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Strategies for Reducing Voluntary Employee Turnover in Small Business

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MBA, Capella, 2014

BS, Upper Iowa University, 2003

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

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Abstract

Small business owners who lack strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover experience decreased organizational performance. Grounded in the two-factor theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that small business owners use to reduce high voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance. Participants were four small business owners from Midwestern Illinois who successfully used strategies to reduce high voluntary employee turnover. Data were collected from semistructured interviews and internal documents and analyzed using thematic analysis. Four themes emerged: (a) employee turnover, (b) job satisfaction, (c) employee engagement, and (d) monetary incentives. A key recommendation is small business owners should develop employee feedback mechanisms and instill employees with a sense of purpose and direction. The implications for positive social change include the opportunity to increase economic growth in local communities, lower poverty, and improve the quality of life for local residents.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this study to my Lord and Savior for without Him I would not have completed this journey. To my guardian angels my great-grandmother Eloise Pugh, Terrence Goodson my very dear friend, my sister Fallon Jenkins, and my lovely Aunt Diana Hodges losing all of you during my academic journey has made me realize that life is to short and never take anything for granted. To my parents Denice Sanders, Patrick Ellis, and Ella Ellis I love you dearly and thank you for being my biggest cheerleaders. To my children Shequennce and Shekalin thank you for being there during the tears and frustration most of all thank you for understanding the sacrifices that had to be made were not only to better myself but encourage you both to always strive for success. To my grandchildren Majik and Moriono Jr. granny loves you both dearly. To my siblings Serice, Rachel, Raven, Deizarae, Alexis, and Erik the encouragement and love from each of you made this journey that much easier to accomplish. Lastly, to Deanna we always say cousins by birth sisters by choice thank you for pushing me to be better than I was before I started this journey.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Small businesses play a vital role in the economy and are an essential source of job growth in the United States (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2020). Employee turnover has negatively influenced small business productivity (Letchmiah, 2017). For example, reducing turnover increases organizational performance culture and facilitating building social bonds between employees and their work (Sun & Wang, 2017). In this study, I focused on providing potential means for understanding the successful strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance.

Background of the Problem

One of the most complicated challenges small business owners face is dealing with the growing trend of voluntary employee turnover (Lee et al., 2018). For example, if an employee cannot balance work with life situations, they may become frustrated with their job and decide to leave. Reducing employee turnover will enforce turnover strategies to trim the cost associated with turnover (Kashmoola, 2017). According to Lu et al. (2016), employers should develop working relationships with employees to reduce turnover. Furthermore, employees that are satisfied with their job are in an emotional state that results from the appraisal of one experience with a current position (Acukgoz et al., 2016). The employees' overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction will become relevant when an employee has a negative experience with different aspects of the job (Acukgoz et al., 2016). Decreasing employee job dissatisfaction can reduce voluntary employee turnover (Yasir & Majid, 2019). Employee retention is enhanced, and specific motivators

will generate job satisfaction and reduce voluntary employee turnover when employees are satisfied with their jobs (Matei & Abrudan, 2016).

Problem Statement

Some small business owners in the U.S. struggle to effectively implement strategies for improved organizational performance (Mathieu et al., 2016). According to The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2020), employees voluntarily separated from their jobs at a rate of 1.6% within a year. The general business problem is high rates of voluntary employee turnover decrease organizational performance. The specific business problem is some small business owners lack strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some small business owners used to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance. This study's target population consisted of 4 small business owners within the Midwestern region of the United States who successfully implemented strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance. The implications for positive social change included the potential for businesses to shape communities' health by contributing to education and development programs, stimulating the economy, and creating more jobs.

Nature of the Study

There are three primary research methods: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method (Posey, 2019). The type of data collected in qualitative research included

semistructured interviews, observations, and internal documents (Wilson, 2016). The qualitative research method was the best choice for this study. The study involved interviews and extensive inquiry of small business owners' strategic solutions and processes that were needed for exploring strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover. The quantitative research method was not appropriate for this study because I did not use statistical data, test a theory, or show individual variables and their components (Saunders et al., 2017). A mixed-method approach combines both qualitative and quantitative research methods (Park & Park, 2016). The mixed-method approach was not suitable for this study because I did not use a quantitative component.

A case study is an inquiry that researchers use to generate an in-depth understanding of a problem in a real-life context, in addition to allowing the researcher to pose *how or what* questions (Yin, 2018). The multiple case study was the best approach for this study because it provided an in-depth investigation of quality data collection. Researchers use a phenomenological design to explore, probe, and evaluate the meanings of individuals' experiences with phenomena (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I did not select a phenomenological design for this study because I did not wish to probe and evaluate the personal meanings of the participants' experiencing a phenomenon. Narrative research is participants' personal life experiences through storytelling (Greenhalgh, 2016). I did not seek to study individuals' lives through their personal stories, and therefore, a narrative research design was not suitable for this study. Ethnographic research is focused on an entire culture to gain the perspective of the individuals and their lives within the culture

(Silverman, 2016). I did not select the ethnographic research design because I did not wish to study a group's culture over an extended period.

Research Question

This study's research question was: What strategies do small business owners use to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

Interview Questions

1.   What strategies did you use to reduce the high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

2.   What major obstacles did you encounter in implementing strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover?

3.   What motivation techniques such as a positive work environment and recognition did you use to reduce voluntary employee turnover?

4.   What, if any, types of job security or salary benefits were offered to employees that would reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

5.   How did you address the organizational policy and procedures with the employees to achieve your strategy for reducing high rates of voluntary employee turnover?

6.   What additional information would you like to share or add relating to strategies small business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the two-factor theory, as developed by Herzberg et al. (1959). Herzberg et al. (1959) explained that when hygiene factors are absent, employees become dissatisfied and will not work harder those factors were; salary, recognition, and positive work environments have been identified as motivators that may increase job satisfaction. Motivational techniques within the actual job may cause satisfaction with the job (Herzberg et al., 1959). Examples of hygiene factors are (a) organizational policies and procedures, (b) guidance, (c) job security, and (d) salary (Herzberg, 1974). Motivation relates to extrinsic and intrinsic factors such as: (a) prosperity, (b) work, (c) attainment, and (d) elevation (Herzberg, 1974). Researchers use the two-factor theory to understand the successful strategies for reducing high rates of voluntary employee turnover that can motivate people to work harder, minimize job dissatisfaction, and retain employees. Reducing turnover increases organizational performance culture that facilitates building social bonds between employees and their work (Sun & Wang, 2017).

Operational Definitions

Employee Engagement: Employee engagement is when employees are delighted with their job displaying passion and dedication (Eldor, 2017).

Employee Turnover: When an employee separates from an organization and is replaced with other staff (Sunder et al., 2017).

Employee Retention: Employee retention refers to the company's ability to sustain employees (Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2016).

Organizational Performance: The achievement of an organization within a timeframe to achieve organizational goals (Verbic & Ogorevc, 2016).

Small Business: A small business is an independent business with fewer than 500 employees (SBA, 2018).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions consist of what the researcher accepts as accurate, with no substantial evidence (Hammeduddin & Fernandez, 2019). The first assumption I made in my research was that the participants would be truthful with their responses to all the interview questions; I also assumed that the data I collected from the interviews would provide me with useful feedback to achieve data saturation. Finally, I assumed that the research would show strategies that would be useful to other business owners.

Limitations

Limitations are out of the researcher's control and are potential weaknesses in the study (Benoot et al., 2016). The first limitation of this study was that the participants are within Midwestern region and might not have known other small business owners from different areas. Another limitation was that the interview questions could have been insufficient to obtain in-depth evidence for the study.

Delimitations

Delimitations are defined as the study's boundaries within the researcher's control (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The delimitations in this study were the sample size and geographical location. The sample size comprised of four small business owners with the

geographical area in Chicago, IL. Another delimitation to the research was the sample size limited to small businesses and did not include medium and large organizations

Significance of the Study

The importance of identifying strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover would be of value to business owners needing to reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance. The results from this study revealed successful strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover that could be of use to aid in the increase of organizational performance and the creation of relationship between business owners and employees.

Contribution to Business Practice

Business owners could use this study's findings to develop best practices to support the reduction in voluntary employee turnover. Business owners may gain insights into job satisfaction and motivate their employees by creating a positive workplace and increased salary. Kashmoola et al. (2017) stated that enforcing turnover reduction strategies in a small business could help trim costs identified with employee turnover, while increasing business profitability. The contributions from the study findings would help reduce voluntary employee turnover and improve business performance.

Implications for Social Change

Small businesses are the most common type of business in the U.S. (SBA, 2017). Reducing voluntary employee turnover and increasing organizations' performance would provide additional job opportunities. Small businesses contribute to the vitality of neighborhoods, creating a better future for employees and society. Reducing voluntary

turnover was essential for business owners to promote continued prosperity for small businesses and the communities they serve. This is turn, could result in increased economic growth in local communities, lower poverty and improve the quality of life for local families.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore successful strategies small business owners used to decrease high rates of voluntary employee turnover. This study's overreaching research question was: What strategies do small business owners use to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance? To address this research question, I reviewed the literature relating to hygiene factors, extrinsic factors, intrinsic factors, complimentary theories contrasting theories, job satisfaction, and strategies for reducing employee turnover to help business owners increase organizational performance.

The literature review included a critical analysis and synthesis of literature related to Herzberg and the topic of voluntary employee turnover and organizational performance. I searched peer-reviewed journal articles and seminal scholarly books. I retrieved sources from the field of business studies. I obtained scholarly peer-reviewed literature through the use of databases available from the Walden University Library, including ABI/Inform complete, Emerald Management Journals, Business Source Complete, and Google Scholar. With keyword search terms that included employee turnover, employee engagement, small business, employee retention, and organizational performance.

The literature review began with an analysis of Herzberg's two-factor theory, which was the conceptual framework that I used to examine the phenomenon of voluntary employee turnovers. I organized the literature review for this study by topic, using headings in five significant areas: (a) Herzberg two-factor theory, (b) hygiene factors, (c) other research theories, (d) complementary and contrasting theories, and (e) strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover. This study reflects motivation and hygiene techniques used by other theorists to increase job satisfaction using Herzberg's two-factor theory. The subheadings for the conceptual framework heading included critical analysis and synthesis of the literature regarding intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The supporting and contrasting theories included Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, McClelland's human motivation theory, and transformational leadership. Strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover, job satisfaction, and employee engagement were next. The review contains citations from 89 peer-reviewed articles and three books published between 2017 and 2021. The literature review sources for this doctoral study consisted of 95 references, and 90% of the sources were peer-reviewed articles published within 5 years of my expected commencement. However, the final 5% are books and peer-reviewed articles published earlier than 2017. Table 1 features additional details of the sources used in the literature review.

Table 1
Literature Review Sources

Sources	Older than 5 years	2017 or later	Total
Books	2	1	3
Peer-reviewed articles	9	80	89
Total	11	81	92
Percentage of total	10%	90%	100%

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

The conceptual framework for this study was Herzberg's two-factor theory. In the 1950s, Herzberg explored employee satisfaction and employee dissatisfaction (Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2018). Herzberg et al. (1959) introduced the two-factor theory, also referred to as motivational hygiene theory. Employee dissatisfaction and the factors that cause the difference from employee satisfaction are theorist-established (Herzberg, 1974; Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2018). Job satisfaction is an emotional state that results from the appraisal of a person's experiences with a current job; when an employee has negative experiences concerning different facets of the job, the employee's overall level of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is likely to be relevant (Acukgoz et al., 2016).

As Herzberg's study evolved, it affirmed that job dissatisfaction relates to the working environment, job satisfaction, and gratification from their associated jobs (Herzberg, 1974). Hygiene and motivation are the two leading factors analysts determined to influence job satisfaction. Poissonnier (2017) explained that motivators and hygiene factors bring about job satisfaction; motivators that generate job satisfaction do not prevent employees from being dissatisfied. The intrinsic motivators cause gratification, whereas hygiene factors contribute to reducing dissatisfaction (Poissonnier, 2017). Alshmemri et al. (2016) demonstrated that intrinsic (motivational) and extrinsic (hygiene) factors have a positive effect on job satisfaction. Applying both hygiene factors and motivational factors can positively impact employee motivation, satisfaction, and dissatisfaction that cannot be measure on the same continuum; they are affected by

different sets of characteristics (Alshmemri et al., 2016; Herzberg, 1974). In the following sections, I give a synopsis of each dimension of Herzberg hygiene factors.

The original hygiene factors of Herzberg two-factor theory continued to expand with added factors. Herzberg (1974) analyzed hygiene factors that could increase satisfaction, whereas another set of factors could cause dissatisfaction. Extrinsic hygiene factors regulate the functional task properties related to the same jobs **(**Shah & Soomro, 2019**)**. A sampling of hygiene factors included (a) organizational policies and procedures, (b) social relations, (c) physical working conditions, and (d) job security (Kim et al., 2016). Herzberg affirmed that the elevation of employee job dissatisfaction was due to the nonexistence of hygiene factors; to eliminate the cause of employee dissatisfaction, hygiene factors should be present (Alfayad & Arif, 2017; Saxena & Vijayakumar, 2015). The existence of hygiene factors decreases employee job dissatisfaction and can reduce voluntary employee turnover because employee job dissatisfaction can influence employee turnover (Majid & Yasir, 2019).

Herzberg explored motivational factors that influenced employee job satisfaction, such as motivational factors necessary to prompt motivation (Shah & Soomro, 2019). According to Herzberg (1974), motivation factors are typically a combination of (a) achievement, (b) appreciation, (c) production, (d) obligation, (e) improvement, and (f) growth. The absence of motivational factors can directly reflect employee job dissatisfaction; Herzberg disputed motivational factors depiction of job dissatisfaction to job satisfaction. Herzberg contended that when motivators are appropriately implemented, and current in a company, decisive characteristics and job satisfaction

occurred (Herzberg et al., 1959). When employees were satisfied with their jobs,

employee retention was enhanced, and motivators that generate job satisfaction do not

prevent employees from being dissatisfied (Abrudan & Matei, 2016; Poissonier, 2017).

Herzberg's two-factor theory includes an assessment of actual instruments that can be

used as incentives for employee turnover and retention so that they would be positively

encouraged and inspired (Abrudan & Matei, 2016).

Contrasting Theories

Transformational leaders shape and value the relationship with employees.

Leaders who use the transformational leadership style develop positive leader-employee

relations, encourage employee growth potential within the organization, validate their

self-expression, and rouse employees to higher performance (Yehuda, 2018).

Transformational leadership intellectually motivates, shapes, and influences employees

through intellectual stimulation. Use of transformational leadership and pseudo-

transformational leadership although contrasting to Herzberg was a powerful business

tool with opportunities and benefits to businesses (Abrudan & Matei, 2016).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders and employees remain in alignment with the values and

goals, leading to contagious citizenship behaviors directed toward supporting a collective

interest and improving organizational performance (Hertel & Nohe, 2017; Yaacoub,

2016). However, through individualized consideration, leaders support the employee's

contributions and encourage problem-solving to maximize organizational performance

(Bormann & Rowold, 2016). The association between transformational initiatives and

employees enriches work practices, mediating a sound connection between employees and best work practices (Hertel & Nohe, 2017). Several theorists examined the relationship between behavioral and situational contexts and believed that transformational leadership was an all-inclusive leadership practice (Orabi, 2016). Transformational leaders articulate a vision, foster a team approach, have high-performance expectations, provide intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bormann & Rowold, 2016). Transformational leaders are unique in that they are an exchange of personal values and benefits, and not expressed exchange of commodities between leader and employee.

Transformational leaders are moderators over dedicated, committed employees. The leader provides individualized support to their employees by shaping the team's abilities for long-term success. Transformational leaders are crucial drivers of business success; the leader redesigns values, expectations, and aspirations that bring out the best in people (Bormann & Rowold, 2016; Lee et al., 2017). The transformational leadership theory was not appropriate for addressing the strategies small business owners may use to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance.

Pseudo-Transformational Leadership

Pseudo-transformational leaders focus on self-interest and status (Lin et al., 2017). The leader exhibits manipulative behaviors and undermines the employee's intentions to engage with the organization (Lin et al., 2017). Pseudo-transformational leadership has a limited effect on encouraging subordinates to exert extra effort on job-

related activities (Lin et al., 2017). The leadership style has an opposite impact on employees from that of transformational leadership qualities.

Leadership behavior affects turnover intention**;** a study conducted about abusive leadership and turnover intentions indicated that abusive leadership will relate to employee turnover intentions (Haa**r e**t al., 2016; Malek et al., 2018). Poor leadership can cause employees to become dissatisfied with their jobs, as Herzberg postulated (Haa**r e**t al., 2016; Malek et al., 2018). Organizational success depends upon the recruitment, development, reward, and retention of the right people, which contradicts Herzberg's theory. Manipulative intentions may reduce any positive impact on job satisfaction, unlike Herzberg's two-factor theory. Voluntary employee turnover consists of many elements and aligns with several theories and conceptual frameworks. However, I chose Herzberg's two-factor theory to explore the strategies owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Hygiene Factors

Hygiene factors play an essential role in employee turnover; the absence of hygiene factors could lead to job dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1974). When hygiene factors are present, they increase job satisfaction and reduce job dissatisfaction in workers (Alfayad & Arif, 2017; Saxena & Vijayakumar, 2015). The absence of hygiene factors results in no job satisfaction and retaining employees can be difficult when employees are dissatisfied with their job and seek new places to work (Sankar, 2016). The use of hygiene factors to determine employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction are appropriate for exploring strategies some business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Inadequate supervision can cause workers to become dissatisfied with their jobs and result in employee turnover. Malek et al. (2018) conducted a study to measure job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee turnover intention with employee turnover. Mahmood et al. (2019) conducted a study to revisit talent management, work-life balance, and retention strategies to understand employee dissatisfaction better. Mahmood et al. (2019) found that work-life balance is a leading issue between employee retention and management. Work-life balance can fall in the category of supervision under the concept of hygiene in the two-factor theory, depending on how the individual's supervisor relates to their employee's needs and can determine if an employee is satisfied or dissatisfied with their job Mahmood et al. (2019). Understanding the link between supervision and employee turnover could help owners grasp the concepts of satisfaction or how dissatisfaction shapes and individual.

The effect of abusive supervision on employee turnover remains a topic for research. Jena and Pradhan (2017) explored the impact of abusive leadership on employee turnover intention. Jena and Pradhan (2017) observed that abusive supervision relates to an employee's intention to quit. Hellman et al. (2020) and Mitchell and Vogel (2017) supported Herzberg's two-factor theory; supervision is a hygiene factor that can decrease or increase an employee's job dissatisfaction. Abusive supervision adversely affects employee turnover because it can cause employees to search for a new job, and abusive supervision can associate with high turnover intentions (Hellman et al., 2020; Mitchell & Vogel, 2017).

According to Herzberg (1974), security is a hygiene factor that can influence job satisfaction. Phillips (2016) researched strategies to reduce turnover from an employee's perspective, the growth of an organization for job security, extensive training, mentoring and coaching programs to enable business leaders to manage employee retention. Shemdoe et al. (2016) conducted a study regarding retention and found that one reason workers wanted to leave was their perceptions of their safety. Shemdoe et al. (2016) confirmed that security is a hygiene factor that can lead to job dissatisfaction, proving that Herzberg's two-factor hygiene factor security can lead to job dissatisfaction and decrease employee turnover.

According to Herzberg (1974), interpersonal relations are a hygiene factor that could increase or decrease job dissatisfaction. The factors that contribute to turnover intention among managers observed by Sharma (2016) are poor supervisory relationships and high stress. The absence of increased job satisfaction levels may lead to higher voluntary leave (Sharma, 2016). The link between job satisfaction and the decision to leave is complex and influenced by labor markets, such as the availability of job opportunities.

According to Lu et al. (2016), employers should focus on developing working relationships with employees to reduce turnover. Positive interpersonal relationships can result in a harmonious working environment and determine whether employees are dissatisfied with their job. Enhancing interpersonal relationships in the workplace can result in employee retention. According to Sun et al. (2017), owners motivate employees to look beyond their self-interest and have a higher commitment to their organization.

The failure to enhance or develop interpersonal relationships can result in interpersonal difficulties that can lead to emotional exhaustion resulting in burnout (Ayoun & Chen, 2019). Interpersonal relationships can affect employee dissatisfaction and can determine an employee leaving or staying with an organization. When employees express satisfaction in a job, it can reduce voluntary employee turnover; individual motivators that generate job satisfaction can also impact employees from being dissatisfied with their job (Majid & Yasir, 2019; Poissonnier, 2017). Hygiene factors present a summary of satisfaction and dissatisfaction among employees. The research explored business owners' strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Extrinsic factors

Herzberg et al. (1959) identified the first of two constructs as the hygiene of the items over which the employee exhibits no control within the workplace. The hygiene factors will not motivate the employee, yet the absence of hygiene factors will demotivate the employee (Van-Der Schyff et al., 2018). The most common and essential extrinsic factors include remuneration and benefit that have work aspects directly associated with job activity (Staelens et al., 2018). Understanding details of an extrinsic factor may assist owners in reducing voluntary employee turnover to increase productivity.

Salary

Employees who are not satisfied with their salary may quit their job (Chakrabarti & Guha, 2016). According to Chakrabarti and Guha1 (2016), a significant relationship exists between compensation and employee retention; the more an employee is rewarded or compensated, the longer they remain in an organization. A worker's pay is a predictor

of an employee's intent to stay on their job (Spencer et al., 2016). Employers should consider offering workers fair compensation to decrease job dissatisfaction to retain the most significant assets.

Organizational Policies and Administration

Company policies and administration can adversely affect employee turnover. Common issues in organizations are employee turnover and job dissatisfaction (Joungtrakul & Sadangharn, 2017)). Joungtrakul and Sadangharn (2017) found that weak policies related to performance management on career growth, the lack of training, unclear operating procedures, poor communication, and poor planning contributed to job dissatisfaction. Conversely, Rodrigues and Vergant (2019) found that policies that provided employees time off to adjust to lifestyle changes could help retain employees; therefore, policies affect employee turnover. The findings of Herzberg's conclusion in the two-factor theory; coincide with company policies, administration and hygiene factors that can affect job dissatisfaction (Joungtrakul & Sadangharn, 2017; Rodrigues & Vergant, 2019).

Herzberg (1974) ascertained that salary is a hygiene factor that can affect job dissatisfaction. Narisada and Schieman (2016) conducted a study of what affects voluntary employee turnover, finding that some respondents prefer to work regular work hours and a decent salary. Today's owners understand that satisfied and committed employees will put forth all their effort into the job and demonstrate loyalty to the organization (Jehanzeb et al., 2018; Tam et al., 2016). Usually, owners succeed in

reducing voluntary employee turnover and saving the organization's financial cost associated with recruiting, selection, and training new employees.

An employee's salary can affect voluntary employee turnover; and pay dissatisfaction can cause turnover intention, leading to employee turnover (Mohamed, 2017). Grissom and Mitani (2016) examined factors that influence turnovers, such as salary and lower performance scores have higher turnover rates, and is a strong predictor of turnover.

Business owners and leaders can benefit from their research and help them understand how salary can affect employee turnover and devise turnover reduction strategies Grissom and Mitani (2016). A significant relationship exists between compensation and employee retention; the more an employee is rewarded or compensated, the longer they remain in an organization; although hygiene factors may not motivate the employee, the absence of those hygiene factors will serve to demotivate the employee (Chakrabarti & Guha1, 2016; Van-Der Schyff et al., 2018). Increased pay can be a strategy for retention, especially in a smaller business with lower performance scores (Grissom & Mitani, 2016). Confirming the hygiene factor salary observed in Herzberg's two-factor theory, salary is a hygiene factor that can be an extrinsic factor leading to job dissatisfaction, leading to voluntary employee turnover.

Intrinsic Factors

Herzberg identified the second construct as the motivational factors or those within the employee (Herzberg et al., 1959). The intrinsic factors directly affect employee motivation. The motivational factors include (a) achievement, (b) recognition,

(c) responsibility, (d) advancement, and (e) the actual work (Van-Der Schyff et al., 2018).

Some organizations focus on the employee's extrinsic needs and fail to address the

intrinsic needs of the employee's (Staelens et al., 2018). Inspiration directly relates to

employees' motivation to be part of the change agent and make a difference (Gillespie,

2018). Inspired employees feel mastery over their work, optimism, and a sense of

accomplishment (Gillespie, 2018). Motivated employees perform better than unmotivated

employees, and the motivation can transfer to others who come in contact with the

motivated employee (Gillespie, 2018). Inspired employees have a sense of purpose and

self-worth that may eventually lead to personal growth (Gillespie, 2018). Motivation

plays a vital role in reducing voluntary employee turnover.

Inspired employees could show more work motivation and provide the

organization with long-term talent (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg identified several

examples of intrinsic motivators. Organizational leaders can use appreciation and

recognition as one way to effectively provide inspiration and motivation to their

employees (Hur, 2018). Ensuring good employees have opportunities to advance also

aids with intrinsic motivation (Allen et al., 2018). In general, employees and people care

about a fair play environment and expect to see rewards go to those who deserve them

(Hur, 2018). Organizations that award promotions and advancement to the best

employees rather than showing favoritism will likely have a well-motivated employee

base.

Motivation Factors

Motivation factors are intrinsic rewards provided by a company to motivate employees, affecting job satisfaction; when employees are satisfied with their jobs, employee retention will improve (Shah & Soomro, 2019; Van-Der Schyff et al., 2018). Inspirational motivation is a component that encourages employees to align their personal goals with the company's mission (Bormann & Rowold, 2016). Motivation is inspirational for employees to achieve personal and professional fulfillment (Martin, 2017). Through inspirational motivation, the leader inspires, motivates the employee, supports the employee's contributions, and encourages problem solving to maximize organizational performance (Bormann & Rowold, 2016). Leaders who engage with their employees create a level of commitment that transcends to their followers and creates a higher motivation (Moon, 2017). Herzberg argued that such motivational factors relate to the jobs content and can contribute to job satisfaction, or the lack of motivational factors can lead to job dissatisfaction.

Responsibility

Responsibility is one motivational factor that Herzberg (1974) identified in the two-factor theory that can contribute to job satisfaction. Martdianty et al. (2020) conducted an exploratory investigation into voluntary employee turnover and retention in small businesses. The leading causes of employee turnover intention that Martdianty et al. (2020) observed were unsolicited roles and responsibility. Martdianty et al., (2020) findings coincide with Herzberg's two-factor theory; employers should ensure that the

employees' job descriptions are clear and give their workers realistic expectations of what their job entails.

Advancement and Growth

Employers should ensure employees have the opportunity for advancement and growth to contribute to employees' satisfaction with their jobs, leading to decreased employee turnover rates (Chen et al., 2016). Roberson and Roberson's (2016) study revealed seven employee retention strategies; communication, recognition, adequate staffing levels, supportive management, flexible work schedules, and professional development. According to Chen et al. (2016), a positive relationship exists between career growth and job satisfaction and a negative correlation to turnover intention. Business owners need to seek ways to understand their workers' needs and desires in advancement and development to reduce turnover (Chen et al., 2016).

A positive relationship exists between career growth, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Inspired employees have a sense of purpose and self-worth that may eventually lead to personal development (Chen, 2016; Gillespie, 2018). The intrinsic motivators generate gratification, whereas hygiene factors reduce dissatisfaction, achievement, appreciation, production, and obligation are combinations of motivation factors if adequately implemented; job satisfaction could occur (Herzberg et al., 1959; Poissonnier, 2017). Employees may find motivation, responsibility, and advancement a parallel that could prevent voluntary employee turnover. Organizations may gain two-fold from motivated employees; showing appreciation and recognition reinforces their self-esteem and self-worth.

Other research theories

Myers and Weed (1967) conducted a motivation research project using the two-factor theory. Myers and Weed (1967) observed that the following maintenance needs could lessen job dissatisfaction: security, status, social needs, and economic and physical factors; the authors also noted the following factors could motivate an employee: recognition, growth, achievement, and responsibility. Herzberg et al., (1959) theory reported that a decrease in the job factors that caused dissatisfaction does not cause worker motivation; other factors have more potential to motivate employees. Myers and Weed's factors are lessening employee dissatisfaction, and enhancing job satisfaction coincides with the satisfying and dissatisfaction factors reported in the two-factor theory. Herzberg predicted in theory that workers find motivation in the intrinsic factors of their jobs, while simultaneously becoming demotivated by a lack of hygiene factors at their jobs, intrinsic and extrinsic factors play an equal role in creating a motivated employee (Herzberg et al., 1959; Shonubi et al., 2016). The first construct Herzberg identified in the two-factor theory comes from factors outside of the person's control.

Herzberg's two-factor theory is essential to researchers in finding factors that can elevate employees' performance, minimize job dissatisfaction, maintain employees, and lessen turnover (Ma, 2019). Within the current position, hygiene and motivation are the duo factors acclaimed by Herzberg (1974) to point to employee job satisfaction and employee dissatisfaction. Ma (2019) used the two-factor theory to investigate what factors motivate employees to perform. When motivation factors elevate, they can spark employee job satisfaction (Ma, 2019). Heightened employee job satisfaction alters

employee reservations, decreasing employee turnover (Brien et al., 2017). The results of Ma's (2019) study coincide with Herzberg's findings in the two-factor theory.

Previous research has shown that there is a relationship between compensation and employee retention. Garibaldi & Putri (2018) examined the effect of compensation and work settings on employee retention and recorded results consistent with findings in Herzberg's two-factor theory. Garibaldi & Putri (2018) observed that compensation slightly influenced employee retention, and the work environment had a compelling impact on employee retention. When employee retention rates are high, it means that the employee turnover rate is low; and motivators that generate job satisfaction do not prevent employees from being dissatisfied (Garibaldi & Putri, 2018; Poissonnier, 2017). The study also found that high levels of employee retention lead to an increase in productivity.

The application of Herzberg's theory was beneficial in assessing workers' attitudes toward company incentives and job satisfaction (Bischoff & Wood, 2019). Bischoff and Wood (2019) used the two-factor theory to evaluate employees' views toward work incentives and job satisfaction. Bischoff and Wood (2019) discovered that financial incentives encourage employees externally, whereas other incentives can inspire workers internally by causing them to feel valued by the organization. (Bischoff & Wood, 2019; Garibaldi & Putri, 2018) findings are consistent with Herzberg's that motivation and hygiene factors could affect job satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Hesford et al. (2016) and Sankar (2016) continued to use Herzberg's two-factor theory to explore employee turnover. Sankar (2016) conducted a study implementing the

two-factor theory to determine hygiene factors' effect on job satisfaction and employee retention. The factors that Sankar observed that drove job satisfaction were working conditions, salary, status, job security, technical supervision, company policy and administration, and interpersonal relations, which coincide with Herzberg's theory.

Herzberg's theory was supportive to determine what factors influence employee retention (Jehanzeb, 2018). Hesford et al. (2016) sought to identify factors that influence employee retention. (Hesford et al., 2016; Shannon, 2017) applied Herzberg's theory to study the facets of job satisfaction, the intent to leave, and enhancing employee motivational levels, and fair compensation could result in employee retention. Shannon (2017) findings concur with Herzberg's two-factor theory; extrinsic and intrinsic job factors correlate with intending to leave. Shannon (2017) reported that the study results could help leaders implement strategies to improve retention rates and reduce employee turnover.

What causes workers to be satisfied or dissatisfied with their job remains a topic of exploration. Similarly, Ikatrinasari et al. (2018) studied employees' relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover and found a connection between job satisfaction and turnover intention. (Alshmemri et al., 2016; Rahman et al., 2017) used Herzberg's two-factor theory to determine the factors that affect job satisfaction; intrinsic (motivational) and extrinsic (hygiene) factors positively affect job satisfaction; both can positively impact employee motivation. Rahman et al. (2017) ascertained that motivational and hygienic factors were indicators of job satisfaction, noting that career growth, development, supervision, rewards, recognition, organizational policies, and

working conditions affect employee job satisfaction. (Majid & Yasir, 2019; Rahman et al., 2017) findings are congruent with the factors identified in Herzberg's two-factor theory explains that when employees express satisfaction in a job, it can reduce voluntary employee turnover. Herzberg's two-factor theory, with other theories, explains employees' reasoning for leaving or staying with an organization and how satisfaction and dissatisfaction factors can reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Complimentary Theories

Maslow's hierarchy is a theory that supports Herzberg's two-factor theory in correspondence with human motivation and the five sets of needs. Herzberg et al. (1959) addressed employees' needs and behaviors; and determined what factors cause employees to be satisfied or dissatisfied with their job. Maslow's hierarchy is an accurate assessment of individual needs that consist of many elements and aligns with several of Herzberg's theories.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory supports Herzberg's two-factor theory. In 1943, Maslow developed the hierarchy of needs theory, a human motivation theory (Groves et al., 1975). Maslow claimed that people are born with five sets of needs (Vignesh, 2016). According to Maslow, the five hierarchical needs are physiological, safety needs, the need for love, esteem needs, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). Maslow (1943) asserted that an individual does not fill the second need until fulfilling the first need. The meeting of the current need must occur before the higher need surfaces (Maslow, 1943). For example, safety needs, the second need in Maslow's hierarchy of

needs, cannot be filled until an employee's physiological needs, which are the first needs in the pyramid, have been filled (Vijayakumar et al., 2015).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory have similarities. The lower-level needs, such as physiological needs, safety needs, and social needs addressed in Maslow's theory, relate to Herzberg's hygiene factors in the two-factor theory (Purohit et al., 2016). The higher level of needs, such as self-esteem and self-actualization in Maslow's theory, is related to Herzberg's motivational factors. The accurate assessment of individual needs is essential to understanding and managing individual behavior in organizations (Gallagher et al., 2017). Understanding the link between Maslow's work and Herzberg could help owners gain a better perception of what motivates employees.

Maslow's approach could help small business owners who seek to satisfy their employees to decrease voluntary employee turnover and provide a framework for business leaders to understand what motivates employees (Lee, 2017). I used Herzberg's two-factor theory for the conceptual framework because its simplicity ensures the reader understands employee turnover phenomena.

McClelland's Human Motivation Theory

McClelland's human motivation theory and the two-factor theory have some likenesses, yet they differ. Like Herzberg's two-factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, McClelland's theory of needs addresses workers' needs, job behaviors, and attitudes (Gautam, 2016). Güss et al. (2017) explored why employees seek work and found that the need for achievement, the need for affiliation, and the need for power are

motivating factors. Herzberg et al. (1959) did not identify the need for control and association as motivational factors.

McClelland defined the need for achievement as the determination to excel, the need for affiliation as the need for interpersonal relationships, and the need for power denotes getting employees to behave in the desired way (Liu & Wohlsdorf, 2016). For example, if employees need power, they will strive for a position to apply their leadership abilities (Liu & Wohlsdorf, 2016). Also, employees who need achievement will pursue a role that emphasizes personal performance; or if employees need affiliation, they will gravitate to an employer committed to its employees (Liu & Wohlsdorf, 2016).

Based on this theory, employees will seek a job that will satisfy their needs; if employees need power, they will strive for a position to apply their leadership abilities (Liu & Wohlsdorf, 2016). Employees who need achievement will pursue a role that emphasizes personal performance, or if employees need affiliation, they will gravitate to an employer committed to its employees (Liu & Wohlsdorf, 2016). According to Gautam (2016), employees who need power, affiliation, and achievement perform best when they know that they have a 50% chance of success because they do not like to gamble with high odds, and luck does not satisfy them.

Like Herzberg's two-factor theory, McClelland's theory provides a framework for leaders to understand what motivates employees and could be a lens to view voluntary employee turnover phenomena. However, Herzberg's two-factor theory is popular among scholars and offers insight into areas that business owners can focus on to increase

employee satisfaction (Saxena & Vijayakumar, 2015). Based on this theory, employees will seek a job that will satisfy their needs.

Strategies for Reducing Voluntary Employee Turnover

Employee turnover remains a concern for businesses; therefore, business owners should devise strategies to eliminate voluntary employee turnover (Manoela et al., 2016). According to Adkins and Premeaux (2019) individuals will seek to restore balance when a negative imbalance is perceived. Organizations that focus on adopting a variety of healthy work environment practices that would involve employees in the decision-making process would provide growth opportunities and development (Adkins & Premeaux, 2019)**.** Employers must develop and implement plans to give employees adequate awards and compensation; failure to provide employees with sufficient salary or bonuses can be detrimental to an organization (Adkins & Premeaux, 2019; Maertz et al., 2019). Knowing turnover reduction strategies can help reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Chowdhury and Nazmul (2017) explored what causes employees to want to quit their job and suggested strategies to retain employees and decrease turnover. Chowdhury and Nazmul (2017) observed that offering training and development opportunities, fair pay, a harmonious work environment, career counseling, and opportunities could positively influence an employee's intent to stay with an organization. Caillier (2016) sought to determine if an employee's satisfaction with family-friendly programs decreased turnover. Flexible work schedules, employee assistance programs, and childcare programs were factors that could reduce turnover (Caillier, 2016; Yu, 2018).

Caillier's findings support Herzberg's two-factor theory, job satisfaction aids in the reduction of employee turnover. Business owners should ensure that their employees are satisfied with their job by offering adequate pay and rewards in salary increase to have a more sustainable impact on retention (Gevrek et al., 2017). Expanding on different tools that can be use to retain employees may help owners decrease turnover to improve productivity.

Small business owners should seek to enhance their understanding of employee turnover to increase performance (Acukgoz et al., 2016). Small businesses' strength has contributed to the economy through the decades (Bennett, 2016). According to the Small Business Administration (2017), the small business employed 47.3% of jobs from 1993 to 2013. Reducing employee turnover among small businesses is a concern because employees are among the organization's greatest assets (Letchmiah & Thomas, 2017). (Bennett, 2016; Hyder & Lussier, 2016) stressed the importance of small businesses and how the evidence supports the value of small companies. However, some small business owners cannot retain their employees; and voluntary employee turnover remains a concern in organizations (Manoela et al., 2016). In December 2017, 3.3 million employee turnovers occurred (U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2020). Small business owners must learn employee retention strategies to prevent voluntary employee turnover, remain in business, and positively affect the economy (Manoela et al., 2016).

Letchmiah and Thomas (2017) ascertained that employee turnover negatively influences small businesses' productivity. Employee turnover is a concern for small business owners because turnover is costly, affecting profitability (Haan & Soleman,

2016). Similarly, Malek et al. (2018) reported that employee turnover is expensive in any company; however, turnover is costly in small businesses where workers may have more job responsibilities. Voluntary employee turnover harms businesses because of the loss of the time and money spent on recruitment and training, the loss of organizational knowledge and skills, and a decrease in productivity, which negatively affects a businesses' profitability **(**Haan & Soleman, 2016; Change et al., 2019**)**. Small business owners use strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover to cut company costs for future sustainment.

Many factors influence voluntary employee turnover in small businesses. Martdianty et al. (2020) concluded that certain factors such as; unsolicited work roles and responsibility, relationship conflict, and limited career prospects were the main reasons for employee turnover. (Letchmiah & Thomas, 2017; Martdianty et al., 2020) findings were in unity with Herzberg's two-factor theory's motivation and hygiene factors, using pay increases, paid training, and maintaining pleasant group dynamics as strategies to retain their employees.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction can define as an attitude that individuals have about their jobs (Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2018). Leaders of organizations should commit more time and resources to motivate employees to achieve job satisfaction (Gillespie, 2018). While an employee might have to cognitive ability to perform the job, that employee may lack the tools or support necessary to complete the task; however, owners have the power to improve employees' job performance by applying managerial strategies to increase job

motivation and satisfaction (Eldor, 2017; Shonubi et al., 2016). Leaders improve

employees' job satisfaction levels when focusing on their needs, including recognizing

their skills and abilities to contribute to the organization (Eldor, 2017).

A positive relationship between employees' organizational commitment and job

performance and employers' organization support positively affects job performance (Lu

et al., 2016; Vignesh, 2016). The comparative analysis of three organizational dimensions

thoroughly and significantly affects employees' job performance (Jehanzeb & Mohanty,

2018). Organizational commitment has a significant impact on employee performance

and allows leaders to moderate the relationship between job performance and job-related

stress (Gillespie, 2018).

The employees' expectations and attitudes toward their jobs contribute to their job

satisfaction; employees' motivation and satisfaction could indicate how an effective

supervisory influence creates positive employee outcomes (DeVos &Verbruggen, 2020;

She et al., 2019). In a meta-analysis study of retention research, Allen et al. (2018) noted

that (a) different types of turnover exist, (b) staff does not leave only because of pay, (c)

job dissatisfaction accounts for less than half of turnovers, (d) leaders have a significant

influence over dissatisfaction and turnover, (e) a one-size-fits-all strategy is not adequate,

and (f) the mix of factors to reduce turnover is context-specific.

She et al. (2019) found that organizational performance has a significant negative

correlation between employee turnover and organizational size. Employees' positive

attitudes toward their organization result in a decreased turnover and increased positive

relationships with a diverse group of employees (She et al., 2019). Turnover decreases

when leaders employ strategies that include employee training to improve diversity; providing training and other resources to employees allows them to improve their job performance, which increases motivation and overall morale. (Chen et al., 2016; Grissom et al., 2016). The comprehensive critical analysis and synthesis of the literature indicate that motivation and organizational commitment impact job performance, voluntary turnover, and employee retention (Gautam, 2016).

Employee Engagement

If employees' need for congruence with the work environment is not met, those employees with a proactive personality may be more inclined to adopt aggressive work behaviors that may lead to alternative employment opportunities (Vermooten et al., 2019). Apart from the positive association between job dissatisfaction and job satisfaction, employees who consider the work environment satisfactory are more inclined to invest themselves in their work and engage more fully (Vermooten et al., 2019). Leaders play a critical role in a business's success by engaging, motivating, and retaining employees (Lee & Rathi, 2017).

The affective aspect of job satisfaction includes the degree of pleasure an employee has with the current position. When owners provide mentoring, the relationship affects protégés skill development and intentions to remain with the employer (Visvanathan et al., 2018)). Employee satisfaction is essential to face the dynamic and ever-increasing challenges of maintaining the organization's productivity by keeping the employees engaged and motivated (Visvanathan et al., 2018). The style of leadership that

owners choose to integrate into the company to reduce turnover or engage an employee is vital to increase productivity.

Conversely, Haan and Mozammel (2016) ascertained that applying a transformational leadership style does not guarantee employee engagement. Employee engagement plays a role in the retention of employees. Job satisfaction is an emotional state that results from the appraisal of one's experiences with one current job when an employee has a negative experience (Acukgoz et al., 2016). Herzberg (1974) study affirmed that job dissatisfaction relates to the work environment, and job satisfaction gratification from their jobs was associated. Malek et al. (2018) found leadership behavior affects turnover intention. Business owners should ensure that their employees are satisfied with their job to have more sustainable retention (Gevrek et al., 2017). Extrinsic and intrinsic factors are directly associated with job activity and can affect employee motivation (Staelens et al., 2018; Van-Der Schyff et al., 2018). This literature review canvases an array of different yet similar hygiene factors and motivation factors that could directly impact voluntary employee turnover.

Transition

This qualitative multiple case study's directions explain what strategies small business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. In Section 1, I addressed the background of voluntary employee turnover and introduced the problem and the purpose statement. The study's nature examined how to identify, define, and justify the research method and design. I also indexed the research and interview questions and addressed the conceptual framework, operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, and

delimitations, along with the study's significance. Lastly, I presented an extensive literature review.

I addressed the following in Section 2: the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, the participants, the research method and design, the population and sampling, and ethical research and implementation. Also, I addressed the data collection instruments and techniques used along with organizational strategies. Lastly, I conducted data analysis, discussed the study's validity and reliability, and concluded with the introduction of Section 3. In Section 3 I addressed the following: presentation of the findings, application to profession practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendation for further research, reflection, and close with a strong conclusion statement making the take-home message clear to the reader.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 includes detailed explanations of the plan I followed in order to explore and understand strategies small business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Section 2 consists of the purpose of the study, the role of the researcher, and the criteria for selection of participants for the study, and the research method and design. The section also includes the population and sampling, the ethical research, the data collection technique, data organization technique, and data analysis component for exploring the validity of the issue. Finally, Section 2 includes the process for assuring valid research to ensure data saturation and reliable research that will address the study's dependability

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some small business owners use to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance. This study's target population consisted of 4 small business owners in the Midwestern region of the United States, who successfully implemented strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance. The implication for positive social change included the potential for businesses to shape communities' health by contributing to education and development programs, stimulating the economy, and creating more jobs.

Role of the Researcher

My role as the primary researcher in this study was to collect data relating to the research topic from interviews, data gathering, data examination, and synthesis. When

conducting a qualitative study, the role of a researcher includes safeguarding participants' data, implementing analysis, communication, and collaboration between researcher and participants (Kelly et al., 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). In qualitative research, the researcher accesses the participants' thoughts and experiences using perception based on meanings expressed through words (Saunders et al., 2016). Conducting qualitative research requires a researcher to strategize to avoid inadvertently offending research participants (Hart-Johnson, 2017). To ensure data addresses the initial research question, an interview protocol is necessary (Yin, 2018). Researchers' added role is assuring the sampling identifies the phenomenon and aligns with the research question (Kelly et al., 2018). To eliminate bias during data gathering and analysis, I remained open to each participant's experience and hearing their views. How the primary researcher addresses and mitigates a personal perspective during data gathering and analysis was vital to the investigation. I addressed any bias relating to the research question during the study's assumption, limitation, and delimitation section.

I had no prior relationship with the participants or the topic of voluntary employee turnover. I conducted interviews in a private setting designated by each of the four business owners from small companies and followed the *Belmont Report's* principal and ethical protocol. According to the *Belmont Report* (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979)*,* researchers must be ethical and follow guidelines established to protect the research participants. I assured participants that the research would not cause harm and would comply with ethical standards to prevent hurtful or intrusive investigation (Office of

Human Research Protection, 2016). I provided the utmost respect to the participants, and ethically demonstrate research to reflect the *Belmont Report* guidelines.

An interview protocol is a script that researchers use to encourage them to stay on track of what to say during an interview process (Stuart et al., 2018). I conducted interviews with business owners of four small companies. I used six interview questions (see Appendix B) to track the participant's perspective. I used the data gathered from the semistructured interviews to describe the participants' views. My role as the researcher was to use the interview protocol throughout each interview. For this research, I recorded each participant interview via Zoom or iPhone to capture accurate data as part of the analysis. I transcribed and saved each interview to separate files on a password encryption computer to protect the collected electronic data, and the personal data will be in a locked safe accessed only by me.

Participants

A researcher should choose applicable participant(s) who will offer rich data (Yin, 2018). Raymond et al. (2018) found that maintaining adequate participation was critical to the research study's outcome and effect. I performed a web-based search to select participants suitable to provide their perspective on reducing voluntary turnover. The target population for this study was composed of 4 business owners in the Midwestern region who had applied knowledge and experience to implement strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover in small businesses. To establish a connection with suitable participants, I connected with participants virtually and provided a letter of introduction to introduce myself, the purpose of the research study, and the participant's role, all via

email. Each participant received an informed consent form and I established a relationship of trust with each participant exemplifying honesty, integrity, and ethical standards; they would provide their consent to participate by replying, "I consent." As the primary researcher, I explained to each participant that, at any time, they may withdraw from the process

The participants' primary role is to provide a source of evidence in a case study (Aslamah et al., 2017). Having a diverse and vigorous participant group is fundamental for presenting information (Raymond et al., 2018). Researchers use multiple strategies to recruit participants for a study (Yin, 2018). The process of obtaining access to participants can be complicated (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016). Researchers should craft a strategy to gain access to participants. To gain access to the participants, some stages need to be accepted, including identifying, and contacting participants, along with gaining commitment (Maramwidze-Merrison, 2016). I used proper communication etiquette, assuring each participant met the eligibility criteria, and scanned company websites to gain background information of the company and the owner. As the primary researcher, I recruited the sample population by phone and/or met with them via Zoom and presented an explanation and purpose of the study.

Establishing a positive link with participants enhances the engagement of the research process (Yin, 2018). Researchers' accessibility to participants can result in more precise communication (Yin, 2018). I was available to each business owner either in person, by email, or by phone to answer any questions or concerns they may had in regards to the questions in this study. Yin (2018) stated establishing a rapport with the

participant's; a researcher should communicate the purpose of the study with those participants honestly. To foster a positive working relationship with the participants, as the primary researcher, I assured each participant that the study would target their views and experiences as business owners while preserving their identities. As the primary researcher, I informed each participant that they could also ask questions of the researcher during the interview stage. I notified participants that they would have access to the study's findings upon request.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

The qualitative research method was suitable for engaging owners in semistructured interviews of strategies used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. A researcher strives to understand the participants' perspectives or situations by exploring experiences to provide meaningful data using qualitative methods (Ruel, 2017). There are three research methods to consider: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Posey, 2019). According to Doody and Baily (2016), the research question guides the choice of method. I used semistructured interviews using open-ended questions; I examined each participant's policy and procedures, and training techniques. The type of data collected in qualitative research is semistructured interviews, observations, and audiovisual materials (Wilson, 2016). The qualitative research method was appropriate for this study, as it gave a better understanding of how business owners implement strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Quantitative research methods are appropriate when actual data is required to answer the research question when general information is mandatory, and when variables can be isolated and defined (Hammarberg et al., 2016). Researchers use a quantitative approach to answer research questions that compare, relate, or describe (Doody & Bailey, 2016). Furthermore, quantitative methods are analyzed using statistical data to examine the relationship or difference among variables (Bartock, 2019). I did not use a quantitative research method for this study because it involves sampling, measuring, and examining relationships with numerical data analysis is not appropriate to address the research question.

The mixed-method approach was not appropriate for this study because a mixed-method combines qualitative and quantitative elements with this type of research approach and the general purpose of increasing the breadth and depth of understanding of a specific research topic investigation (Palinkas et al., 2015). The mixed-method approach addresses complex issues when a quantitative and qualitative approach alone is not adequate (Halcomb & Hickman, 2015; Molina-Arizona, 2016). However, a mixed-method approach did not align with my goals for this study; therefore, I did not use a mixed-method approach.

Research Design

I used a multiple case study design to collect and analyze data to explore the study's phenomenon. The multiple case study design addresses the how, and what of the research question. Hyett et al. (2014) emphasized that researchers should use multiple case study designs to collect and analyze data in specific contexts. I used a multiple case

study design to answer the research questions. According to Yin (2018), a case study can

be exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive. Researchers use multiple case studies to

gather and collect data (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016). I used a multiple case study design

to conduct semistructured interviews with individuals in two or more areas of the

Midwestern region. I collected data from 4 small business owners; therefore, a multiple

case study was suitable for my research. I used this approach to understand the strategies

small business owners use to decrease voluntary employee turnover to increase

organizational performance.

Phenomenological research explores the participants' lived experiences and

perceptions using a phenomenological method that might cause an eidetic generalization

instead of an empirical generalization (Englander, 2020). The overall objective of

phenomenologists is to obtain the depth of human experiences and how groups of

individuals share the same experiences (Pell et al., 2018). A phenomenological approach

did not coincide with the overarching research questions in this study. I did not use a

phenomenological design in the study, as it was not appropriate to explore lived

experiences and perceptions.

Ethnography is a qualitative research design in which researchers focus on

people's culture in their associated environment (Woermann, 2018). Ethnographic

researchers provide insight into daily life experiences, such as political, economic, and

social dynamics (Kalyta & Malsch, 2018). According to Bamkin et al. (2016),

ethnographic researchers collect data by observing people in their environment or

socializing with them to understand their environment. The ethnographic design was not

appropriate for this study, as I did not collect data by observing people in their environment.

Narrative research is storytelling conferred by participants with real-life experience (Kudret et al., 2019). Vough and Caza (2017) used narrative inquiries to research growth-based denied promotion stories and how the past response to career setbacks influenced responses to denied promotion. Their study provided an in-depth analysis of participants' modes of storytelling to define what denied their promotions meant to them. The narrative inquiry approach was not pertinent or an acceptable method to convey the participants' experience in this study. I did not tell a story of real-life experiences.

I conducted a multiple case study and collected data by conducting semistructured interviews using open-ended questions. Valid research requires quality data saturation and validity (Kline, 2017). Saturation means no additional data is discovered and pertains to the sample population (Saunders et al., 2017). A researcher achieves data saturation when there is no new information, the scholar will have enough data to duplicate the study, and no additional coding is possible (Kline, 2017). I achieved data saturation in this study, so no additional participants were selected with no new emerging themes.

Population and Sampling

The population chosen for this qualitative case study included a purposeful sample for 4 small businesses located in Midwestern region that had successfully used strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research to gather and collect data that will align with a study's purpose

(Benoot et al. 2016). According to Boddy (2016), researchers can use a small number of participants when using the purposeful sampling method to reach data saturation. One way to ensure data saturation is rehearsing the same open-ended interview questions and semistructured interview techniques to the different participants (Tran et al., 2017; Yang, 2016). Based on Yin (2018), researchers decide the sampling size to reach data saturation. I stopped collecting data when information became redundant and coding did not reveal any added information.

The opportunity to identify and interview participants who have first hand experience and knowledge of the research topic was the reason why purposeful sampling was an appropriate technique for the current qualitative study. The sample size was critical for research. Colorafi and Evans (2016) stated that researchers could use considerable sample sizes for case study interviews. The sample size for a qualitative study should represent the population and should be between three to six participants (Englander, 2020). My goal was to apply purposeful sampling methods to select a total of four small business owners from different-units for this study.

To achieve data triangulation, information retrieved from a case study could include interviews, observation, and documentation to triangulate the findings (Natow, 2019). For a case, study researchers examine sources as employee handbooks, office memos, and correspondents in addition to interviews and personal observations (Yin, 2018). Data collected for this study included organizational policies and other documents related to voluntary employee turnover strategies to support triangulation. The

participants had the opportunity to communicate their capabilities, add depth to the interview, and present the researcher with knowledge relating to the phenomenal interest.

Ethical Research

In qualitative research, ethical consideration must be taken at every step to protect the participants, protect the researcher's integrity, and overall the study (Reid et al., 2018). Reid et al., (2018) suggested that it is only appropriate for research to begin after obtaining IRB approval from the accompanying institution.

One way to ensure participants understand the critical elements of an interview is to obtain an informed consent form before conducting the study (Burke et al., 2018). Informed consent is a process that relates to the information given to potential participants for a study and designed for researchers to use for not committing harm or corruption (Mwaka et al., 2018). According to Annas (2018), the informed consent process involves (a) enough knowledge for potential participants to reassure they understand the information, (b) providing the potential participants the option to voluntarily opt-out at any time, and (c) answer any questions the potential participants may have. The researcher must ensure the informed consent form is a quality product with adequate ethical protection, such as confidentiality allocated only to the researcher (Annas, 2018). As the primary researcher, I emailed each participant an informed consent form to sign; once returned with a signature; I emailed a copy of the informed consent form for the participants' records. Furthermore, I included the informed consent form in the appendix of the Table of Contents.

The details within the informed consent form included participants' rights to withdraw from the study without consequences. I provided each potential participant with an informed consent form via email before the interview to clarify expectations regarding the interview and interview process. I did communicate to each participant that they may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. Participants may contact me anytime via telephone, email, or Zoom if they wish to withdraw from the study at any point during the interview sessions. If a participant chose to withdraw, I ceased any further communication with the participants and immediately returned any documents and deleted any data recordings.

Gelinas et al. (2018) asserted that incentives could have undue influence over the research participants. Gelinas et al. (2018) further explained that participatory incentives could sometimes be considered coercion. Based on these recommendations, I did not offer any incentives to study participants but thanked each participant for voluntarily participating in this research-investigation.

The Belmont Report protocol was useful to comply with the ethical protection of participants. To ensure the ethical protection of the research participants, I did adhere to the three ethical principles as indicated in The Belmont Report, which include (a) respect for others, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). I selected participants for the study once IRB (07-30-21-0669200) was approved.

I stored data collected from each participant on a secure USB drive that was locked away in a secure drawer located in my home office accessible only by the

researcher for a minimum of 5 years. After the 5 year timeframe, the data stored on the USB was formatted and then physically destroyed; this procedure protected each participant's confidentiality.

As the primary researcher, I did not reveal the participants' identity or information regarding their employment during or after the study that could jeopardize their identity or the organization's identity. I did not identify the participants' actual name(s) or the participants' business name or location at any time. I referred to the study participants as voluntary employee turnover Inc. and assigned a pseudo name for each ranging from P1, P2, and P3 or P4 if needed.

Data Collection Instruments

Qualitative interviews can be informal, semistructured, or focus groups (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016). Informal interviews are not structured like traditional interviews, semistructured interviews ask open-ended questions allowing for discussion, and focus groups interviews are conducted with a group of participants (Yin, 2018). Semistructured interviews are a critical part of the qualitative research process to generate responses from the subjective participants about the study's phenomenon (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). For this qualitative study, I was the primary data collection instrument and primarily used semistructured open questions for collecting data from interviews. According to Cakir and Cengiz (2016) and Yin (2018), asking the same open semistructured interview questions to every participant is essential to the data collection instrument process because open questions will engage participant's higher-order thinking. To collect crucial data from each participant, I asked the same open questions to

every participant adhering to the interview protocol (see Appendix A). The interviews lasted a maximum of 60 minutes.

Researchers are the primary data collection instruments in a qualitative research method (Alam, 2020; Yin, 2018). As the primary data collection instrument, the researcher's responsibility is to collect, synthesize, and analyze the collected data (Denzin 2017). Cyr (2016) posited that the researcher, as the primary data collection instrument, is also responsible for interpreting and translating the research participants' data into meaningful and useful information.

Based on Chen et al., 2019 and Yin (2018), researchers use interview protocol to develop a background for the study, strengthen the data collection process, and maintain the structure and quality of the data collected for interviews. The interview protocol guide (see Appendix A) involved an opening script, the target population for the study, the study's purpose, the research question, interview question(s), and the prompt for recording (Chen et al., 2019; Yin, 2018). Listening, reviewing, and interpreting the data was the researcher's role in this study, and adopting a protocol is critical to avoiding personal biases and wrong assumptions (Chen et al., 2019; Yin, 2018). Per these recommendations, I listened, reviewed and interpreted the data while adopting a protocol to avoid personal bias and wrongful assumptions. The lack of structure could lead to errors while interviewing each participant when conducting an interview (Yin, 2018). I used the interview protocol (see Appendix A) with each participant to explore each interview question with the intent of unveiling new ideas for implementing voluntary employee turnover strategies and ensure that the appendix is listed in the table of

contents. I complied with the interview process and avoided deviating from the outlined interview.

Member checking is crucial to the researcher because it enhances data collection and the reliability and validity of the data collection (Birt et al., 2016; Yin, 2018). Based on Brear (2018) member checking is the technique that the researcher uses to improve the accuracy, credibility, reliability, and validity of a study. Brear (2018) stated that member checking provides emancipatory outcomes, including developing critical understandings, influencing the research trajectory to give the participants a voice and establish more equitable researcher-researched relationships. Member checking is a form of respondent validation in which the participants confirm the data, interpretations, and conclusions of the research (Brear, 2018). Furthermore, I used member checking to make textual corrections, and any necessary changes by the interviewee for the final analysis.

The overall idea of member checking is to ensure the collection instrument's reliability and validity (Hamilton, 2019). I used member checking to enhance the reliability and validity of the data collection instrument. I used member checking by offering short summaries (no more than two pages) of interpretations of interview responses to the participants to verify that the data collected was an accurate reflection of their interview and the ideas they intended to convey. I scheduled a follow-up member-checking interview as needed. I repeated the member checking only if participants added new data during the process and also to support data saturation.

Data Collection Technique

The interview protocol (see Appendix A) is one of the techniques used when collecting data for a case study (Yin, 2018). Another data collection method in qualitative research is in-depth interviews applying interpersonal and subjectivity skills to understanding participant's experience (Alase, 2017). I collected primary data by conducting semistructured interviews using zoom conference calls to eliminate face-to-face interaction due to COVID-19 guidelines, company archival documentation by email, and relevant content from official company websites. Yin, 2018 describes data collection protocol as well-planned procedure which includes gaining access to interviewees, making a precise schedule to have completion time frames, and arranging unanticipated events. For this study, I scheduled interviews with four business owners who implemented voluntary employee turnover solutions. A follow-up meeting for member checking with each participant may be essential to ensure the participants' views are accurate.

One advantage of semistructured interviews is to allow the researcher to ask open-ended questions that will allow for more dialogue and elaboration from the participant (Brown & Danaher, 2017). Another advantage of semistructured interviews is that it aids researchers to gather in-depth accounts of people's experiences (Brown & Danaher, 2017). The disadvantage of collecting data through interviewing is the researcher may not do an excellent job of probing or asking follow-up questions (Brown & Danaher, 2017). Another disadvantage of collecting data through interviews is securing time slots with participants maybe difficult due to work, life balance (Schober, 2018). A researcher may

fail to listen or underestimate the resources required to transcribe and analyze data (Brown & Danaher, 2017). To extenuate any confusion, I asked several follow-up questions and established detailed discussions of each response. I used the member checking technique to affirm my understanding and clarification of the information I collected.

A pilot study was not required nor used for this study. I conducted interviews only after IRB approval. First, I begin with an explanation of the interview's purpose and process. Second, I ensured that each participant signs the informed consent form, and I restated that each participant could withdraw from the study at any time. Finally, I confirmed each participant's date and time to ensure that each participant would be ready for the interview. Lastly, I commenced the interviews following the interview protocol (see Appendix A). The interview protocol guide helped structure all interview phases (Danby et al., 2017). I used a journal to record nonverbal observations during the interviews to reflect participants' reactions and eliminate interview bias. At the end of each interview, I expressed my gratitude to each participant for participating in the interview. I informed each participant that I would request another meeting after completing the data analysis to ask for a review of my transcription for accuracy.

Member checking can help obtain participant approval, improve data collection's validity, and reduce bias (Thomas, 2017). I used the member checking technique to complete the transcribed interviews' perception and share a summary of each participant's findings in a follow-up meeting. I increased engagement with each participant with the member checking technique while allowing each participant to check for any mistakes or

misrepresentation of the participant's opinions and to ensure reliability and validity. Member checking can be a review to identify the purpose and procedures for seeking feedback (Thomas, 2017). Furthermore, I utilized member checking to ensure the actual wording and meanings were correct summaries in preparation for data analysis to begin. I considered all participants' suggestions during member checking to ensure that my interpretations of the interviews accurately reflected the participants' views.

Data Organization Technique

Yadav et al. (2018) indicated that data organization techniques are a platform to extract and store meaningful information to apply in practice. To ensure that the data's integrity and reliability was identifiable in all records, including nonverbal cues, the interview setting, and any unusual occurrence, I utilized Microsoft (MS). To ensure the files were password-protected, I used Microsoft (MS) to transfer raw data from each interview into NVivo 12. NVivo 12 is appropriate when analyzing the transcripts, assisting with pattern matching, coding, and identifying emergent themes (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). I categorized and labeled the data accordingly with similar themes for each participant's account to ensure accuracy. Data storage was maintained on a Universal Serial Bus (USB) flash drive and stored on a personal computer located in my home office.

It was essential to take the appropriate steps to backup and secure all critical data to protect all personal information that was acquired, and I did not disclose any participant's information. I retained all personal data until participants had the opportunity to review a summary of the study. Saunders et al. (2016) postulated that it is

essential to comply with controls that regulate data management. All encrypted participant data and identifiable media was deleted from all devices and permanently destroyed after the five-year deadline requirement, such as the USB drive and memory on the assigned computer. I stored all non-electronic data in a securely locked safe located in my home office. I destroyed audio recordings and errantly deleted any PDF files after 5 years. I destroyed the archival data to ensure that information extraction or reconstruction would not be possible.

Data Analysis

Data analysis represents a systematic and objective means to describing and understanding a phenomenon (Camila et al., 2018; Márcio et al., 2018, Carlos & Rafael, 2018). According to Yin (2018), data analysis examines, categorizes, and tabulates the evidence to produce empirical findings. The appropriate data analysis process that I used for this research was triangulation.

Triangulation is one data analysis process that can increase validity and reliability, which encompasses credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability (Moon, 2019). There are 4 methods of triangulation (a) method triangulation, (b) investigator triangulation, (c) theory triangulation, and (d) data source triangulation (Fusch et al., 2018; Natalia & Rodrigo, 2017). Qualitative case study researchers use methodological triangulation to validate data through cross-verification of two or more methods (Lodhi, 2016). I performed methodological triangulation to identify common themes. For example, I collected data by interviewing participants via zoom conference calls,

examined company websites, and reviewed recently published peer-reviewed articles on voluntary employee turnover.

Bengtsson (2016) recommended 5 steps of the textual analysis process, and they are (a) compile data, (b) disassemble data, (c) reassemble data, (d) interpret data, and (e) conclude. I outlined and shared each step of what I did during the textual analysis process. The description and 5 stages of this textual analysis process are:

Compiling Data

Bengtsson (2016) indicated that compiling is an essential part of document collection because compiling allows the evidence from the inquiry to be used later for triangulation. When qualitative researchers use compiling to collect and analyze raw data, the researcher will use that raw data to recognize the themes (Bengtsson, 2016). Bengtsson (2016) suggested that the researcher transcribe raw data immediately after each interview because of the possibility of losing notes to the incorrect participant.

Disassemble Data

Disassembling is viewed as data that helps researchers make sense of the different emergent themes (Velasco et al., 2020). Disassembling is a process of seeking responses with familiar themes from each semistructured question, and critical words from each participant respond during each interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The researcher must focus on each participant at a time for accuracy when disassembling data from each participant (Alam, 2020; Yin, 2018). I assigned each participant a category name to ensure each response was correct and applied to the proper participant.

Reassemble Data

Reassembling the data is the ability to interpret themes that surface (Velasco et al., 2020). After coding, I looked for patterns in the document or data that reassembled and arranged data with parallel coding categories (Haines et al., 2018). The process of seeking and arranging data with similar coding categories allowed me to arrange data graphically (Haines et al., 2018). I took the reassembled data by categories and illustrated each by order of significance once I completed the reassembling process. Based on Yin (2018), when viewing the data accumulation, the researcher can notice and connect each response to a research question.

Interpret Data

Interpretation is the basis of forming themes when they surface (Yin, 2018). The interpretation step is the study phase; the researcher will check for the data's consistency and understand its meaning (Regalla, 2016). According to Haines et al. (2018), the patterns of the data collected from each participant allow the researcher to understand the data for themes accurately. Based on Glazer (2018), several ingredients involve the interpretation process, like providing an explanation of the findings, making sure the "why" questions are answered, attaching results, and making sure each pattern has a place in an analytical framework. After each interpretation, member checking took place to ensure accuracy. The member checking process affirmed that each participant's responses were accurate and that the data's explanation met their approval (Debono et al., 2017).

Concluding

The conclusion is when I drew the conclusion and chose ways to define my findings (Cho & Jimerson, 2017). Following and complying with the 5 steps to analyze is essential and a vital aspect of the concluding step (Cho & Jimerson, 2017). As part of the concluding phase, I clarified the data's details to reinforce my arguments. For instance, I reviewed the codes to clarify that resembling codes grouped into themes aligned with my interview questions (Edmondson et al., 2019). My intentions for this step was to be very familiar with the data, determine the logic relating to my conclusions, and make the accessibility to my data precise.

I used NVivo12 software to organize and analyze data. Researchers uses NVivo12 to perform data entry, data analysis, create tables, and graph events related to the data (Castleberry & Nolan, 2018). NVivo 12 was used to generate transcripts from the recorded interviews to assist with coding functions, coding patterns, creating diagrams, and theme characteristics (Hobaugh, 2019).

The data for my research focused on voluntary employee turnover and other themes relating to my research purpose statement within my conceptual framework. I identified the information concerning the existing literature and conceptual framework section of my study; if any essential related themes or literature differed from the study; I correlated that information into the study as an amendment.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability is when a research study is repeatable because reliability is active, not passive, relating to the finished product, and reliability is vital to research. Reliability allows the repeat of a research study or a study repeated with the same outcome (Andrian et al., 2018). According to Bengtsson (2016), reliability adds accuracy to the complete research process by expressing the researcher, participants, and triangulation interaction. Qualitative researchers use member checking to provide each participant a summary of specific sections of their collected data that need verification; member checking would allow participants to review specific raw data areas for clarity and accuracy (Birt et al., 2016). Furthermore, member checking would provide transparency of the data collection and reliability that addressed this research study's dependability to ensure data consistency.

I adopted member checking to guarantee that I met the highest level of reliability and validity. Qualitative researchers using an interview protocol can improve the data quality obtained in an interview and enhancing the study (Powell & Brubacher, 2020; Yin, 2018). Furthermore, I used an interview protocol for each participant's using the same open-ended interview questions and guidelines. Qualitative researchers encompass methodological strategies to ensure the trustworthiness of research findings,' and the criteria for qualitative studies are credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Korstjens & Moser, 2017; Noble & Smith, 2015; Queiros et al., 2017).

Dependability

Qualitative researchers can strengthen the dependability of findings by ensuring process transparency and other researchers' ability to replicate the research (Noble & Smith, 2015). I incorporated member checking, also known as respondent validation, in the process of verifying that the data collected was true and accurate (Varpio et al., 2017). Member checking is a means of ensuring the fidelity of the data and analysis of that data (Denzin, 2017). Birt et al., (2016) asserted that ethical considerations should ensure participants' protection throughout the research process. Ethical conditions are different from a transcript review where you ensure that you have accurately transcribed an interview from an in person-interview (Saunders et al., 2017).

Validity

Qualitative researchers addressing validity are vital, but the researcher's goal is to meet the criterion of trustworthiness within a qualitative analysis (Bengtsson, 2016; Conz & Magnani, 2020). I addressed validity and reliability through the lens of the criterion of trustworthiness. The standard criteria of trustworthiness of a qualitative researcher are (a) credibility, (b) dependability, (c) transferability, and (d) confirmability (Bengtsson, 2016; Korstjens & Moser, 2017; Leal 2019; Noble & Smith, 2015; Queiros et al., 2017).

Credibility

Credibility is critical to ensuring the validity of the analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). However, when coding transcribes and reviewing similarities establish credibility, and researchers use credibility as criteria to prove the study's accuracy and trustworthiness (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Wright et al., 2016). According to Marshall

and Rossman (2016), the research participants must review, verify, and validate the study's interpretations during member checking. I engaged with each participant using member checking to verify and validate the researcher's interpretations. Qualitative researchers that use methodological triangulation will consist of two or more methods to obtain raw data (Akbiyik & Senturk, 2019). Research experts discovered that triangulation, member checking, and using an interview protocol assist with a research study's credibility (Akbiyik & Senturk, 2019). I implemented the use of methodological triangulation to collect raw data to assist with the research study's credibility. Akbiyik and Senturk (2019) recommended using more than two methods to assist with this research study's credibility. Based on Akbiyik and Senturk's recommendation, I used methodological triangulation in various data sources to gain information relating to the study to generate findings from analyzing data.

Transferability

A researcher should provide a detailed description of the participants' characteristics, data collection technique, analysis technician, and the study process to increase information transferability (Jouhari et al., 2015). Transferability denotes whether a study's results apply to other studies or settings (Colorafi & Evans, 2016). Inclusion criteria maintained transferability and reassessed the research as it progressed. Yin (2018) stated specifying clear and concise descriptions of the findings retain the reader's attention.

Confirmability

The degree of neutrality or the extent to which a study's findings reflect the participants' opinions and experiences rather than the researchers' biases, motivations, or interests (Kyngàs et al., 2020). Correct and accurate interpretation of each participant's data provides confirmability in qualitative research, as a representation of the researcher's data collection does not reflect the investigator's biases or viewpoints (Miyasaki et al., 2017; Rose & Johnson, 2020).

Data saturation

The incurrence that no additional data will reveal new themes or that a researcher reaches the point that information is redundant (Saunders et al., 2017; Tran et al., 2017). I ensured data saturation by providing the data's interpretations accurately, continuing to collect data until I had no new information, I had enough information to duplicate the study, and no new codes arose.

Transition and Summary

This qualitative multiple case study understood what strategies small business owners used to reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance. I began Section 2 with a restatement of the purpose statement, followed by the researcher's role, participants, the research method, and research design. I addressed the population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments, and data collection technique. Finally, I discussed the organization technique, data analysis, and the study's reliability and validity. Section 3 will address the following: The introduction, presentation of findings, application to professional practice, and social change

implication. I also discussed the recommendations for actions, recommendations for further research reflections, and the conclusion. Section 3 ends with the appendixes.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that small business owners used to reduce voluntary employee turnover successfully. Data were acquired from conducting individual interviews via Zoom with 4 small business owners that successfully managed voluntary turnover. I analyzed the collected data using a meaningful unit analysis of the themes. I used member checking to validate the collected data and confirm the connection, organization, productivity, and voluntary employee turnover. Four themes emerged from the participants' responses: (a) employee turnover, (b) job satisfaction, (c) employee engagement, and (d) monetary incentives. Section 3 will include common themes, the presentation of findings and incorporate application to professional practice, social change implication, recommendations, personal reflections, and contributions to the literature.

Presentation of the Findings

This study was guided by the research question: What strategies do small business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase productivity? The data collected from the individual semistructured interviews were applied to answer the research question. I used company documents, semistructured interviews, and methodological triangulation to validate the research findings. This study generated four themes, which I related to the conceptual framework. After transcribing the interviews, I contacted each participant with a synopsis of the answers given in the interview, including my analysis. To protect the data and participants' identities and maintain

confidentiality, participants were assigned a pseudonyms label of P1, P2, P3, and P4. After their approval, I used qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software Nvivo to organize, analyze, find common themes, and find patterns to achieve more robust research results.

This study's conceptual framework was Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory. It yielded a base and structure of hygiene factors such as employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction strategies that could be used by business owners and implemented in a day-to-day work capacity, including salary, recognition, and positive work environments. I selected four small business owners in the Midwestern region who successfully implemented strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance and could address the research questions.

Emerging Themes

After coding and analyzing the data, I reached data saturation after the fourth interview and focused on themes related to the research question. I identified the following four major themes: (a) employee turnover, (b) job satisfaction, (c) employee engagement, and (d) monetary incentives. In the following sections, I analyze these themes and how they correlate with the conceptual framework that supported this study.

Table 2

Notable Participant Theme Quotes

Themes	P1	P2	P3	P4
Employee Turnover	1	1	2	1
Job Satisfaction	2	1	2	2
Employee Engagement	1	2	3	1
Monetary Incentives	3	2	3	1

Note. Numbers are rated by the participant.

Theme 1: Employee Turnover

The first theme that emerged from the thematic analysis was employee turnover. The findings suggest owners should implement practical approaches to reduce employee turnover and increase organizational performance for their business needs. All participants responded that a plan of action pertaining to employee turnover is critical to retain employees and maintain engagement. Creating both an operating agreement and a mission statement would give a better understanding of the goals and the vision the owners have for reducing employee turnover. Business owners need to seek ways to understand their workers' needs and desires to reduce turnover (Chen et al., 2016). For example, P1 described employee turnover as buying into the vision:

First, I needed to get my current employees to buy into the vision that I was creating. Getting the team to understand the goals we were trying to reach and how we would achieve them helped give them direction on the path we were heading.

P2 stated that "I offered better incentives that the employees could see immediately increased pay, better health coverage, and a chance for a bonus." Also, P1, P2, and P3 stated that becoming a business owner was based on their experiences in other jobs and how the lack of communication between management and employees impacted their decision to leave the job. However, P4 stated, "I vow to maintain open communication with employees will always be a goal to create an owner, employee relationship that will reduce turnover within my business." The employees' expectations and attitudes toward their jobs contribute to employees' motivation and satisfaction could

indicate how an effective supervisory influence creates positive employee outcomes (DeVos &Verbruggen, 2020; She et al., 2019). All participants were able to say that having an effective influence on employees made turnover strategies easier to implement. The following section is an analysis and correlation between the theme of employee turnover and the two-factor theory.

Employee Turnover and the Construct of Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

The construct of Herzberg's two-factor theory and the theme of employee turnover align with the impacts that employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction have on improving voluntary employee turnover and increasing organizational performance. The findings of this study suggest that if hygiene factors are absent, it could cause an employee to become dissatisfied with the job and leave. Herzberg et al. (1959) explained that when hygiene factors are absent, employees become dissatisfied and will not work harder; those factors have been identified as motivators that may increase job satisfaction. The findings suggest that when employees are satisfied with their job, the potential to increase performance and loyalty becomes evident. Job satisfaction is an emotional state when an employee has negative experiences concerning different facets of the job; the employee's overall job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is likely to be relevant (Acukgoz et al., 2016). P2 stated, "Being a business owner, we have the option to think outside the box when exploring motivators for our employees but remain cost-effective." Owners have the power to improve employees' job performance by applying managerial strategies to increase job motivation and satisfaction (Eldor, 2017; Shonubi et al., 2016). Owners can improve employees' job satisfaction levels when they focus on the needs of

employees' which include recognizing their skills and abilities to contribute to the business.

P3 stated, "owners should seek to restore balance when a negative imbalance is perceived." Furthermore, owners that use an accurate assessment of individual needs can adopt a healthy work environment. P1 and P4 talked about treating employees as people, listen to their concerns, and help where possible. For example, P4 stated, "commit more time and resources to motivate employees." Leaders play a critical role in a business's success by engaging, motivating, and retaining employees (Lee & Rathi, 2017). The affective aspect of job satisfaction includes the degree of pleasure an employee has with the current position. Employee satisfaction is essential to face the dynamic and ever-increasing challenges of maintaining productivity by keeping the employees engaged and motivated.

The findings of this study suggest that the theme of employee turnover aligns with the constructs of satisfaction versus dissatisfaction from Herzberg's two-factor theory. Herzberg (1959) theory promoted the construct that employees are satisfied with their job and stay in their position for long periods when hygiene factors are present. The absence of hygiene factors results in no job satisfaction and retaining employees can be difficult when employees are dissatisfied with their job and seek new places to work (Sankar, 2016). Offering training and development opportunities, fair pay, a harmonious work environment, career counseling, and opportunities could positively influence an employee's intent to stay with an organization (Chowdhury & Nazmul, 2017). Apart from the positive association between job dissatisfaction and job satisfaction, employees who

consider the work environment satisfactory are more inclined to invest themselves in

their work and engage more fully.

Employee Turnover and Business Practice

Work incentives and job satisfaction along with financial incentives encourage

employees externally (Bischoff and Wood, 2019). In contrast, other incentives can inspire

workers internally by causing them to feel valued by the organization. For example, P1

stated,

> Increasing the pay, adding better health coverage, a chance for a bonus, and better
>
> treatment, allowing our employees to reinvest into the company and become part
>
> shareholders made them feel like they were working for more than just a
>
> paycheck.

An employee's salary can affect voluntary employee turnover; according to Mohamed et

al. (2017), pay dissatisfaction can cause turnover intention, leading to employee turnover.

According to Chakrabarti and Guha (2016), a significant relationship exists

between compensation and employee retention; the more an employee is rewarded or

compensated, the longer they remain in an organization. A worker's pay is a predictor of

an employee's intent to stay on their job (Spencer et al., 2016). Employers should

consider offering workers fair compensation to decrease job dissatisfaction to retain the

most significant assets.

Summary of Employee Turnover

Some participants agreed that one of the most complicated challenges small

business owners face is the growing trend of voluntary employee turnover. For example,

if an employee cannot balance work with life situations, they may become frustrated with their job and decide to voluntary leave. Gaining insight into job satisfaction and what motivates employees can create a positive workplace by applying hygiene factors. Motivational factors can also positively impact employee motivation and satisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2016).

When employees are satisfied with their jobs, employee retention is enhanced, and motivators that generate job satisfaction prevent employees from being dissatisfied (Abrudan & Matei, 2016). Leaders who use the transformational leadership style develop positive leader-employee relations, encourage employee growth potential within the organization, validate their self-expression, and rouse employees to higher performance (Yehuda, 2018). The findings of this study are consistent with supporting the owner's approach to employee turnover, which relates to the purpose statement. In addition, the findings of this study are consistent with the related and contrasting theory of Maslow's hierarchy and transformational leadership.

Transformational leaders articulate a vision, foster a team approach, have high-performance expectations, and provide intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Bormann & Rowold, 2016). Understanding the link between supervision and employee turnover could help owners grasp the concepts of satisfaction or how dissatisfaction shapes an individual. Maslow (1943) asserted that the five hierarchical needs are physiological, safety needs, the need for love, esteem needs, and self-actualization. An individual does not fill the second need until fulfilling the first need; the meeting of the current need must occur before the higher need surfaces (Maslow, 1943).

The accurate assessment of individual needs is essential to understanding and managing individual behavior in organizations (Gallagher et al., 2017).

Theme 2: Job Satisfaction

The second theme that emerged from the thematic analysis was job satisfaction. The findings suggest owners improve employees' job satisfaction levels when focusing on their needs, including recognizing their skills and abilities to contribute to the business. A positive relationship between employees' organizational commitment and job performance and employers' organization support positively affects job performance (Lu et al., 2016; Vignesh, 2016). Business owners believe commitment has a significant impact on employee performance this allows them [owners] to moderate the relationship between job performance and job-related stress. For example, P2 stated, "make sacrifices when for the sake of morale you will be better in the long run with the happiness of the employee." P3 described the theme of job satisfaction and how owners should understand how satisfaction impacts a business:

Whether they [employee] like the job or even individual aspects of the job, as long as they feel respected and valued, they [employee] will work better. We as owners need to find what motivates employees and do what needs to be done; that's the most critical factor in business.

P1 gave a different outlook on job satisfaction:

When we [owners] place ourselves in the position that our employees are in or reflect on the positions that we [owners] worked before becoming business

owners, what did the managers or organizations do or not do to make the job

appealing or not so appealing we [owners] should do the opposite of the negative.

Furthermore, P4 explained the same concepts that P3 acknowledged business owners

should recognize employees as individuals, show respect, and find motivators to engage

employees to make the job more satisfying.

The employees' expectations and attitudes toward their jobs contribute to their job

satisfaction; employees' motivation and satisfaction could indicate how an effective

supervisory influence creates positive employee outcomes (DeVos &Verbruggen, 2020;

She et al., 2019). If additional resources are provided to the employees, this will allow

them to improve their job performance. All participants stated how job satisfaction has a

negative impact on turnover. However, if additional focus is on employees' needs, the

rate of organizational performance will increase. Apart from the positive association

between job dissatisfaction and job satisfaction, employees who consider the work

environment satisfactory are more inclined to invest themselves in their work and engage

more fully (Vermooten et al., 2019). The affective aspect of job satisfaction includes the

degree of pleasure an employee has with the current position; integrating motivators into

the business will reduce turnover and increase productivity.

Job satisfaction and the Construct of Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg et al. (1959) explained that employees become dissatisfied, not

motivated, and do not work harder when hygiene factors are absent. Job satisfaction was

identified as one of the hygiene factors that will motivate employees. All participants

expressed the need for motivators to be present to obtain job satisfaction. Motivational

techniques within the actual job may cause satisfaction with the job (Herzberg et al.,

1959). Motivated employees perform better than unmotivated employees, and the

motivation can transfer to others who come in contact with the motivated employee

(Gillespie, 2018). If owners can engage with their employees to create a level of

commitment that transcends into even higher motivation, the content of the job can

contribute to job satisfaction:

P1 discussed some of the motivational techniques used to create job satisfaction.

"Offer award bonuses based on profit twice a year also offer a chance to win extra perks

via performance, for example, extra time off, a raffle of gifts or cash." Moreover,

understanding what motivates employees will sustain a business and develop a positive

work environment where employees will be happy in the position.

Herzberg (1974) affirmed that job satisfaction relates to the working environment

and gratification from associated jobs. For example, P2 said, "When employees are

promoted from within the business, it shows in their work." P3 and P4 implied that job

satisfaction regarding motivation should be measured by individuals and not as a business

in general, focusing on accomplishing the end goal. For example, P4 stated, "I try to do

individual evaluations, so I can get a better understanding of what each need may be in

the position to help them be successful." The construct of intrinsic factor and motivation

correlates with job satisfaction and the techniques owners put for their employees. The

following section is an analysis of and links between the theme of job satisfaction and

motivation.

Job Satisfaction and Business Practice

Some businesses focus on the employee's extrinsic needs and fail to address the intrinsic needs (Staelens et al., 2018). The most common and essential extrinsic factors include remuneration and benefit that have work aspects directly associated with job activity (Staelens et al., 2018). Motivation relates to extrinsic and intrinsic factors; the intrinsic factors directly affect employee motivation. One participant explained a motivational factor that impacted business decisions was responsibility. Giving employees more to do within the scope of the job creating a sense of satisfaction. For example, P2 stated,

> When I [the owner] assign different tasks to employees outside of the normal scope of the job, I [the owner] can see that most appreciate being able to do something outside of the daily routine and seem to feel like this is how they [employee] will grow within the business.

One participant explained that having an owner aware and versed on how different motivation techniques have a positive perspective on the meaning of work-family and owners who care. P1 stated, "When employees know that you care and want to see everyone succeed, they are inclined to be teachable and focused on getting the work completed correctly."

Inspired employees feel mastery over their work, optimism, and a sense of accomplishment (Gillespie, 2018). Motivated employees perform better than unmotivated employees, and the motivation can transfer to others who come in contact with the motivated employee (Gillespie, 2018). Inspired employees have a sense of purpose and

self-worth that may eventually lead to personal growth (Gillespie, 2018). Motivation factors are intrinsic rewards provided by a company to motivate employees, affecting job satisfaction; employee retention will improve when employees are satisfied with their jobs (Shah & Soomro, 2019; Van-Der Schyff et al., 2018). Owners who engage with their employees create a higher sense of motivation and job satisfaction. The following section summarizes the theme of job satisfaction.

Summary of Job Satisfaction

Previous segments from the theme job satisfaction consisted of analysis and the findings of this study. First, I analyzed the results of Herzberg's two-factor theory constructs of intrinsic and extrinsic over job satisfaction. In this study, I established that motivation is essential to job satisfaction as an intrinsic factor. Owners are compelled to create motivation techniques to reduce the challenges of turnover continuously.

Owners should commit more time and resources to employees to achieve job satisfaction. While an employee might have to cognitive ability to perform the job, that employee may lack the tools or support necessary to complete the task; however, owners have the power to improve employees' job performance by applying managerial strategies to increase job motivation and satisfaction (Eldor, 2017; Shonubi et al., 2016). The employees' expectations and attitudes toward their jobs contribute to their job satisfaction; employees' motivation and satisfaction could indicate how an effective supervisory influence creates positive employee outcomes (DeVos &Verbruggen, 2020; She et al., 2019). Understanding the link between owners and employee turnover could help owners grasp the concepts of satisfaction or how dissatisfaction shapes an

individual. The link between job satisfaction and turnover is complex and influenced by an owner's understanding of what motivates employees.

The theme of job satisfaction aligns with Herzberg's two-factor theory constructs of intrinsic and extrinsic. Herzberg identified the second construct as the motivational factors or those within the employee (Herzberg et al., 1959). Job satisfaction is an emotional state that results from the appraisal of one's experiences with a current employees job; when an employee has negative experiences concerning different facets of the job, the employees overall level of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is likely to be relevant (Acukgoz et al., 2016). Extrinsic and intrinsic are the two leading factors determined to influence job satisfaction; job dissatisfaction relates to the working environment, job satisfaction and gratification relate to an individual's associated job (Herzberg, 1974).

This research study's findings are linked to the purpose statement that owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance. An inclusion to the findings of this study are; conforming to the related and contrasting theory of needs/human motivation theory; in the following paragraph, I linked the theory and theme of job satisfaction.

In Maslow's theory, the higher needs, such as self-esteem and self-actualization, are related to Herzberg's motivational factors**.** The accurate assessment of individual needs is essential to understanding and managing individual behavior in organizations (Gallagher et al., 2017). Like Herzberg's two-factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, McClelland's theory of needs addresses workers' needs, job behaviors, and

attitudes (Gautam, 2016). McClelland's theory provides a framework for owners to understand what motivates employees and could be a lens to view voluntary employee turnover phenomena. The following section is an analysis of the theme of employee engagement.

Theme 3: Employee Engagement

The third theme that emerged from the thematic analysis was employee engagement. The findings suggested that owners should be receptive when asked questions and not complacent, increasing employees' knowledge and comprehension of the business, especially when employees are eager to learn. Three out of four participants acknowledge that employee engagement is more than business strategies or techniques for keeping employees engaged. For example, P2 stated, "Engagement works two ways both parties should be intellectually curious with inquisitive minds to increase productivity." P4 stated, "Persistent questioning and healthy dialogue between owner and employee will create ideas for improvement and new ways to achieve those goals." For example, experimental learning, and rebranding approaches are essential to reach measurable goals, increasing knowledge at a higher working level, and knowledge sharing among senior employees and new hires. P1 stated.

> Suppose 4 things are followed, having measurable goals, acquiring knowledge, hard work, and perseverance. In that case, anything can be achieved as long as the employee never stops learning, then that's when they [employee] will start to see the uniqueness within themselves.

The participants explained how owners consider employee engagement a crucial part of business and a critical component of turnover strategies. Leaders play a vital role in a business's success by engaging, motivating, and retaining employees (Lee & Rathi, 2017). Business owners should ensure that their employees are satisfied with their job to have more sustainable retention (Gevrek et al., 2017). Although participants in this study disclosed various challenges with engaging employees, all participants expressed strategies such as one-on-one meetings, surveys, and healthy dialogue as positive effective platforms to reduce challenges. The leadership style that owners choose to integrate into the company to reduce turnover or engage an employee is vital to increase productivity.

Employee Engagement and Construct of Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

The question asked in the conceptual framework that correlates with Herzberg's two-factor theory constructs was that employees become dissatisfied when hygiene factors are absent. They will not work harder if employees' need for congruence within the work environment is not met. In that case, those employees with a proactive personality may be more inclined to adopt aggressive work behaviors that may lead to alternative employment opportunities (Vermooten et al., 2019). Apart from the positive association between job dissatisfaction and job satisfaction, employees who consider the work environment satisfactory and feel more engaged with details of their work will invest more fully into the business, which will increase productivity.

The affective aspect of job satisfaction includes the degree of pleasure an employee has with the current position. Employee satisfaction is essential to face the

dynamic and ever-increasing challenges of maintaining the organization's productivity by keeping the employees engaged and motivated (Visvanathan et al., 2018). Job satisfaction is an emotional state that results from the appraisal of one's experiences with a current employee's job (Acukgoz et al., 2016). For example, P2 stated, "when an employee has negative experiences concerning different facets of the job, the employee's overall level of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is likely to be relevant." Herzberg affirmed that job satisfaction or dissatisfaction relates to the working environment, employee engagement, and gratification from their associated jobs (Herzberg, 1974). P1 stated,

> We tried to stay as flexible as we could, depending on the circumstances presented to us when engaging employees in job-related ideas for improvement. And, we did allow our employees to reinvest into the company and become part shareholders. This allowed them to feel like they were working for more than just a paycheck.

Also, P1 gave a similar motivational response when employees seem unsure of how their suggestions will be perceived "Good, better, best never let it rest. Until your good is better and your better are best." Inspired employees have a sense of purpose and self-worth that may eventually lead to personal development (Chen, 2016; Gillespie, 2018). A positive relationship exists between employee engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Business owners need to seek ways to understand their workers' needs and desires and engage them more in decisions that affect the productivity of the business and employees as individuals.

Employee Engagement and Business Practices

Owners can gain more when employees are engaged in their career paths, motivated, show appreciation and recognition, reinforcing their self-esteem and self-worth. According to Chen et al. (2016), a positive relationship between career growth and job satisfaction negatively correlates to turnover intention. Employers should ensure employees have the opportunity for advancement and growth to contribute to employees' satisfaction with their jobs, leading to decreased employee turnover rates (Chen et al., 2016). Owners need to become change agents in their business. Inspiring employees' to be motivated could have a direct impact on the reduction of turnover. For example, P4 stated,

> When employees perceive higher levels of owner support in decision-making, they [employee] are more likely to deliver higher levels of job performance. It is what I [owner] call emotional labor; employees' emotions are vital to a work environment. We [owner] need to engage and motivate employees more and not exhaust their [employee] emotions with unrealistic goals related to the job.

Motivated employees perform better than unmotivated employees, and the motivation can transfer to others who come in contact with the motivated employee (Gillespie, 2018). Inspired employees could show more work motivation and provide the organization with long-term talent (Herzberg et al., 1959). Inspirational motivation is a component that encourages employees to align their personal goals with the company's mission (Bormann & Rowold, 2016). Motivation is inspirational for employees to achieve personal and professional fulfillment (Martin, 2017). P1 stated, " The key is to

treat your employees as people, listen to their worries and concerns. You will be better in the long run with the happiness of the employee."

Furthermore, Moon (2017) discovered that if leaders engage with their employees, it will create a level of commitment that transcends to their followers. For example, two of the four participants conveyed a measure of employee engagement strategies. P2 provided an example, and the participant stated, " Implementing work-related suggestions from employees show that owners listen, and once the employees began seeing their ideas being carried out it gives a higher understanding that this is not just a paycheck but a workplace involving employees in the decision making process of providing opportunities for growth and development." Extrinsic and intrinsic factors are directly associated with job activity and can affect employee motivation (Staelens et al., 2018; Van-Der Schyff et al., 2018). In the end, employers may find motivation, engagement, and advancement as a parallel that could prevent voluntary employee turnover.

Summary of Employee Engagement

Each previous section from the theme employee engagement subsisted of analysis and the findings of this study. An analysis of the findings related to Herzberg's (1974) two-factor theory construct of satisfaction and dissatisfaction examined the findings of motivation and turnover strategies. P4 stated, "Through the lens of perseverance, employee engagement is viewed as a marathon rather than a sprint; owners need to stay the course with employees and face any deterrents or tempting distractions as a team." Additionally, based on the findings of this research study, small business owners

essentially promote continued prosperity and economic growth in local communities. These growths take on many different forms, such as lowering poverty by providing new job opportunities, contributing to the vitality of neighborhoods, and helping people organize their professional and personal growth.

The construct of Herzberg's (1974) theory of satisfaction and dissatisfaction relates to the theme of employee engagement as the owner's focal point is on experimental learning, branding new ideas, and increasing knowledge as crucial ways of keeping employees satisfied and engaged in their work. When employees are satisfied with their jobs, employee retention is enhanced, and motivators that generate job satisfaction do not prevent employees from being dissatisfied (Poissonier, 2017). When owners provide mentoring, the relationship affects protégés skill development and intentions to remain with the employer (Visvanathan et al., 2018)). The affective aspect of job satisfaction includes the degree of pleasure an employee has with the current position.

Employee satisfaction is essential to face the dynamic and ever-increasing challenges of maintaining the organization's productivity by keeping the employees engaged and motivated (Visvanathan et al., 2018). Business owners should ensure that their employees are satisfied with their job to have more sustainable retention (Gevrek et al., 2017). Extrinsic and intrinsic factors are directly associated with job activity and can affect employee motivation (Staelens et al., 2018; Van-Der Schyff et al., 2018). Employee engagement plays a role in the retention of employees.

Offering training and development opportunities, fair pay, a harmonious work environment, career counseling, and opportunities could positively influence an employee's intent to stay with an organization (Chowdhury & Nazmul, 2017). Organizations that focus on adopting a variety of healthy work environment practices that would involve employees in the decision-making process would provide growth opportunities and development (Adkins & Premeaux, 2019)**.** Herzberg's two-factor theory, with other theories, explains employees' reasoning for leaving or staying with an organization and how satisfaction and dissatisfaction factors can reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Theme 4: Monetary Incentives

The fourth and final theme that emerged from the thematic analysis was monetary incentives. The essential recommended findings were that owners should consider offering workers fair compensation to decrease job dissatisfaction and retain the most significant assets.

The participants' feedback implied that establishing a more rewarding compensation package could increase employee satisfaction and reduce turnover. Owners believe that employees who are satisfied with their salary will not quit their job. For example, the participants acknowledged that monetary incentives have the potential to motivate employees. P1 stated, "Offering incentives employees can see immediately." The same participant explained those immediate incentives as increasing pay, adding better health coverage, and a chance for bonuses. P3 stated, "Implementing strategies cause me [owner] to encounter obstacles, money being at the top of the list."

Additionally, the participant gave a brief recap of incentives that employees can see immediately. For example, P3 stated, "Immediate incentives do not always come in the form of money; it can be recognition, flexible work schedules, or even professional development." The owner explained that immediate incentives as another strategic way to keep employees satisfied.

For example, P4 stated, "We did award bonuses based on profit and performance." P4 expressed a similar yet different incentive approach that provided more job security than a set pay rate. Finally, P1 responded to how money motivates individuals and how that aligns with a reduction in turnover. For example, P1 stated, "We offer higher pay rates, and performance increases less tardiness, and less absenteeism."

Three of the four participants claimed money retains employees and how money outranks satisfied employees. For example, most participants argued that an employee may be dissatisfied with the job but stay because of adequate pay. Each participant suggested they would be more inclined to offer more incentive to satisfied employees if it guaranteed fewer turnovers. According to Chen et al. (2016), a positive relationship between career growth and job satisfaction negatively correlates to turnover intention. An employee's salary can affect voluntary employee turnover, lower performance scores have higher turnover rates, and pay is a strong predictor of turnover.

Monetary Incentives and Construct of Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

The question asked in the conceptual framework that correlates with Herzberg's theory constructs was: When hygiene factors such as salary are absent will employees become dissatisfied and work less? Most participants agreed that when the salary does

not meet the needs of the employees' dissatisfaction with the job will become evident, and turnover rates will increase. The findings of this study suggested that the theme of monetary incentives aligns with Herzberg's two-factor theory constructs of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Bischoff and Wood (2019) discovered that financial incentives encourage employees externally, whereas other incentives can inspire workers internally by causing them to feel valued by the organization. Garibaldi & Putri (2018) observed the effect of compensation and work settings on employee retention and recorded results consistent with findings in Herzberg's two-factor theory that compensation slightly influenced employee retention and the work environment had a compelling impact on employee retention. An employee's salary can affect voluntary employee turnover. According to Mohamed et al. (2017), pay dissatisfaction can cause turnover intention, leading to employee turnover. A participant disclosed how allowing employees to become part shareholders could create satisfaction with the job and the business. For example, P3 stated,

> We understand that compensation is a connection factor that brings employees and business goals together. That is why our compensation package has to be an effective tool utilized to reduce turnover.

Owners must develop and implement plans to give employees adequate awards and compensation; failure to provide employees with sufficient salary or bonuses can be detrimental to an organization (Adkins & Premeaux, 2019; Maertz et al., 2019). Chowdhury and Nazmul (2017) observed that offering training and development opportunities, fair pay, a harmonious work environment, and career counseling could

positively influence an employee's intent to stay with an organization. Participant 4 stated, "Owners have the capabilities to improve the traditional competitive advantage; we [owners] should start with salaries."

Flexible work schedules, employee assistance programs, and childcare programs were factors that could reduce turnover (Caillier, 2016; Yu, 2018). Letchmiah and Thomas (2017) ascertained that employee turnover negatively influences small businesses' productivity. Small business owners use strategies to combat voluntary employee turnover to cut company costs for future sustainment. Leaders improve employees' job satisfaction levels when focusing on their needs, including recognizing their skills and abilities to contribute to the organization (Eldor, 2017). Increased pay can be a strategy for retention, especially in a smaller business with lower performance scores (Grissom & Mitani, 2016). Businesses that award promotions and advancement to the best employees rather than showing favoritism will likely have a well-motivated employee base.

Monetary Incentive and Business Practice

Herzberg et al., (1959) theory reported that a decrease in the job factors that caused dissatisfaction does not cause worker motivation; other factors can motivate employees. Garibaldi & Putri (2018) observed that compensation slightly influenced employee retention and the work environment had a compelling impact on employee retention. Bischoff and Wood (2019) discovered that financial incentives encourage employees externally, whereas other incentives can inspire workers internally by causing them to feel valued by the organization. For example, P1 stated, "Our goal is to continue

to look at each individual needs and try to detail the extra incentives to those needs we have to show compassion and understanding money is not the only thing that attracts employees." Maslow's approach could help small business owners who seek to satisfy their employees to decrease voluntary employee turnover and provide a framework for business leaders to understand what motivates employees (Lee, 2017).

Employees who need achievement will pursue a role that emphasizes personal performance, or if employees need affiliation, they will gravitate to an employer committed to its employees (Liu & Wohlsdorf, 2016). For example, employees will seek a job that will satisfy their needs; they will strive to apply their leadership abilities if they need power. If an employee's primary purpose is to build wealth, the employee will seek a position that offers higher pay. An owner-participant explained how they adapted their basic compensation package to the needs of the employee. P1 stated,

> We offered a chance to win extra perks via performance, for example, extra time
> off, a raffle of gifts, or cash. We also tried to stay as flexible as we could,
> depending on the circumstances presented to us. Help where possible and make
> sacrifices when for the sake of morale.

Employers must develop and implement plans to give employees adequate awards and compensation; failure to provide employees with sufficient salary or bonuses can be detrimental to an organization (Adkins & Premeaux, 2019; Maertz et al., 2019). P3 stated,

> The cost of adding extra benefits for the employees raised by overhead inevitably
> made me tighten the ship and make even tougher decisions about what was being

used, how it was being used, and when we could use it. The benefits helped the

dedication to the company but having to tighten our belt made us keep a tighter

hold on things, thus making morale an up and down thing.

Flexible work schedules, employee assistance programs, and childcare programs

were factors that could reduce turnover (Caillier, 2016; Yu, 2018). Expanding on

different tools that can be used to retain employees may help owners decrease turnover to

improve productivity. Leaders of organizations should commit more time and resources

to motivate employees to achieve job satisfaction (Gillespie, 2018). Owners have the

power to improve employees' job performance by applying managerial strategies to

increase job motivation and satisfaction (Eldor, 2017; Shonubi et al., 2016). Leaders

improve employees' job satisfaction levels when focusing on their needs, including

recognizing their skills and abilities to contribute to the organization (Eldor, 2017). The

affective aspect of job satisfaction includes compensation and the degree of pleasure an

employee has with the current position.

Summary of Monetary Incentives

The previous sections provided an analysis of the theme of monetary incentives

and the findings from this study. An extension of the analysis and the findings from this

study pertains to Herzberg's two-factor theory construct of satisfaction and dissatisfaction

and an analysis of the findings from this study related to the motivation of employees and

productivity. Employee satisfaction is essential to face the dynamic and ever-increasing

challenges of maintaining the organization's productivity by keeping the employees

engaged and motivated (Visvanathan et al., 2018). Participants contributed their

combined proposal to voluntary employee turnover strategies with employees, advancing monetary incentives in employee turnover strategies and providing employees' an opportunity for growth within the business. This study demonstrates that small business owners acknowledged the need for adequate compensation packages. Furthermore, the owners that explored new incentives saw an increase in performance productivity and reduced turnover.

The findings of this study align with the literature based on the construct satisfaction and dissatisfaction of Herzberg's theory, which identifies voluntary employee turnover strategies. Herzberg et al. (1959) introduced the two-factor theory, also referred to as motivational hygiene theory. Poissonnier (2017) explained that motivators and hygiene factors bring about job satisfaction; motivators that generate job satisfaction do not prevent dissatisfaction. Applying hygiene and motivational factors can positively impact employee motivation, satisfaction, and dissatisfaction that cannot be measured on the same continuum; they are affected by different sets of characteristics (Alshmemri et al., 2016; Herzberg, 1974). Using hygiene factors to determine employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction is appropriate for exploring strategies some business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Through individualized consideration, leaders support the employee's contributions and encourage problem-solving to maximize organizational performance (Bormann & Rowold, 2016). Business owners should ensure that their employees are satisfied with their job by offering adequate pay and rewards in salary increase to have a more sustainable impact on retention (Gevrek et al., 2017). Leaders improve employees'

job satisfaction levels when focusing on their needs, including recognizing their skills and abilities to contribute to the organization (Eldor, 2017). Business owners' strategies for understanding employee satisfaction are inadequate when considering strategies as a one-size-fits-all strategy. Employee satisfaction as it pertains to monetary incentives is more beneficial to a business when reducing voluntary employee turnover.

The themes that developed from the study were: (a) employee turnover, (b) job satisfaction, (c) employee engagement, and (d) monetary incentives. I derived that all participants agreed that in order to reduce employee turnover, a positive work environment was vital, job satisfaction was crucial to increase organizational performance, employee engagement was essential to give employees a voice in the decisions that pertain to the job, and monetary incentives were necessary to move their business forward in the overall goal of reducing employee turnover to increase organizational performance.

Applications to Professional Practice

I used Herzberg's two-factor theory to guide the research analysis. The specific business problem was that some small business owners lack strategies to reduce high voluntary employee turnover rates to increase organizational performance. Furthermore, this study may benefit small business owners seeking to develop strategies to reduce turnover and increase organizational performance.

The results conferred from this study are constructive strategies to help small business owners successfully implement voluntary employee turnover strategies. The themes developed and generated from this research study derived from semistructured

interviews of 4 business owners and analysis of company documents provided by the

owners. Each owner's different backgrounds depicted strategies for employee turnover,

job satisfaction, employee engagement, and monetary incentives. For example, an

employee's salary can affect voluntary employee turnover; according to Mohamed et al.

(2017), pay dissatisfaction can cause turnover intention, leading to employee turnover.

When implementing job satisfaction strategies, some businesses focus on the employee's

extrinsic needs and fail to address the intrinsic needs (Staelens et al., 2018). Motivated

employees perform better than unmotivated employees, and the motivation can transfer to

others who come in contact with the motivated employee (Gillespie, 2018). Lastly,

Garibaldi & Putri (2018) observed that compensation slightly influenced employee

retention, and the work environment had a compelling impact on employee retention. The

following section is about the implications for social change.

Implications for Social Change

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

small business owners used to reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase

productivity. The findings of this study may support positive social change by investing

in employees' development and well-being to enhance organizational performance and

address aspects of turnover intentions. When employees are satisfied with their jobs,

employee retention is improved, and motivators that generate job satisfaction do not

prevent employees from being dissatisfied (Abrudan & Matei, 2016; Poissonier, 2017).

Today's employers and the idea that these owners understand that satisfied and

committed employees will put forth all their effort into the job and demonstrate loyalty to

the organization (Jehanzeb et al., 2018; Tam et al., 2016). The results of this study may improve the lives of residents in local communities through lowering standardized poverty rates and enhancing the vitality of neighborhoods, creating a better future for employees and society while affording additional new job opportunities (Staelens et al., 2018). The following section is recommendations for business owners

Recommendations for Action

Reducing turnover increases organizational performance culture that facilitates building social bonds between employees and their work (Sun & Wang, 2017). According to Lu et al. (2016), employers should focus on developing working relationships with employees to reduce turnover. This study's results could be helpful to business owners who want to reduce voluntary employee turnover to improve organizational performance.

The framework of this study focused on small business owners and the strategies used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. When employees express satisfaction in a job, it can reduce voluntary employee turnover; individual motivators that generate job satisfaction can also impact employees from being dissatisfied with their job (Majid & Yasir, 2019; Poissonnier, 2017). By implementing the strategies found in this study, business owners could improve employee satisfaction with different motivation factors that could reduce turnover.

Based on the results of this study and the themes disclosed, I would make the following recommendations for small business owners to ensure constructive use of the strategies postulated in this study:

Recommendation 1: Instill employees with a sense of direction and purpose.

Find clarity about what inspires employees, inspired employees will show more work motivation and provide the organization with long-term talent. Owners should focus more on the intrinsic needs of the employees' to give them a sense of mastery over their work. Owners should consider seeking continuing education programs and tuition reimbursement for employees that may consider committing their time and energy into higher education. On-the-job training that connects to specific jobs may provide employees with more optimism, a sense of accomplishment, and provide a clear guide to reach their goals. Lastly, empower employees to own their destiny as they set their goals and encourage support in the advancement this could lead to reduced turnover and increase organizational performance.

Recommendation 2: Develop employee feedback mechanisms.

Employees who consider the work environment satisfactory are more inclined to invest themselves in their work and engage more fully. Business owners should ask employees for their feedback through short surveys giving each employee the opportunity to voice their opinions this will encourage honest and open communication. Owners should consider employee resource groups (ERG) to make employees feel valued and visible the combination of gaining valuable and actionable information will increase performance, productivity, and profitability. Lastly, business owners should consider one-on-one conversations to combine agile performance development, promote teamwork, and to reduce bad habits and promote best practices.

Recommendation 3: Update compensation packages to sustain employees.

Total compensation packages deliver all the elements of how employees are paid, which includes more than a paycheck and required benefits. Owners should consider offering workers fair compensation to decrease job dissatisfaction. The more an employee is rewarded or compensated, the longer they remain in an organization. Owners need to provide adequate pay, rewards, salary increases, flexible work schedules, employee assistance programs, and childcare programs to positively influence an employee's intent to stay with the company. Developing an appealing benefit package is a key facet to attracting and retaining employees.

Employee turnover strategies in small businesses should include owners, managers, and employees who can use this study's results to improve turnover strategies for retention, and employee satisfaction, which will increase organizational performance. This study's results could help align owners and employees with the overall mission goals of the business to improve performance and job satisfaction to reduce turnover.

I recommend business owners evaluate this study's conclusions to achieve compelling turnover strategies to increase organizational performance. Throughout this study, the united message is related to business owners reducing employee turnover. I arranged and delivered a brief overview of this study's findings to the participants of this study. This study will be available on the ProQuest database for anyone searching for voluntary employee turnover strategies. I will continue to conduct leadership and development training sessions, webinars, and in-person with proper safety measures pertaining to Covid-19 to share my findings on employee turnover to improve

organizational performance. The following section is recommendations for further research.

Recommendations for Further Research

As I reviewed the literature, I identified employee turnover strategies to increase organizational performance in small businesses. The purpose of this study was to explore voluntary employee turnover strategies that small business owners use to increase organizational performance. Small business owners lack the strategy needed to reduce voluntary employee turnover. This multiple case study sample included 4 small business owners within the U.S. Midwestern region with successful strategies to reduce turnover and increase organizational performance. The study had two limitations; the first was that the participants were within Midwestern region and might not know other small business owners from different areas. The second limitation was that the interview questions would be insufficient to obtain in-depth evidence for this study.

Future research recommendations may encompass researching other geographical areas and focus on small businesses with protocol modifications due to COVID. The population for this study consisted of four small business owners within the U.S. Midwestern region. The limited geographical area of the Midwestern region possibly blocked the outcome of transferability to other geographical areas.

The second recommendation may consist of other business owners to explore employee turnover strategies that led to successful organizational performance. Although qualitative researchers could not stop participants from withdrawing from a study, the objective is to obtain a relationship of trust with each participant exemplifying honesty,

integrity, and ethical standards to keep each participant from withdrawing from the study. Establishing a relationship with each participant with ethical standards may create more assertive communication for data collection.

Reflections

The Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Doctoral Study curriculum was challenging. Still, the process has given me a personal understanding of how hard work, dedication, and self-discipline can lead you. The consideration of furthering my education became a vision of looking at overall future career opportunities. As a doctoral student, I became aware of what criteria are acceptable in scholarly writing. The DBA program at Walden University has been a test that is now my testimony, a true journey both physically and mentally, especially during a global pandemic, but the knowledge that I have obtained since I started the program has given me more personal growth in many facets of leadership, professionalism, and entrepreneurship within my own business.

My interest in voluntary employee turnover in small businesses stemmed from my professional experience in retail management for over 15 years and as a business owner. Implementing my research into my business has been valuable, learning how intrinsic and extrinsic play an intricate role in reducing voluntary employee turnover to increase productivity. My research has provided an in-depth understanding of hygiene factors, satisfaction, and dissatisfaction of employees. During my findings, one participant mentioned that COVID's impact on employee turnover was minimal because employees were allowed to work virtually, which allowed the business to maintain productivity.

Business owners can use this study's findings to develop best practices to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Kashmoola et al. (2017) stated that enforcing turnover reduction strategies could help trim costs identified with turnover. Reducing voluntary employee turnover and increasing organizational performance provided additional jobs.

I initially assumed that some business owners' failures were merely due to the improper use of resources. I believed that business owners managed to meet the year-end allocated budget with the same assumption despite the turnover. However, business decisions take leadership skills, education, and practice from the owners' perspective to resourcefully and effectively lead employees. I was conscious that mitigation of my bias was appropriate with data collection and data analysis because of my previous management history in retail. I had to avoid data from a personal perspective.

I appreciated the owners who were willing to participate in this study. Although these owners experienced some challenges due to a global pandemic, maintaining productivity, and employee engagement because of working remotely to remain safe, the owners provided an insight into what implementation looked like during the pandemic. And, finally, the next section is the conclusion of this study.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies that successful business owners used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Martdianty et al. (2020) concluded that certain factors such as; unsolicited work roles and responsibilities, relationship conflict, and limited career prospects were the main reasons for employee turnover. I used a multiple case study to conduct semistructured interviews with four

business owners in the Midwestern region. I asked six open-ended questions to determine strategies of business owners to reduce voluntary employee turnover. The study of business owners' organizational documents expanded my knowledge of their turnover strategies. The 1959 publication of Herzberg's two-factor theory was my conceptual framework that provided the basis and guidelines for understanding voluntary employee turnover.

The primary directive, from the study, was the influence that business owners used to better understand the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of their employees, which directly impacted turnover. I used mythological triangulation to compare information from company documents to improve the findings. The four primary themes generated were (a) employee turnover, (b) job satisfaction, (c) employee engagement, and (d) monetary incentives these themes could help business owners identify strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover, increase employee satisfaction, and improve organizational performance.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Scheduled Date_____ Interview Date_____
Participant Identification: □□□
Consent to participate received □ Disclosure and consent to record
Confirm confidentiality and voluntary □ Informed that transcript will be available
Script

Good morning/afternoon.

My name is Sherale Bell, and I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am

conducting my doctoral study on strategies some small business owners use to reduce

voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance, which I will present

in partial fulfillment of the requirements to complete my Doctor of Business

Administration (DBA) degree. I appreciate your participation in this study. Before we

begin, I would like your permission to digitally record this interview using Zoom

technology, so that I will later be able to create a transcript of our conversation. If, at any

time during this interview, you would like me to stop recording, please feel free to let me

know *(Now, I will begin recording and briefly repeat the request so that I can record*

you permitting me to record). I will keep your responses confidential. I will use your

responses to develop a better understanding of your views of how voluntary employee

turnover strategies affect employee engagement. Once more, the purpose of this study is

to explore voluntary employee turnover strategies that small business owners use to

improve employee engagement and increase productivity.

Record Interview Start Time _____

This study's research question is: What strategies do small business owners use to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

1. What strategies did you use to reduce the high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

2. What major obstacles did you encounter in implementing strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover?

3. What motivation techniques such as a positive work environment and recognition did you use to reduce voluntary employee turnover?

4. What, if any, types of job security or salary benefits were offered to employees that would reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

5. How did you address the organizational policy and procedures with the employees to achieve your strategy for reducing high rates of voluntary employee turnover?

6. What additional information would you like to share or add relating to strategies small business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

Stop recording

Record Interview End Time_____

Thank you very much for spending your valuable time answering questions. I appreciate your assistance and contributions in making this interview a success. Once again, the

information you have provided would be used solely for this study purpose, and I will not

disclose any information not related to the purpose of the study outcome to anyone.

*For further clarification, please feel free to contact the researcher **Mobile:** 773-671-1606; email: sherale.bell@waldenu.edu*

Thank the participant for volunteering to share their individual experience

Appendix B: Interview Question

1. What strategies did you use to reduce the high rates of voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

2. What major obstacles did you encounter in implementing strategies to reduce high rates of voluntary employee turnover?

3. What motivation techniques such as a positive work environment and recognition did you use to reduce voluntary employee turnover?

4. What, if any, types of job security or salary benefits were offered to employees that would reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?

5. How did you address the organizational policy and procedures with the employees to achieve your strategy for reducing high rates of voluntary employee turnover?

6. What additional information would you like to share or add relating to strategies small business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover to increase organizational performance?