aids in enhancing peer and employee relationships, allows managers to relay and clarify what they expect from employees, provides feedback regularly, reduces conflicts and misunderstandings, and helps to increase staff performance and reduce employee turnover intentions positively.

Operating with a lack of resources, and poor or little guidance from leaders creates a toxic atmosphere with little or no trust, a decrease in motivation, and the potential for unethical behaviors, increasing turnover rates and organization costs (Kuuyelleh, 2021). Wallin et al. (2022) shared that when financial resources within the organization are lacking, employees' behavior may change; Increasing the risk of decreasing employee motivation and patient quality of care. Employees' workloads and responsibilities increase when resources and funding are scarce (Wallin et al., 2022). Operating with a lack of resources may potentially increase employees' intent to leave. The lack of communication from leaders, lack of follow-up, and poor scheduling, and planning increase health care workers' stress (Wallin et al., 2022). Working in an atmosphere of negativity, including conflicts, gossip, slander, and jealousy, affects employees' work ethics, behavior, and attitude. A negative or hostile work environment

influences employees' level of motivation and job performance (Rasool et al., 2021). According to Rasool et al. (2021), a negative work environment consisting of rumors, gossip, and bullying may lead to stress, anxiety, and depression and may affect employee performance and organizational culture. Leaders should implement incentives to engage and support employees to create a positive and productive work environment.

Training and Education

Leaders increase employee retention and reduce turnover costs by providing various employee training. Doing so may enhance employees' work performance by improving the employees' skills, knowledge, and behavior. Ju and Li (2019) followed 1,531 individuals from 2003 to 2014 to explore the effects of training, job tenure, education, and job skills on employee turnover intentions and hypothesized that employee training significantly affected employee retention. Employee training can be on or off the job or on a distance learning platform. Rohatinsky et al. (2020) conducted a study of 30 registered nurse mentors and mentees volunteers recruited to help describe and evaluate a rural-specific pilot mentorship program that was implemented to ease workplace transition, strengthen community connections, and encourage recruitment and retention in rural areas. Rohatinsky et al. (2020) identified connection, communication, and support as crucial considerations when implementing rural mentorship programs. Mentorship can be beneficial to support health care providers working in rural environments. To be successful and sustainable in rural areas, mentorship programs require support and commitment from employees, health care organizations and facilities, and members of the community.

Fostering communications, connecting with, and supporting employees on various levels helps to build trust and respect and can help to retain and motivate employees. Mentorship consisting of communication and having a connection between the mentor, mentee, and the community had a positive effect on the recruitment and retention of health care providers (Rohatinsky et al., 2020). In a slightly different perspective and approach on factors that influenced nursing staff retention from various levels of needs, Chiao et al. (2021) explored and investigated whether medical humanities education was associated with the retention of nursing staff. Chiao et al. (2021) found that incorporating and implementing the six levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs by providing a regular day shift system and schedule, education, and training, cultivating an environment that values lifelong learning, tailoring a promotion path, strengthening communication skills, and funding further research helped with improving nursing staff retention.

Tailoring educational programs according to diverse groups of nurses using their years of work experience to enhance the effectiveness of medical humanities education aids leaders in retaining employees (Chiao et al., 2021). Implementing and providing mentoring programs increases providers' availability and aid in increasing the likelihood that the community residents will receive timely access to care that will result in positive patient outcomes and overall greater community health. Increasing exposure in rural areas helps with employee recruitment.

Thill et al. (2019) conducted a study on the rural immersion experience that is part of a nursing program strategy to attract nurses to rural areas. Consisting of a day-long tour of nursing students as participants visiting various health care facilities in rural areas

in which they were exposed to diverse populations and services to learn about the

challenges and rewards of working in a rural setting, Thill et al. (2019) found that the

day-long training tour influenced participants' decision to work in rural and underserved

areas. Implementing immersion programs to create a partnership with health care

facilities and medical training institutions or as part of an undergraduate nursing program

in which communities and educational institutes collaborate to provide similar programs

aids in recruiting health care workers in rural areas.

Compensation

Employee pay is a factor in determining candidates' and employees' decisions to

accept, stay or leave a position. Swami and Scott (2021) examined the effects of policy

reform on financial incentives that were designed to improve the recruitment and

retention of physicians in rural areas and access to their services. Creating financial

incentives as a basis to measure the waiting times to receive an appointment to see a non-

urgent General Practitioner helped decrease the wait time. The findings showed an

increase in emergency room and hospital visits and an increased turnover cost because of

the shortage. Aligning with Swami and Scott (2021), Yan and Sun (2022) conducted their

study using survey results from 722 physicians in rural areas to investigate how to

anticipate physicians' intent to leave and facilitate strategies in advance to retain

physicians in rural areas. Yan and Sun (2022) found that increasing salary, socialization,

and decreasing work hours and workload were successful strategies for retaining

physicians in rural areas. Managers should consider salary for each position to help with

employee recruitment and retention. Each position has various duties and responsibilities,

and each candidate and employee have a different level of experience. Strategically setting salaries to attract candidates to open positions and rewarding current employees with financial incentives or salary increases is an option for HRM to consider when implementing salary policies to recruit and retain employees.

Job Satisfaction

Receiving recognition and incentives increases employee performance, productivity, and behavior while at work. Employees' experiences while on the job can determine satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the job. According to Sheraz et al., (2019), job satisfaction is an employee's positive behavior, attitude, and performance on the job. In monitoring employees' level of job satisfaction, organization leaders can tailor strategies to retain employees (Sheraz et al, 2019). Zhang and Li (2020) found that communicating with peers, obtaining feedback from leaders, and receiving financial and non-financial awards were influential factors in employees' achieving job satisfaction.

When investigating the relevance of factors such as job satisfaction and individual competencies such as emotional competence for organizational commitment in health care professionals, Stamouli and Gerbeth (2021) found that emotional competence increased the relationship between job satisfaction and commitment and that health care workers with high emotional competence were able to deal with areas of dissatisfaction without negatively affecting organizational commitment. Emotional Intelligence is a prerequisite to developing emotional competence. According to Stamouli and Gerbeth (2021), building patient and provider partnerships improved communication skills and increased patient satisfaction.

Emotional Intelligence awareness and teaching in organizations aid managers in displaying or expressing support for individuals to create opportunities to achieve success and sustainability (Johnson, 2015). Johnson (2015) posited that emotional intelligence endeavors promote an environment supporting diversity. Emotional competence increases employees' job satisfaction and commitment (Stamouli & Gerbeth, 2021). Fostering emotional competence, increasing, and improving job satisfaction aids leaders in reducing employee turnover intentions and increasing employee performance. If one does not enjoy performing the job or the compensation for doing the job, satisfaction will not occur, and turnover intentions may increase.

Human Resource Management

HRM's role is important to organizations. An effective HRM department can help provide structure and guidance to help organizations achieve organizational success (Sriviboon & Jermsittiparsert, 2019). HRM must advertise jobs to attract candidates and provide incentives to retain current employees. Hiring individuals to retain for the long term is important and critical for HRM and organizational leaders (Kuuyelleh, 2021). Kuuyelleh (2021) posited that to avoid recruiting and hiring unsuitable candidates, HRM should consider the culture in the organization, policies, and systems outlining compensation, position requirements, and candidates' skills. Selecting the best candidates, and providing rewards, incentives, and appropriate pay for the duties of the job helps to retain employees, and reduce turnover intentions (Kuuyelleh, 2021).

To investigate how HRM practices can enhance service quality and integrate a framework of the perception of HRM concerning employee commitment related to the

quality of service and performance, Sasongko (2018) collected data from 270 employees and found that selected HRM practices and strategies successfully motivated employees and improved the quality of care and overall employee performance. HRM should conduct listening sessions with employees to obtain their opinions, feedback, and concerns as it relates to COVID-19 and the work environment; doing so may help to engage and retain employees.

To retain employees in times of crisis, HRM and leaders should communicate with employees to understand concerns and issues employees may have. Davidescu et al. (2020), like Sasongko (2018) conducted a study focusing on HRM and addressing the need to redesign HRM to incorporate sustainability, which is an extension of strategic human resources but with an innovative approach. Constant changes in the labor market, the Coronavirus crisis, restrictions, and the process and procedure for returning to work in the future are several relevant factors that HRM should address to ease employees' doubts and concerns (Davidescu et al., 2020). Many factors, especially amid a pandemic, will affect recruiting and retaining health care workers in rural areas; creating a critical need for innovative strategies to attract and retain employees.

Rural Areas

Classification of an area according to the population and time it takes to commute to a metropolitan area. A place with various meanings depending on specific guidelines from the federal government. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), it is estimated that there will be a shortage of 18 million trained, motivated, and skilled health care workers by 2030. Government and policymakers face challenges securing

access to health services in rural and remote areas. Because of multiple definitions, Childs et al. (2022) found while conducting their study that numerous definitions of rural are challenging and affect communities in several ways depending on federal determination and classification. The population's size, density, and distance to the metro area are some of the stipulations to determine if an area is rural or not.

According to WHO (2021), rural populations are poor and less healthy, estimated 2 billion without access to appropriate health services. Factors causing this gap include socioeconomic status, demographic or economic barriers, transportation, telecommunication, and cost to access services (WHO, 2021). Obtaining resources is challenging for rural areas depending on the agency's guidelines. Childs et al. (2022) posited that not precisely defining rural effects funding, allocation of resources, implementation of policies, and studies about the culture and demographic of the individuals in the community could harm their health and wellbeing. In reference to Isserman's (2005) study, Childs et al. (2022) revealed that the definition of rural varied with agencies and geographical areas, increasing ambiguity. Rural area challenges are recruiting and retaining appropriate amounts and levels of health care workers, educational and training opportunities, the economy, governing systems, successful planning, and policy implementation.

The WHO (2021) proposed a guideline to formulate policies on health workforce development, attraction, recruitment, and retention in rural and remote areas targeting national and subnational authorities and policymakers, as well as associations relating to health workforce occupations, health system, and human resource managers, rural and

remote communities, education, training institutes, employers of health workers, funding agencies, researchers, and health care workers. A framework and six core questions aid in selecting intervention bundles to evaluate strategies appropriate to retain health care workers in rural areas. The intervention bundles should include relevance, acceptability, feasibility, affordability, and effectiveness to measure the effects of development, attractiveness, recruitment, and retention of the retention strategies (WHO, 2021). The variations of definitions of rural is instrumental when implementing policies on health promotions, health care services, costs, educational and training programs, and recruiting and retaining health care workers.

Health Care Workers

Improving health and providing care to community members is critical in reducing morbidity and mortality rates. Individuals serving in a variety of roles and position taking care of others to reduce emergency room visits and promote overall health are at risk of mental and physical challenges, intentions to leave current positions, and add to the increasing number of shortages. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2022) defines health care workers as individuals in a health care setting with direct and indirect exposure to patients and infectious materials, such as nurses, assistants, physicians, management, administrative, clerical, and housekeeping personnel Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2022). Health care workers are individuals who deliver care and services directly or indirectly to the sick and ailing (Mohanty et al., 2019). Individuals who provide a service to others in a health care facility may receive compensation or serve in volunteer roles.

To understand the potential positive benefits of employer-supported volunteerism on facilities in rural areas, Faryle and Rohlman (2019) conducted a study and found that allowing volunteers, especially older individuals, improved quality of life, reduced morbidity, and higher self-rated health. In another study, Faryle and Rohlman (2019) found that employer-supported volunteerism increased employee engagement, recruitment and retention, and productivity. To help create a successful organization, leaders should understand the factors that lead to employee turnover intentions and create and use various strategies to remove, reduce or diminish turnover intention and attract and retain employees.

Transition

In this qualitative multiple case study, I explored successful strategies HR managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Section 1 consisted of my explanation of the elements of the foundation for this study including the background of the problem, problem, and purpose, population, and sampling, nature of the study, research question, interview questions, peer review articles on the conceptual framework, which is the basis and lens of the phenomenon for this study. Additionally, section 1 included definitions of unique terms in the study, definition of assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and a synthesis and analysis of professional and academic review of literature as it related to employee motivation and job satisfaction, employee recruitment and retention, strategies and factors that hinder the recruitment of health care workers, health care workers, and rural areas. Section 1 concluded with a synthesis of

most of the literature within the last five years that related to exploring successful strategies HRM use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas.

Section 2 consisted of my restatement of the purpose statement, a review of the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection techniques, and data analysis, and concluded with a discussion on reliability, and validity, a transition, and summary of important points in the study along with an overview of Section 3 which included the presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, social change, the recommendation for action, further research for future study, reflections and conclusion.

Section 2: The Project

This section of the study includes details describing the reason or purpose of this study. Evidence for the method and design used to explore HRM strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas will be provided. The population, my role and responsibility for participants, the selection and security process, protocol, guidelines, and consent for interview participants will also be discussed in this section. Section 2 consisted of my definition and description of data collection instruments and techniques used in this study as well as details related to the ethical basis for the research.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore successful strategies some HRM uses to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. The target population for this study was three health care managers who work in rural area health care or medical facilities in Louisiana and were successful in implementing strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. The results of this study could influence positive social change. Communities could benefit from the information in this multiple case study because the implication for social change includes creating and implementing strategies to increase the recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural areas. Reducing turnover rates and costs may improve patient quality and affordability of health care services. When the employee retention rate is high, the organization's turnover expenses and costs are low, creating an opportunity for organizational leaders to allocate hospital savings to provide education and prevention measures to patients in rural areas. Increasing employee recruitment and retention in rural

areas could create a positive work environment and better work-life balance for employees. By improving patients' access to care, patients would receive better quality of care and education, which could aid in reducing emergency room visits and morbidity and mortality rates.

Role of the Researcher

I, as the researcher, was the primary instrument to find participants, develop interview questions, organize, and conduct interviews, collect, and synthesize the data. According to Clark and Veale` (2018), the qualitative researcher's role as the main instrument of the study is to collect and analyze data and access the participant's natural environment. As the researcher, I aimed to explore strategies HRM uses to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. I do not work in a health care or medical facility, nor do any family members or friends.

To help reduce bias, I do not have a personal relationship with any of the participants. I do not know or have direct knowledge of HRM recruitment and retention strategies. Researchers use The Belmont Report (1979) as a guide for informed consent and respecting participants. Following the guidelines from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) helped me to uphold confidentiality and conduct ethical interviews. Using the interview protocol helped me be consistent and ask the same questions during each interview. The interview protocol helps researchers collect valid and reliable data (Yin, 2018). All data were the results of participants' responses to interview questions, my journal notes, and secondary documents.

Participants

The participants for this study were three managers who were successful in developing and implementing strategies to recruit and retain health care workers. To be eligible to participate in this study, participants should align with the study topic of recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural areas. To meet eligibility requirements for this study, participants must work in rural Louisiana area hospitals or medical facilities with a minimum of 5 years of experience and be instrumental in developing, administering, and implementing strategies to hire health care workers. Using public resources including the internet and website for each of the three organizations helped with obtaining names, phone numbers and email information for three potential participants who met the eligibility criteria. Recruitment of participants is successful when a gatekeeper, someone the target population trusts in the organization, agrees to support and help with recruiting participants (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

Upon receiving approval from Walden University's IRB, purposeful sampling was used to select participants. To gain access to participants, I called and sent an introductory email with informed consent to eight organizations to recruit potential participants. Purposeful sampling helps researchers in selecting potential participants from the target population that have experience and are knowledgeable; subject matter experts (Campbell et al., 2020). Conducting an introductory phone call and sending emails (see Appendix C) to each participant helps researchers to introduce themselves, establish rapport, build trust and mutual respect. Building trust is not easy but is important to make sure that the collection of data is accurate (Nunan, 2020). A formal

invitation was emailed to each participant (see Appendix C) to include the consent form for review and possible acceptance.

If participants agreed to participate in the study, they were asked to respond to my email with "I consent." After I received consent emails, I called each participant to discuss a date and time to conduct the semistructured interview, and their preference of face to face or video conferencing. Two participants elected a video conferencing interview, and one participant elected face to face interview. To align with the purpose of the study, I verified that each participant met the eligibility criteria.

To help establish a working relationship with study participants, researchers transparently and explicitly provide any information and answer any questions that may arise to have participants become comfortable with the process. Recruiting success starts with trust and support from others in the organization, a gatekeeper (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Researchers must be mindful and respectful of the participant's time. DeJonckheere and Vaugh (2019) shared that respecting participants helps to validate the protocol of conducting research. To align with the research question, purposeful sampling was used to select three managers that are subject matter experts in recruiting and retaining health care workers in rural areas. Purposeful sampling improves the quality and reliability of the data and results of the study by selecting participants who will present appropriate and pertinent information (Campbell et al., 2020).

Reviewing the Belmont Report helped me obtain an understanding of the guidelines and requirements to make sure I demonstrated and adhered to the respect and trust for and towards each participant, as they were integral to success in completing this

study. Using the interview protocol as a guide and asking each participant the same questions helped to avoid bias. Each participant was informed that they were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. A location free of noise and distraction was used to interview each participant. Displaying trust, providing an environment conducive to collecting data, being respectful when conducting interviews, making eye contact, and demonstrating active listening skills displayed my respect toward each participant. Being candid about my lack of knowledge on strategies some managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas assured participants, I have no preconceptions.

Research Method and Design

Researchers should select the best method and design to obtain relevant and bias free data relating to the phenomenon of their topic. According to Johnson et al. (2020), to obtain rigor in qualitative research, researchers should make sure that the research design, method, and conclusion are explicit and free of bias and aligns with the research question. After considering the different research methods, the qualitative research method using multiple case study was most appropriate to explore successful strategies HRM use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas.

Research Method

A qualitative multiple case study was the research method and design for this study exploring successful HRM recruitment and retention strategies. Strijker et al. (2020) identified qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods as three research methods. According to Yin (2018), researchers use the qualitative method to identify, explore, and observe lived experiences to gather a deeper understanding of a phenomenon. I asked six

open-ended questions to explore human resource managers' successful strategies for recruiting and retaining health care workers in rural areas. According to Tenny et al. (2021), researchers use close ended questions in quantitative research focusing on testing hypotheses on variable relationships or differences, which is not the focus of this study. The mixed method is a blend of quantitative and qualitative attributes that allows researchers to collect and analyze data (Yin, 2018). This method was inappropriate. I did not use any quantitative components. The qualitative method helped identify, determine, and define successful strategies to recruit and retain health care workers.

Research Design

A case study design was used for this study. Case study, phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative are four possible qualitative research designs I considered for this qualitative study exploring HRM strategies for recruiting and retaining employees. Using a case study design allows researchers to explore a phenomenon through various data sources, collect data from participants, and identify emerging themes (Saunders et al., 2015). A multiple case study design was appropriate to explore human resource managers' strategies to recruit and retain employees. The use of interview questions, interview summary transcripts, journal notes, member checking, and secondary data including job announcements, recruitment materials, and a summary of results from employee exit interviews and feedback that were provided by participants were used to answer the research questions. According to Tenny et al. (2021), researchers use phenomenology design to capture the participants' lived experiences. Phenomenology was not the design for this study, as the information is solely from the participant's

experience. Some data or essential facts may be left out and pose bias. Using

phenomenology design was inappropriate. Ethnography allows researchers to explore

social and cultural aspects; even though ethnography interprets participants' behavior in

cultural aspects, this design was not appropriate for the study because I am not studying a

particular cultural group. Narrative design is the details of a story from the perspective of

the participants. This design was also not the objective and purpose of this study. Using

multiple case studies design was most effective for this study.

Achieving data saturation is when the researcher cannot yield new information

applicable to the topic; reaching data saturation is the end goal (DeJonckheere & Vaughn,

2019). According to Fusch and Ness (2015), not achieving data saturation affects the

quality and validity of the study. Data saturation was achieved after I interviewed three

managers who were successful in recruiting and retaining health care workers in Southern

Louisiana rural areas medical facilities.

<center>**Population and Sampling**</center>

Sample size and target population are important to collect data to answer research

questions. Purposeful sampling was the method I used to select three managers.

Purposeful sampling is appropriate for qualitative researchers and improves the quality

and reliability of the data and results of the study by selecting participants who will

present relevant and pertinent information (Campbell et al., 2020). The participants who

were selected from the target population were knowledgeable and had at least 5 years of

experience implementing successful recruitment and retention strategies in rural area

medical facilities in Louisiana. Purposeful sampling was the most appropriate for

selecting participants with management experience and success with implementing

strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. I conducted interviews

in an area or environment that was private and conducive to receiving relevant data and

added value to the study's results. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. To help

achieve data saturation, an interview was conducted with three managers who in the last

5 years have been successful in recruiting and retaining health care workers. Researchers

achieve data saturation when the collection of data is adequate, repeated, and there is no

new data or need to obtain additional coding (Fusch & Ness, 2017). Data saturation was

achieved after interviewing three participants and no new data or information was found.

Ethical Research

Starting the interview process with an ethical attitude helps to incorporate respect

for participants and is a critical component in completing this study. Following the steps

and guidelines of IRB regulations, and ethical academic standards while conducting this

study helped to ensure that participants were not harmed, and their identity was kept

confidential. Walden's IRB's purpose is to protect participants' welfare in research

studies. I adhered to compliance regulations throughout this study. The National Institute

of Health offers training on protecting human research participants. I completed the

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative on November 5, 2022. After receiving IRB

approval and approval number, the search for participants began. The IRB approval

number for this study is 12-27-22-1069402 and will expire on 12-27-23. After receiving

IRB approval, the process started by conducting a search on the internet and the

organization's website for potential participants, and by emailing potential participants

who met the eligibility requirements the introduction script, and consent form (see

Appendix C), and purposefully selecting three participants that responded to my email

with "I consent." Before each interview, a brief discussion was conducted to review the

purpose of the study and the contents of the consent form and let each participant know

they will not receive any compensation or incentives for participating in the study. I

reassured each participant that their answers and responses are confidential and had no

bearing on their job (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Each participant was advised that

participation in this study was voluntary, no incentives or compensation would be

received, and they may withdraw from the study at any given time verbally or written,

with or without reason.

To ensure I upheld ethical standards, no data was collected before obtaining IRB

approval. After IRB approval, I searched the internet and the organization's website to

obtain the contact information of potential participants. I sent an introductory email and

informed consent to eight organizations to recruit potential participants. If potential

participants were willing to participate in this study, they were asked to reply to my email

with "I consent." After receiving "I consent" emails, purposeful sampling was used to

select three participants who meet the eligibility criteria for this study. The informed

consent from The Belmont Report interview protocol was my guide (see Appendix A).

To protect the participant's identity and privacy and ensure confidentiality, a coding

system was implemented using a unique number code for each participant. P01 was

assigned to Participant 1, P02 to Participant 2, and P03 to Participant 3. After completing

and finalizing the data collection process, all information including journal notes and

audio recordings related to this study was secured. In adhering to and following Walden

University guidelines and requirements, all items were placed in a fireproof safe and will

be kept for 5 years to protect participants' rights and privacy. After 5 years, all

documentation will be physically shredded, and all recordings and any data or software

applications used for this study will be erased.

Data Collection Instruments

I was the researcher and the primary data collection instrument for this study. As

the interviewer, data was collected for use in this study by reviewing, gleaning and

analyzing data from multiple sources to identify common themes. Data was gleaned from

semistructured interviews, interview transcript summaries, member checking summaries

of interviews, and my journal notes. I asked each participant for available documents that

were mentioned during the interview session. Each participant emailed me a summary of

results from employee exit surveys, Gallup survey results, employee retention rate, and

community needs assessments. Participants also mentioned job announcements,

recruiting incentives, testimonials, community involvement and partnership,

organizational rewards and recognition, and community health needs assessments were

available on the organization's website. I found and reviewed the documents when I

searched each organization's website. Data was collected from interview transcript

summaries received from semistructured interviews with each participant by asking six

open ended questions (see Appendix B), member checking, and reviewing secondary data

to explore strategies some HRM use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural

areas. After receiving IRB approval, I searched on the internet and searched public

websites for rural area medical facilities located in the Southern region of Louisiana to

obtain contact information for potential participants. After obtaining the contact

information, I sent an email (see Appendix C) and called eight organizations to recruit

participants for this study. If a participant agreed to participate in the study, they were

asked to respond to the email with "I consent." Participants responded to my email with

"I consent" within 3 business days. Each participant received a phone call to discuss and

select a specific date and time to conduct the interview and select a method to conduct the

interview. Each participant received a phone call to confirm the meeting. Two of the

three participants elected a video conferencing interview via Zoom, and one participant

elected face to face interview and was given the address to a local library along with the

room number of the private room that I reserved for the time agreed to conduct the

interview. During the face-to-face interview, social distancing was practiced, and masks

were worn.

To help make each participant comfortable, I discussed the purpose of the study,

and the contents of the informed consent as outlined in Appendix A. I also assured

participants that their privacy will be protected and that their participation was voluntary.

Each participant was advised that they may withdraw from this study at any given time.

To help reduce bias, no incentives or compensation was given to participants for

participating in this study. Each interview was approximately 45 minutes. All participants

were asked the same questions. To enhance the reliability and validity of the data

collected through each face to face and video conference interview, member checking

was used. A transcript was sent via email to each participant for their review and

approval. Member checking was conducted to allow participants to review the

transcription of their answers and my interpretation of the answers, modify, elaborate

more, or approve. Participants' responses and approval of summary transcripts were

received within 3 days. Data collection is valuable to obtain information to answer the

research question of what strategies some HRM use to recruit and retain health care

workers in rural areas? To help with consistency, and avoid distraction from the purpose

of the study, the interview protocol (see Appendix C) was used. Each participant was

asked the same interview questions (see Appendix B).

Data Collection Technique

This study is a qualitative multiple case study. As the primary data collector, my

approach and technique to collect data for this study was the use of semistructured

interviews using open-ended interview questions (see Appendix B). Two interviews were

conducted via Zoom video conferencing, and one interview was conducted face to face in

a private room at a local library while practicing social distancing and wearing masks. I

collected data by reviewing interview summary transcripts, member checking, my journal

notes, and asking participants to review available organization documents they mentioned

during the interview session which included a summary of results from employee exit

surveys, Gallup survey results, employee retention rate, and community needs

assessments. The participants emailed the requested documents and mentioned job

announcements, recruiting incentives, testimonials, community involvement and

partnership, organizational rewards and recognition, and community needs assessments

were available on the organization's website. I found and reviewed those documents

when searching each organization's website. After receiving approval from each participant, data was collected simultaneously using my voice memo application on my Apple iPhone 11, my 16 GB mini Evistr V508 digital voice recorder, and journal notes of participants' emphasis when responding to questions and observance of body movement and gestures. I used the interview protocol (see Appendix B) as my guide to ask each participant the same questions in the same order. Microsoft Word Online was used to transcribe the recorded data into written format.

Researchers using semistructured interviews in qualitative research may receive valuable data. Some advantages of using semistructured interviews according to Kakilla (2021) are researchers engaging participants in depth conversations helps to generate new ideas, and flexibility in coding themes, and may include nonverbal communication. Researchers may conduct follow up on verbal and nonverbal responses such as laughter and silence to obtain quality data that is hidden to help with data analysis and themes extraction. A 45 minute interview was conducted with all three participants in which six open ended questions were asked. Notes were used to capture participants' observed behaviors, emphasis and gestures when responding to the interview questions.

I practiced using the Zoom videoconferencing platform to be comfortable with setting up meetings and conducting interviews before scheduling interview appointments. Deterding and Waters (2018) shared that a disadvantage to using technology in semistructured interviews, researchers may lose data, because of language barriers, loss of translation, or inadequate response to the topic. Researchers may have technical difficulties with using various software tools. Gray et al. (2020) suggested researchers

spend time learning how to set up and conduct recording sessions to become proficient

before conducting interviews. Conducting interviews during the COVID-19 pandemic

requires researchers to follow safety precautions, and social distancing, therefore using

virtual platforms may help with meeting those requirements. I conducted two interviews

via Zoom videoconferencing platform, and one interview face to face practicing social

distancing and wearing masks. According to Gray et al. (2020), using technology may

help researchers obtain more data, and access participants from various geographical

locations. Using technology including video conferencing to conduct semistructured

interviews is helpful to researchers during a global pandemic.

Data Organization Technique

To keep track, maintain data, and ensure the security and protection of all

documents, and electronic communications, each interview document was appropriately

labeled and secured in password protected folders. Secondary documents received from

each participant and documents from each organization's website are secured in

password protected folders on my computer. My computer is password protected and is

only accessible to me. Each participant received a unique identifier. I assigned P01 to

Participant 1, P02 to Participant 2, P03 to Participant 3, and so forth to ensure

confidentiality. To make sure I captured and understood all comments and responses of

participants, I took notes in a journal during the interviews and listened to each recorded

interview several times before transcribing. I read each transcript line by line to make

sure that I captured each participant's response to the questions before sending the

transcripts to each participant for their review to conduct member checking. After

completing and finalizing the data collection process, and member checking, all notes, documents, and recordings relating to this study have been secured in a fireproof safe and will be kept for 5 years to protect participants' rights and privacy. After 5 years, all data, documents, journal notes, recordings, and software applications used in this study will be physically shredded and erased.

Data Analysis

In this qualitative multiple case study, my approach was to explore HRM strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. After interviewing participants, I used methodological triangulation, member checking, and Yin's data analysis five step process to thematically analyze and interpret the findings from the data received from the interviews, interview transcript summaries, member checking, and my journal notes. I asked each participant to review any available secondary documents from the organization that was mentioned during their interview session. Each participant willingly emailed a summary of results from employee exit surveys, Gallup survey results, employee retention rate, and community needs assessments. Participants also mentioned job announcements, recruiting incentives, recruitment materials, testimonials, community involvement and partnership and organizational rewards and recognitions were available documents on the organization's website. When searching each organization's website, I was able to find and review the aforementioned documents.

The purpose of analyzing this data was to identify and explore strategies managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was used as the framework to analyze data and develop codes and themes

according to the five levels of humans' physiological and psychological needs identified to motivate employees. The data was thematically analyzed. Pay, compensation, rewards, recognition, communication, trust, workload, hours worked, family, age, stereotypes, and work life balance were the most commonly repeated words, trends and themes identified. Moon (2019) found methodological triangulation to be beneficial in increasing validity and enhancing the understanding of the phenomenon of the study; the coding, validating and interpreting process. The process of identifying common themes consisted of using thematic analysis and uploading the recordings to NVivo 12 for interpretation of data received from the open-ended questions, reviewing, and sending transcripts to participants for verification, journal notes, and secondary data (Alam, 2021).

I collected, interpreted and transcribed all data. Member checking was used to confirm the accuracy of the interpreted data. I transcribed the participant's response after I converted the recording from the Evistr mini audio recorder and Apple iPhone voice memo application into a written format using Microsoft Word Online. I presented my findings from managers participating in this study. According to Yin (2018), the five steps to analyze data consist of compiling; researchers meaningful organizing of the data, disassembling the data; researchers process to code data, reassembling the data; researchers use of data to locate themes or patterns, interpreting the meaning; researchers provide meaning and reporting; researchers interpret data. Using computer assisted tools such as NVivo 12 helps researchers to organize and code large volumes of data (Yin, 2018). Using NVivo 12 software helped with disassembling, assembling data and coding themes from the collection of interview data. After thematically analyzing, coding, and

grouping the developed themes as they related to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, I used

NVivo software to match and identify the emerging themes. When examining and

interpreting the data, I related the themes and strategies to Maslow's hierarchy of needs

and literature review. In conclusion, a presentation was given on my interpretations of the

themes as they related to successful HRM strategies for recruiting and retaining health

care workers in rural areas.

Triangulation improves validity and reliability in qualitative research (Moon,

2019). Triangulation helps researchers understand and comprehend the phenomena of the

study (Moon, 2019). In data triangulation, researchers use multiple sources to collect data

(Yin, 2018). Methodological triangulation is the researchers' use of multiple methods; to

provide more support than a single method (Moon, 2019). For this study, methodological

triangulation was the most appropriate form of triangulation to use when collecting data

reviewing Maslow's hierarchy of needs and literature for possible themes and strategies

related to my research question. Using thematic analysis helped with analyzing and

coding data to develop themes from semistructured interviews consisting of six open

ended questions with multiple participants, interview transcript summaries, and

reviewing available secondary documents I received in an email from each participant

that was mentioned during the interview session which consisted of a summary of results

from employee exit surveys, Gallup survey results, employee retention rate, and

community needs assessments. Participants also mentioned job announcements,

recruiting incentives, recruitment materials, testimonials, community involvement and

partnership and organizational rewards and recognitions as available documents on the

organization's website. I found and reviewed those documents when I searched the organization's website. Using methodological triangulation in addition to using NVivo 12, Word online, Microsoft Word and Excel helped with managing, organizing, and sorting data.

Reliability and Validity

Qualitative researchers aim to provide reliability and validity in their research by assessing and referencing the qualities of dependability, confirmability, credibility, and transferability (Nassaji, 2020). Researchers achieve dependability when participants duplicate findings, and the results are trustworthy (Yin, 2018). Achieving credibility and confirmability includes triangulation and member checking (Yin, 2018). I used the interview protocol (see Appendix A) to help with consistency by asking the same questions during each interview to reduce bias, and mistakes and to collect valid and reliable data to ensure reliability and validity.

Reliability

Researchers assess rigor in reporting findings in qualitative studies by incorporating a framework of trustworthiness, auditability, credibility, and transferability (TACT) (Daniel, 2018). To ensure the quality of data is valid and reliable, researchers rigorously collect, assess, analyze, interpret, and present data while minimizing bias. According to Yin (2018), member checking is a tool that involves participants reviewing summary transcripts to ensure content accuracy before publication. Member checking enhanced the reliability of the study. Interviews, member checking, and triangulation

helped to ensure and enhance dependability, and validity in my study. Following standard guidelines and protocols while conducting this study helped to achieve reliability.

Validity

An email containing a copy of the transcript was sent prior to calling each participant to review and discuss the results to obtain feedback and ensure we agreed, understood, and accepted responses to ensure that all was correct before publishing. Member checking helps achieve transactional validity, a more robust version of validity than triangulation (Caretta & Perez, 2019). Using multiple data collection methods helps to add validity and reliability to the study (Yin, 2018). Applying and using member checking helped address conformability. Methodological triangulations consisted of using semistructured interviews, member checking, and reviewing results from Gallup surveys, employee exit interviews, job announcements, community needs assessments, and organizations vision, mission and value statements. Triangulation helped to achieve data saturation (Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018), data saturation enhances the validity and dependability of the study and occurs when there are no new data. The details in the interview process helped to achieve transferability in which I can transfer the findings without compromising validity.

Transition and Summary

In this qualitative multiple case study, I explored successful strategies HR managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Section 2 included an outline of the process of conducting this study by restating the purpose statement, review of the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population

and sampling, ethical research, data collection techniques, data analysis, and concluded

with a discussion on achieving reliability, and validity. Using scholarly and seminal

works supported details within this study. A transition and summary of important points

in this study concluded section 2.

Section 3 includes a summary of my presentation of the findings, emerging

themes, application to professional practice, implication for social change from the

recommendation for action, further research for future study, my reflections, and

conclusion of the study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The objective of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore successful strategies some HRM use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. The target population for this study was three health care managers who work in rural area health care or medical facilities in Louisiana and were successful in implementing strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Three semistructured interviews were conducted with one manager from three different medical facilities who were knowledgeable and had at least 5 years of experience in developing and implementing successful recruitment and retention strategies in rural area medical facilities in the Southern Region of Louisiana.

I transcribed each interview and used Yin's five stages of data analysis to thematically analyze the data. Data were collected from transcripts from semistructured interviews, member checking summaries of interviews, my journal notes, and reviewing recruiting incentives, testimonials, community involvement and partnership, organizational rewards, and recognition documents found on each of the three organization's websites. Additional secondary data consisted of reviewing job announcements, job fair recruitment materials, and reviewing available organization documents I requested and received in an email from each participant which included a summary of results from employee exit surveys, Gallup survey results, employee retention rate, and community needs assessments.

The purpose of analyzing this data was to identify and explore strategies managers use to recruit and retain healthcare workers in rural areas. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was used as the framework to analyze data and develop codes and themes according to the five levels of humans' physiological and psychological needs identified to motivate employees. The secondary data was thematically analyzed. Pay, compensation, rewards, recognition, communication, trust, workload, hours worked, family, age, stereotypes, and work life balance were the most commonly repeated words, trends, and themes identified. Yin's (2018) five steps of data analysis are compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. NVivo qualitative data analysis software was used to complete each of the five steps. The findings include strategies managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. The four themes that emerged from the data analysis were: communication, compensation, recognition, and effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question for this study was: What successful strategies do human resource managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas? I conducted semistructured interviews in which I asked six open ended questions (see Appendix B) to three managers who had at least 5 years of experience with developing and implementing strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in Southern Louisiana rural area medical facilities. I also reviewed and analyzed company documents that were provided by participants along with the documents I found when searching the organization's website that resulted in four themes: communication, compensation,

recognition, and effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies. From these themes, strategies were identified to help managers with improving employee recruitment and retention in rural areas.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs was the conceptual framework for this study. Participants' responses and analysis of the secondary documents aligned with the conceptual framework in targeting physiological and psychological needs to motivate employees. Terry et al. (2021) shared that using Maslow's hierarchy of needs may help managers understand and target employees' needs to motivate, recruit, and retain employees. The findings in my study were used to recommend that managers' recruitment and retention strategies be timely, specific and relevant, which aligns with Stefan et al. (2020), Harrington (2021), and Abelsen et al. (2020).

Adhering to ethical protocol, I assigned codes to each participant to keep their identity private and information confidential. P01 was assigned to Participant 1, P02 to Participant 2, and P03 to Participant 3. Two interviews were conducted via individual Zoom video conferencing, and one interview was conducted face to face at a local library where I reserved a private room. I adhered to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 guidelines by practicing social distancing and wearing a mask.

Data sources used to collect data were transcripts from semistructured interviews, interview transcript summaries, member checking summaries of interviews, my journal notes, organizational documents provided by participants, and documents found on the organization's website. I asked each participant to review any available secondary documents from the organization that was mentioned during their interview session

which consisted of a summary of results from employee exit surveys, Gallup survey results, employee retention rate, and community needs assessments. Each participant emailed the requested documents. The participants mentioned that job announcements, recruiting incentives, recruitment materials, testimonials, community involvement and partnership, and organizational rewards and recognitions were available documents on the organization's website. I found and reviewed those documents when searching the organization's website.

The purpose of analyzing these data was to identify and explore strategies managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was used as the framework to analyze data and develop codes and themes according to the five levels of humans' physiological and psychological needs identified to motivate employees. The secondary data was thematically analyzed by reviewing academic literature, organizational documents provided by participants (summary of results from employee exit surveys, Gallup survey results, employee retention rate, and community needs assessments), reviewing my journal notes, and documents retrieved from company's website (recruiting incentives, testimonials, community involvement and partnership, organizational rewards and recognition, and job announcements). Pay, compensation, rewards, recognition, communication, trust, workload, hours worked, family, age, stereotypes, and work life balance were the most commonly repeated words, trends, and themes identified. Methodological triangulation, according to Moon (2019), is used by researchers to help with increasing the validity and enhancing the understanding of the phenomenon of the study; the coding, validating and interpreting process.

I applied and incorporated methodological triangulation by reviewing Maslow's hierarchy of needs and reviewing academic literature to find and identify themes and strategies related to my research question. I used those themes, the texts, and software analysis I collected from conducting semistructured interviews with three managers and by reviewing organizational documents I received from each participant (summary of results from employee exit surveys, Gallup survey results, employee retention rate, and community needs assessments). I also used methodological triangulation by reviewing my journal notes, and documents I found and reviewed on the organization's website (recruiting incentives, testimonials, community involvement and partnership, organizational rewards and recognition, and job announcements). Using the varying methods, I was able to compare and discover themes.

After receiving permission from each participant to audio record the interview, I collected data using two audio recording devices, and by reviewing secondary documents and my journal notes. I transcribed each interview recording into a written format using Microsoft Word online transcribe feature. Using terms and trends gleaned from secondary sources I asked for and received from each participant and found on each of the three organization's websites, and my journal notes helped to further collect, transcribe, and analyze data to develop themes as they relate to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Member checking was conducted by emailing each participant their interview transcript to verify the accuracy and to validate my interpretation of their responses. Data were analyzed using Yin's (2018) five step process that consisted of compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting and concluding the data. NVivo software was

used to store and interpret data. Data saturation was achieved after I conducted three interviews in which data were repeated, and no new information was found.

The themes that emerged from thematically analyzing the collected data and uploading the transcripts into NVivo software were communication, compensation, recognition, and effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies. Additional surprising subthemes that were not used were generational divide, work hours, effects of COVID-19, and work-life balance. I conducted a comparison of these findings to those of existing literature to determine if any of these findings disconfirm, confirm, or extend topic knowledge. The findings of this study align with Maslow's hierarchy of needs motivational theory to help leaders target employees' physiological and psychological needs.

Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs was the conceptual framework that guided this qualitative multiple case study. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivational pyramid model that was created with employees' physiological and psychological needs in mind. Maslow's hierarchy of needs may help some managers with implementing policies and strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas by targeting employees' physiological and psychological needs to help motivate them. Figure 1 is the reflection of the four themes that emerged.

Figure 1

Reflection of Emerging Themes
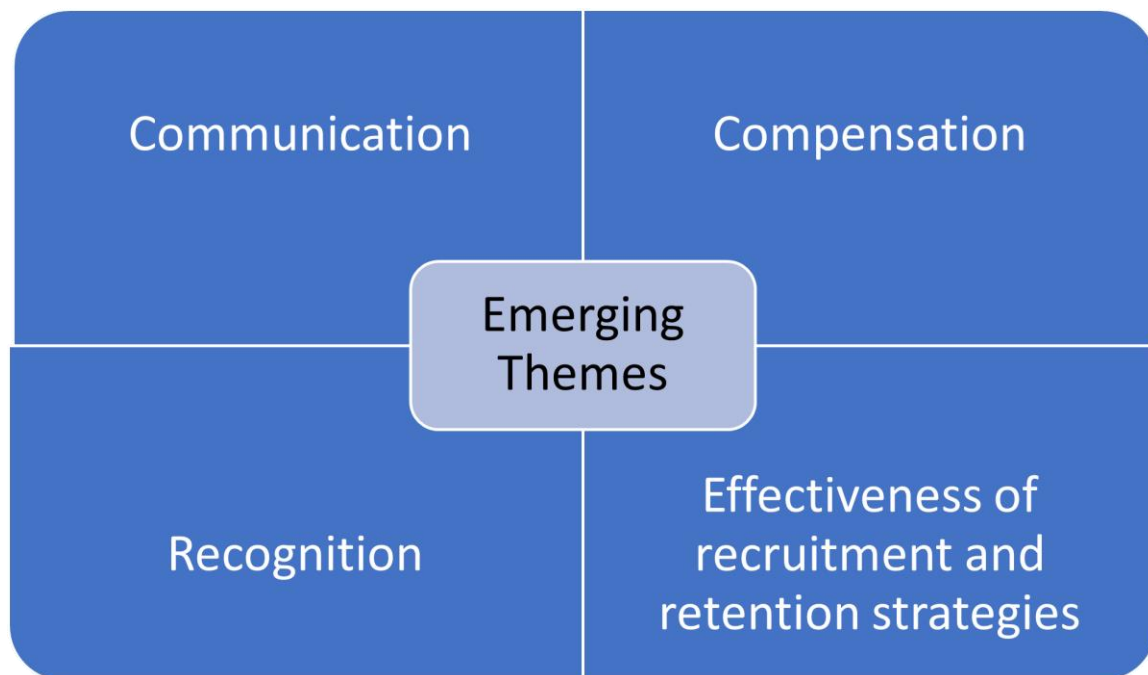
Theme 1: Communication

Communication was the first identified theme from interviews with participants, and my journal notes included observation of participants' behaviors, movement, and facial expressions when responding to interview questions. In all forms, communication helps managers with creating an opportunity for employees to be open, have a voice, and building commitment, loyalty, and trust within the organization (Kuuyelleh, 2021). All participants supported interacting with and engaging employees to help with motivation and retention strategies.

P01 stated, "talking with employees is important, and leaders should be strategic in their approach when conducting feedback sessions to avoid having employee shutdown". P01 further shared that communication is twofold, as it allows for managers

and employees to provide feedback to each other, voice their concerns and opinions, and talk about their expectations, and a plan on how to accomplish them.

In an effort to recruit applicants to fill open positions, P02 shared the importance of talking with recruits to highlight incentives. P02 stated, "Talking with recruits and highlighting available amenities in rural areas and employees bragging about their job in those areas has proven to be a successful recruiting strategy." P02 further shared that collaborating with community leaders and establishing a partnership with local colleges and universities helped with recruitment strategies. Consistent with P01 and P02 on the importance of using communication as a strategy to motivate and retain employees, P03 stated:

> Being transparent and having an open level of communication is important and key to showing employees that you care about them and are concerned; it helps them to be more open to discuss issues or concerns and let them know that they have a voice.

In addition to support of communication in findings from participants' responses to interview questions, communication was supported in findings that resulted from reviewing results from Gallup surveys, and employees exit surveys provided by participants highlighting employee's feedback on having a voice, along with receiving and providing open and honest feedback. Reviewing the organization's mission, vision, and value statement on their website also supported communication by using "transformative," "collaboration," "enduring beliefs and inspiring behaviors," "promoting health and wellness through education, and sharing vital information" in their statements.

Support of communication was also found in supporting literature. Verbal or written communication helps leaders to relay important tasks, activities, roles, and responsibilities to employees; aids in team building, explaining, and implementing policies to address rewards and recognition; and may reduce or increase turnover intentions (Holzwarth et al., 2020). Triangulating and analyzing data from participants' responses to interview questions, existing literature as well as reviewing results from Gallup surveys, employee exit interviews, and organization's mission, vision, and value statements helped with identifying and developing the communication theme.

Theme 2: Compensation

Compensation was the second identified theme that resulted from participant's response to interview questions. Aligning compensation with employees' roles, responsibilities and desires increases individual and organizational performances (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). Consistent and in alignment with existing literature, all three participants shared the effects of compensation on employee recruitment and retention. P01 stated

> When employees begin asking for a pay increase in addition to their normal yearly raise which is a percentage based on their productivity rate, that is typically where we find that they are hitting that point. It does not matter how much you increase their pay; they are not satisfied.

Not having extra finances to offer cash incentives and sign on bonuses to recruits and employees, P02's organization implemented compensation in the form of tuition reimbursement.

P02 shared:

> We have very stringent pay rules that all tie back to the Code of Governmental
> Ethics. The incentives that we use in my current and previous role is tuition
> reimbursement. P02 further stated as a premium for coming from an urban area
> to a suburban area, we look at their qualifications and offer incentives
> accordingly. P02 further shared my philosophy has been that when you're looking
> for certain competencies when you're looking for certain types of employees, you
> can either buy it or you can grow it right, so I think a lot of times in rural settings
> you're talking about growing it, because we don't have money to compete with
> private industry to buy; we just don't have the applicant pool to buy it. Most
> people do not want to leave the urban areas; so, a lot of times, you have to buy it
> and you end up hiring those individuals, possibly at a lower level, and then
> training those individuals.

With having financial flexibility like P01, and varying slightly from P02, P03 stated "Meeting people where they are while considering the area they live and or work in, and access or drive time to get too work, and other areas of interest are factors to consider when discussing pay."

Reviewing and analyzing the findings that resulted from organization's Gallup surveys, and employee exit surveys provided by each participant indicated pay, benefits, time off award, sign on bonus and incentives were factors employees shared that influenced their decision to stay or leave an organization and helped with identifying and supporting compensation as a theme. Compensation aligned with existing literature in the

factors that influence the recruitment and retention of health care workers section of my study. Selecting the best candidates, and providing rewards, incentives, and appropriate pay for the duties of the job helps to retain employees, and reduce turnover intentions (Kuuyelleh, 2021). Reviewing job postings on organizations' website and career landing page, compensation in the form of pay, sign on bonus, leave, time off awards, parental leave, benefits, and tuition was found to be leading strategy organizations use to recruit and retain employees. Compensation was supported by using participant's interview responses, reviewing literature and results from exit interviews, Gallup surveys, and job announcements.

Theme 3: Recognition

The third theme identified was recognition. Employees who receive recognition from leaders for their efforts are more confident in their abilities (Heathfield, 2019). All participants acknowledged that employee recognition helps with increasing performance, job satisfaction and improving job retention.

P01 stated "There is a quote that I like, which is what gets recognized gets replicated. When somebody does something good, shout them out, send an e-mail to your whole staff letting them know what the employee did." P01 shared "we got to recognize their performance; when they get recognized they tend to repeat those actions, or whatever they did."

P02 shared a different perspective from P01. P02 stated, "Recognition is different in Federal and State organizations, and in private versus public sectors."

P02 shared:

because of various limitations, leaders are to be strategic and creative with

recognition and rewards, especially since financial rewards are not an option;

providing in house training to include tailoring a position to accommodate none

licensed employees to work with licensed employees, giving shout outs, having

recognition ceremony are alternative options.

P03 stated

"Giving recognition when it is due and deserved is a big thing and helps a lot with

employee engagement and performance, a great motivation strategy."

Recognizing employees for their hard work may serve as a strategy to motivate

others. Recognition is supported in the findings that resulted from participants' interview

responses. Additional support on using recognition as a theme resulted from findings

when reviewing Gallup survey results, and results from employee exit interviews

provided by participants highlighting the effects of employee recognition on employee

engagement, organization culture and morale. Reviewing existing literature supporting

identifying and using recognition as a theme. Recognition and doing the job had a

positive, significant effect on job satisfaction (Ann & Blum, 2020).

Reviewing the recognition and reward section on the organization's website helped with

identifying recognition as a theme by spotlighting employees and team members for

outstanding performance.

Theme 4: Effectiveness of Recruitment and Retention Strategies

The fourth theme identified was the effectiveness of recruitment and retention

strategies. Participants' responses were consistent. All participants emphasized the

importance of having a way to measure and know if recruitment and retention strategies were effective. All three participants shared the importance of measuring strategies, revisiting, and redirecting as needed.

P01 stated:

> I ask them to criticize me and ask what can I do to make their time here better? I tell them ultimately you know you are a great worker; I want you to stay here so how can we make this work? I think the monthly one on one as well as big yearly reviews are very important in figuring out how we can keep our staff here permanently. P01 shared that the one on ones is important to fix anything or other issues they may have, as the employee says what is going on, and where they think I need to improve, or where I am lacking.

P02 stated:

> Creating a team consisting of core members to improve the recertification process, write procedural guides, and assess what was done, how it was done, and identify if there were any changes; this process helps with cross training others to fill in the missing gaps; revisit yearly and improve as needed.

> P02 further stated that there are some strategies that are more easily measurable than others, but I think at the end of the day, how do you measure it on your jobs filled, do you have people in them, do you have people that you can promote, do you have people who stay? Some of those tuition incentives such as student loan reimbursement have a time frame that the people have to stay on board; you know that you've been successful with your other incentives if after that period, which

is usually a two to three-year period, the employee stays; We did have people

stay, and renewed, they were able to get more money for staying and continuing

to stay; after they paid off their loans, they are still there, that is how you know

that you can measure what works, especially on the incentive side. In rural

communities and in these rural areas, you have the opportunity because your

agency or employer is connected to the community and have an inroad for these

individuals to start becoming part of the community, and when they stay and they

are active in the community, then you know you have done what you set out to

do; for the recruiting, obviously, if you are able to fill the position and you are

able to keep it filled; sometimes we only look at recruiting and say ok, Did I get a

body in? Yes, you did, but they left in six months; Well, that was not a

successful recruitment strategy, especially if you are talking about health care;

There are some high-turnover positions in which six months would be great, but

not always in these health care positions. Did they stay? How many times have

you had to fill that position in the last year? I think those are going to be your

metrics to let you know whether or not your recruitment strategy really works or

is working.

P03 stated:

Placing emphasis on results from the employer administered surveys, and

feedback sessions is a way for leaders to measure and get a better idea of how the

employees feel, and find out what areas are lacking, and engaging employees to

brainstorm, or do icebreakers to get an idea on how to do things differently and better.

Interview responses from participants as well as reviewing documents on employee retention rate highlighting the percentage rate, number of employees, how much time employees have been on the job during a certain period of time job, and reviewing results from employees' exit interviews provided by each participant indicating how long the employee stayed on the job, and the reason why they left a job helped with developing and supporting the effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies theme. The findings indicated that when managers measure the effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies, the recruiting process is better, and the cost to recruit and retain employees is reduced.

Findings Related to Literature Review

The findings from Theme 1 are consistent with Shannon (2019) to understand factors that motivate health and human services workers. Shannon (2019) found that communication was a factor that significantly affected employee's motivation. In a similar study, Kuuyelleh (2021) found that communication of all forms was conducive to creating an opportunity for employees to openly communicate, have a voice to build commitment, loyalty, and trust within the organization. Communication, when effective aids in building teamwork, handling workplace issues, and building and maintaining a relationship with colleagues, customers, the public, the government, and stakeholders (Chakravarti & Chakraborty, 2020).

Theme 2 findings concur with Ormel et al., (2019) on understanding incentives that are aligned and consistent with job demands, roles, and responsibilities to motivate employees to perform better. Theme 2 findings align with Akbar (2022) statement on influencing and increasing employee satisfaction with the job aids in increasing job retention rate, and employee productivity. Consistent with Theme 1, Theme 2 is an additional factor that resonates with Suryosukmono et al., (2022) on identifying successful strategies managers can use to contribute to employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance to reduce health care worker shortages.

Theme 3 findings are consistent with Mhlongo, Lutge, and Adepeju (2020) in exploring and implementing factors to influence and enhance employees' roles, responsibilities, and participation in the community to improve patient quality of care. Theme 3 is consistent with Angelopoulou and Panagopoulou (2020), Ann and Blum (2020), Heathfield (2019) and Soeherlan (2022) indication of how important it is for managers to provide positive feedback and recognize employees to reduce job burnout and employee turnover intentions increase employees confident in their abilities to perform well and help organizations to achieve goals.

Theme 4 findings are consistent with themes 1, 2, and 3, and Pillai and Sivathanu (2022) in understanding and considering some of the various HRM metrics such as compensation, training, employee engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover rate and cost to provide insights on recruitment and retentions strategies and organizational performance and success. Theme 4 aligns with the (WHO, 2021) implementation of a

framework to select intervention bundles to evaluate appropriate strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas.

Findings Related to Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs provided the lens to explore strategies some managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Some managers should use Maslow's hierarchy of needs to target psychological and physiological needs to motivate employees (Stefan et al., 2020). My focus for this study was to identify strategies using Maslow's hierarchy of needs model to help managers understand and target various needs of employees to help with the recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural areas.

The findings from the four identified themes align with the five levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs model. Identifying and exploring strategies targeting employees' physiological and psychological needs may aid leaders in developing and implementing strategies to address factors needed to successfully recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas (Maslow, 1954). The four identified themes were consistent with Stefan et al. (2020) suggestion of using Maslow's hierarchy of needs to provide insight for policymakers and managers to implement motivational strategies to increase professional performance. All four themes were consistent with Willard-Grace et al., (2019), and Mandal and Phillips (2022) suggestions and introduction of initiatives for

leaders and policy makers to use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas by socially integrating work, family and the community.

Conclusion of Findings

The findings of this study outline strategies HRM uses to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Implementing policies and strategies targeting employees' physiological and psychological needs outlined in Maslow's hierarchy of needs model may help HRM with recruiting and retaining health care workers in rural areas. According to Duru and Hammoud (2021), job satisfaction, financial compensation, and effective communication were effective strategies some senior leaders identified to help reduce voluntary turnovers and retain health care workers. The four themes that emerged from this study were communication, compensation, recognition, and effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies.

Figure 2

 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Model

Applications to Professional Practice

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore some strategies

HRM uses to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. The findings from the

results of this study on exploring strategies some HRM use to recruit and retain health

care workers in rural areas align with Maslow's hierarchy of needs model targeting the

physiological and psychological needs of employees. The findings highlighted strategies

HRM could use to reduce employee recruitment rate and increase employee retention rate

by targeting specific needs to influence and motivate employees, to increase their

performance and overall organizational success. According to Adynski and Morgan

(2021), addressing a variety of recruitment and retention strategies is costly, but may help

to improve access to care for residents in rural areas. The focus of this study was to explore and identify successful strategies HRM could develop, implement and use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas to reduce the shortage of health care workers rate, provide quality care to patients, reduce patient length of stay, reduce emergency room visits, reduce morbidity and mortality rate and achieve organizational success.

Implications for Social Change

The results from the finding of this study may implicate social change by improving the recruitment and retention rate of health care workers in rural areas by partnering with local colleges and universities to recruit locally and by offering incentives such as placement into residency programs and sign on bonuses. Additional strategies HRM may use are implementing training and procedure manuals to help current employees fill open positions and help in areas that are experiencing a shortage of workers, implementing recruitment presentations or announcements to highlight amenities in rural which may include a list of available properties, venues such as churches, gymnasiums, and schools to minimize the stereotypes associated with working in rural areas targeting families or individuals to attract them to rural areas. Some managers also suggest providing job shadow opportunities for potential recruits to come in and get a feel for the area and work environment to see if it is a good fit. Applying the identified strategies may help HRM in recruiting and retaining health care workers in rural to achieve organizational success, hire employees from within the community to

reduce the unemployment rate, and provide access to quality care for patients in the community; therefore, creating a positive social change.

Recommendations for Action

To help managers implement strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas, I would recommend three actions based on the results from this study as shown in Figure 3. The three recommendations of action were: Be open and honest when communicating with employees, provide relevant and timely feedback, and lastly, be open and available to receive criticism and feedback from employees. Managers that apply these recommendations may obtain an understanding of what is required to help identify, develop, and implement strategies needed to recruit and retain employees in rural areas.

The first recommendation is for managers to be open and honest when communicating with employees. Having open and honest communication may help managers with creating an environment and culture that promotes and builds trust, boost morale, and gives employees a sense of belonging. When employees feel that their employers are concerned, their voices are heard and feel that they belong, they may become motivated and productive. Motivated and productive employees may contribute to organizational success and may help to reduce employee turnover rates.

The second recommendation is to provide relevant and timely feedback to employees. Managers should provide feedback as soon as possible. Feedback me positive or negative. If employees are underperforming, managers should conduct a feedback session to rectify the issue and to try and prevent the issue from happening again or

progressing. The feedback session whether one or one or in a group setting may help with implementing training programs to help employees understand what is required of them. The feedback session may also consist of recognizing employees for a job well done, which may help with motivating other employees.

  The third and final recommendation for managers is to be open and available to receive feedback and concerns from employees. Receiving feedback from employees may help leaders to understand and improve their leadership skills, increase employee motivation and performance, and overall organizational success. Leaders that promote open communication and receive feedback from employees may increase employee motivation and retention rates.

  The findings and recommendations from this study were relevant to HRM, leaders, managers, and administrators who recruit and retain health care workers, particularly in rural areas. My study findings could help health care leaders and managers in implementing strategies to help recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. With the help of my chair, I would like to present my study results at academic conferences and have it published in peer-reviewed journals as support for other researchers.

Figure 3

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendation for Action
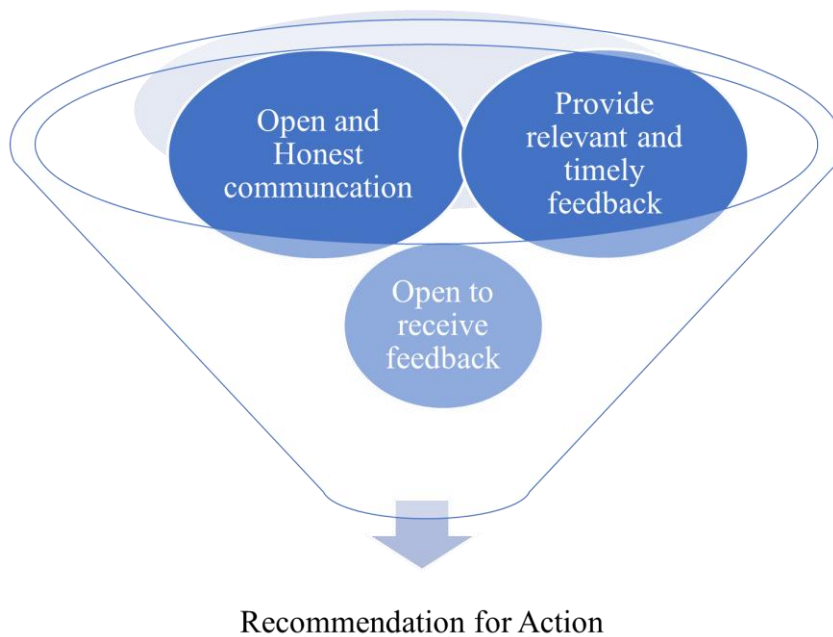
Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of the qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. I interviewed three managers with at least five years of experience developing or implementing strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas of southern Louisiana. Limitations to this study were the responses from participants that may not be applicable or true. Another limitation was the control of bias despite the necessary steps to avoid it.

My recommendation is for researchers to conduct a study with more participants, as my study consisted of three participants. Having a bigger sample and different

methods may yield additional strategies HRM may use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Another recommendation would be conducting a qualitative study with participants from suburban areas in another part of Louisiana, the United States, or maybe even another country. Conducting a quantitative study to test a hypothesis is another recommendation for further research. What strategies do hospital administrators and human resource managers use to recruit and retain health care workers and specialty providers to help prevent and reduce the morbidity and mortality rate in African American and Hispanic males in rural areas of Louisiana?

Reflections

Conducting this research and interviewing the participants to explore strategies some managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas to achieve the goal of creating a positive social change, has been rewarding. This journey was humbling and enlightening as the participants shared valuable information about what it takes to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. I did not know what was required and what must be considered when advertising jobs to recruit employees, or how important it is for leaders to provide and receive feedback and recognize and reward current employees to permanently retain them. Initially, I was lost and did not fully understand what was required to complete this study. I found that by reviewing Walden University's doctoral study rubric and handbook, and checklist, and by addressing numerous comments from my committee members, I quickly learned that I must pay attention to details and review my work before submitting it if I wanted to make progress. The three participants provided successful strategies to recruit and retain health care

workers in rural areas. The themes that emerged align with my conceptual framework. Each theme supports the concept of targeting physiological and psychological needs as identified in Maslow's hierarchy of needs to motivate employees. The findings of this study will contribute to the development and implementation of strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas.

Conclusion

The intent of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore some strategies managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. The shortage of health care workers continues to be a worldwide problem. The problem is more prevalent in rural areas. Some factors contributing to the shortage of health care workers in rural areas consist of stereotypes associated with rural areas, lack of communication, resources to complete the task, access to quality of care to reduce patient hospital's length of stay, emergency room visits, and morbidity and mortality rates. Additional factors were a lack of tools to measure the effectiveness of the recruitment and retention strategies, managers not providing open, relevant, and honest communication and feedback, or leaders not being open to receiving feedback and criticism from employees. HRM should evaluate current recruitment and retention strategies and implement new strategies targeting the physiological and psychological needs of employees. I conducted semistructured interviews with three managers from three organizations in rural areas of southern Louisiana; one interview was conducted face to face in a private room at a local library while practicing social distancing and wearing masks and two were conducted using Zoom video conferencing in which I asked six open ended questions to explore strategies

managers use to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas. Data was collected for use in this study by reviewing interview transcripts, journal notes, job announcements, recruiting materials, reviewing documents on the organization's website that consisted of recruiting incentives, testimonials, community involvement and partnership, organizational rewards, and recognition, and summary of results from employee exit surveys, and employee feedback received from employer administered surveys.

The study results aligned with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the conceptual framework that guided this study. The four themes that emerged from this study were communication, compensation, recognition, and effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies. The findings from this study may serve as a guide to help HRM develop and implement strategies to recruit and retain health care workers in rural areas to provide quality care, preventive measures, and education to patients to help reduce unemployment rates, emergency room visits, and morbidity and mortality rate in rural areas.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Date: _____   Location: _____

Researcher: _____   Participant: _____

Interview Format

I will:

1. Meet and greet participants at the location and time we agreed on and express gratitude and appreciation for participating in the study.

2. Introduce myself.

3. Discuss the consent form and the purpose of the study.

4. Ask if there are any questions, and if there are no questions; ask participants to sign the form. Collect the consent form.

5. Write the participant's code on the consent form.

6. Inform the participant that this interview is voluntary and let them know they can withdraw at any time during the process.

7. Ask each participant for their consent to audio record the interview. If they consent, ask them to verbally agree by saying "I consent" to audio record the interview and proceed to conduct audio recording with two devices. If participants do not consent to the audio recording, the meeting will be ended. Thank the participants for their time.

8. Inform participants that their responses will be confidential, all documentation, and recordings will be kept and secured in a fireproof safe for 5 years. After 5 years, they will be destroyed by shredding documents and deleting audio recordings.

9. Notify each participant that the interview will last 30-45 minutes. The protocol will be the same for each participant.

10. Be mindful of my expressions, gestures, and body language to not distract participants.

11. Thank each participant and conduct a follow-up with the interview transcript for review and approval (member checking).

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. What are some strategies and incentives you use to recruit or retain health care workers?

2. How do you measure the effectiveness of your strategies and incentives to recruit and retain health care workers?

3. What strategies were not effective for the recruitment and retention of health care workers?

4. What barriers did you encounter when implementing recruiting or incentive strategies?

5. How did you overcome these barriers?

6. What additional information would you like to share regarding your recruitment or retention strategies that were not previously discussed?