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Increasing Employee Motivation Through Job Satisfaction and Empowerment

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Alicia Banks Myers

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

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Alicia Banks Myers

MSM, Southern Wesleyan University, 2016

BA, University of South Carolina Upstate, 2012

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

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Abstract

Leaders with high employee dissatisfaction have excessive absenteeism, complaints, and attrition, leading to low employee motivation. Dissatisfied employees are directly linked to customer dissatisfaction, resulting in decreased sales revenue. Grounded in Herzberg's motivation–hygiene theory, the purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore motivation strategies that three department store managers have used to increase job satisfaction and empowerment in a retail store in South Carolina. Data were collected from semistructured interviews and company documents, including employee handbooks, strategic plans, and business forecasts. The three primary themes that emerged using thematic analysis were (a) effective leadership attributes, (b) understanding motivational influence, and (c) relationships and environments. A key recommendation for department store managers is to develop motivating strategies that include empowering employees and reevaluating a manager's role to understand the motivational and hygiene factors that can affect employees' job satisfaction and motivation to increase sales revenue. Potential implications for positive social change could include increasing employment opportunities in the community.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my husband, André Myers; my parents, Jerry and Rosalind Banks; my sister/twin, Ashley Banks; my grandfather, John Mark Moyd, Sr.; and my aunts, Roberta Moyd, and Linda Jackson. Thanks for being there for every roadblock, celebration, and multiple attempts to quit this quest for a doctoral degree. I know that I could not have done this without your love and support. Thanks for answering my many phone calls when I had a breakdown and needed an encouraging word to continue my journey. Thanks for understanding the pressures of trying to find a balance for family, school, and work.

Thanks, Dre, for being on this journey with me. Thanks for understanding when I started this journey just after we were engaged. Thanks for understanding when I could only take one semester off to celebrate our marriage and honeymoon. Thanks for understanding that the first couple of years of our marriage were dedicated to school. Thanks for being my rock as I went through this journey.

Thanks to my roomie, Amber Murray. Thanks for allowing me to stay at your home when I had to complete both of my residencies. To my grandma, Ruthie Mae Prioleau Moyd, my uncle John Mark Moyd Jr., and my good friend Archie Nguyen— although you are not physically here to celebrate with me, I know you are in heaven rejoicing with me.

Growing up, my granddaddy always taught me: "Anything worth starting is worth finishing." Thanks for teaching me that failure is not an option. You must go through the fire to come out as pure gold. I am forever grateful for the love and support that each of

you has shown me as I complete this journey. As I worked on this degree, this verse has been my motivation: "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Thank you, Holy Ghost; we completed the assignment.

Acknowledgments

I would first like to acknowledge my Lord and Savior for helping me achieve this goal of completing my doctoral degree. You are the main reason all this is possible. You gave me the strength to continue this journey when times were tough and challenging. Proverbs 31:17 NIV: "She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks." Your grace sustained me to complete this task.

Dr. Gwendolyn Dooley, my chair: There are no words to thank you for your help in succeeding in this doctoral program. Thank you for your encouraging words, multiple revisions to produce the best document, and your tenacity to see each of your students arrive at the finish line of graduation. You taught me to celebrate each milestone—small or big. Those words inspired me to enjoy everything that came with this journey toward doctorhood. Thank you for your guidance and support during this journey, to my committee members, Dr. Deborah Nattress and Dr. Theresa Neal. The writing and format of this doctoral study have benefited enormously from the academic editing services of Libby Sciole; thank you so much.

Thank you to my family and friends, who always listened to my praises and complaints and were a sounding board to get my feelings out. Finally, I would like to thank my participants of this study for their willingness to participate and give time to the authentication of this research.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Employee motivation is a significant issue in the retail industry. According to Halasagi and Januni (2018, p. 19, Table 2), 62.5% of employees in the retail sector are dissatisfied with their job. Employee motivation can be problematic for department store managers in the retail industry because a lack of emotional labor can cause low job satisfaction and empowerment. Leadership is essential to employee motivation. Managers who comprehend employee motivation concerns can develop strategies to address them (Alshmemri et al., 2017; Koziol & Koziol, 2020). When employees are motivated, they are inspired, optimistic, and loyal, and motivated employees show behaviors of commitment and passion in their workplace (Puni et al., 2021; Rachmawati et al., 2020). In this doctoral study, I explored the motivational strategies that some department store managers have used to increase employee motivation in South Carolina. The target population consisted of four department store managers in one department store who successfully implemented strategies to increase employee motivation through job satisfaction and empowerment. This study's findings could help lead to methods of increasing employee motivation through job satisfaction and empowerment.

Background of the Problem

Employee motivation is a topic of concern and responsibility for business leaders across industries. Putra et al. (2017) suggested that some employees may be motivated by intrinsic factors (e.g., doing meaningful work and employee growth and development), whereas others are motivated by extrinsic factors (e.g., job promotion, increased salary, and bonuses). An employee performs specific tasks according to their job title and

description. Business leaders are tasked with developing strategies to keep an employee motivated by using intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to increase performance (van der Kolk et al., 2019). Business leaders must develop strategies to motivate employees to perform at their highest level.

An employee's motivation wavers for many reasons. Guclu and Guney (2017) identified that an employee's motivation could fluctuate when organizational expectations and personal interests change. Employee motivation is important because workers are the lifeline of an organization (Taylor, 2015). Business leaders are affected when employees are not motivated to perform at their best and must find strategies to keep employees motivated. A lack of employee motivation can cause an employee not to perform well (van der Kolk et al., 2019). The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that department store managers use to motivate their employees.

Problem Statement

A lack of employee motivation significantly deflates job satisfaction (Breaugh et al., 2018, p.1427). Halasagi and Januni (2018, p. 19, Table 2) reported that 62.5% of employees in the retail sector are dissatisfied with their job. The general business problem is that some department store managers do not prioritize employee job satisfaction. The specific business problem is that some department store managers lack strategies to motivate their employees.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that department store managers use to motivate their employees. The target population

consisted of four area managers who implemented successful strategies to motivate

employees at a department store in southeastern South Carolina. Potential implications

for positive change that could result from the findings of this study are that members of

the community may benefit from company-sponsored events increase community service

activities that provide opportunities for family togetherness, promote generational wealth,

and improve financial well-being among the families and the community.

Nature of the Study

The three research methods are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Saunders et

al., 2015). I selected a qualitative method to explore the strategies department managers

use to motivate employees. Qualitative researchers acquire data by using open-ended

questions to discover what is occurring or has occurred (Saunders et al., 2015). In

contrast, quantitative researchers use closed-ended questions to test hypotheses for

examining variables' characteristics and relationships (Saunders et al., 2015), which is

not the purpose of this study. Researchers using a mixed method incorporate both the

qualitative and quantitative methods (Breevaart et al., 2012). Quantitative or mixed

methods were not appropriate for this study because the intent was not to examine

variables' characteristics or statistical relationships.

I considered three qualitative research designs: phenomenology, ethnography, and

case study. I selected a single case study to explore the managers' strategies to increase

employee motivation at one department store. A single case study design is appropriate

when a researcher wants to study a particular person, group, organization, or situation

during a specific period to understand the factors contributing to the problem (Keenan et

al., 2005). Studying the strategies at this organization may provide managers of similar stores opportunities to reduce employee attrition rates. Using a single case study enables researchers to understand better the phenomenon being studied (Fiss, 2009; Ridder, 2017). Researchers use a phenomenological research design to explore the personal meanings of participants' lived experiences (Saunders et al., 2015). A phenomenological research design was not appropriate for this study because I was not exploring the personal meanings of lived experiences. Employing an ethnographical study allows researchers to explore the description and interpretation of a culture or a social group (Holloway et al., 2010). Employing an ethnographic study design was not appropriate for this study because exploring the values of a particular culture or social group was not the study's goal.

Research Question

The research question was: What strategies do department store managers use to motivate their employees?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies have you used to motivate your employees?

2. How did your department store managers measure the success of the implemented employee motivation strategies?

3. How did your employees respond to your different motivational techniques?

4. What key obstacles did you and your employees overcome to implement successful employee motivational strategies?

5.   What method did you find worked best to motivate your employees?

6.   What additional information can you share with me to understand the method you used to improve your employees' motivation?

Conceptual Framework

Herzberg et al. (1959) motivation–hygiene theory, also known as the two-factor theory, was the study's conceptual framework. Herzberg created this theory to explain factors related to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, which are crucial elements for employee motivation. According to Herzberg et al. (1959), various intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence job satisfiers (motivation factors) and prevent job dissatisfaction (hygiene factors) that can help increase employee motivation. Herzberg et al. (1959) contributed concepts to help leaders motivate employees to exceed company-established goals. Herzberg et al. (1959) identified the following key constructs underlying the theory: achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, working conditions, company policies, relations with supervisors, subordinates, coworkers, and pay. I therefore expected that Herzberg's two-factor theory would effectively facilitate my exploration of the motivational and hygiene factors that can affect employees' job satisfaction to increase employee motivation.

Operational Definitions

Employee motivation: Psychological process that energizes and maintains human activity concerning work, tasks, or projects (Hitka et al., 2019).

Extrinsic factors: Hygiene factors that represent the basic needs of employees, such as salary, fringe benefits, and job security (Putra et al., 2017).

Intrinsic factors: Motivation factors that come from within an individual that meet the emotional needs of employees, such as meaningful work, sense of accomplishment, and growth opportunities (Putra et al., 2017).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

This qualitative single case study included three underlying assumptions. Assumptions are facts considered accurate but not verified by the researcher in a study (Wargo, 2015). The first assumption was that participants would provide honest responses to the interview questions. The second assumption was that the managers for this study would provide in-depth responses to answer my interview questions related to the research question. The third assumption was that department store managers monitor employee motivation and develop motivational strategies to motivate employees.

There are three limitations to this study. Limitations are potential weaknesses of a study outside the researcher's control (Greener, 2018). The first limitation was that the results from this study might not apply to other department stores. The second limitation was that department store managers might not remember all the strategies they use to motivate employees. A strategy that I implemented was to discuss with the department store managers that the feedback they provided me needed to be honest. The third limitation was the participants' time limits to conduct the interview and the member-checking process.

There are three delimitations in this study. Delimitations are the boundaries that researchers place on their study that limit its scope (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The first delimitation was that the study participants were limited to one department store in

South Carolina. The second delimitation was that data were collected only from interviews with department store managers. The third delimitation was the sample size would be limited to four department store managers who have implemented strategies to motivate employees.

Significance of the Study

Managers who implement strategies to increase employee motivation may have more motivated employees. Hitka et al. (2019) asserted that managers must know the factors that affect employee motivation. Habanik et al. (2020) noted that employees are the most valuable asset of an organization. This study could help organizations increase employee motivation or modify existing strategies for motivating employees. These changes could help managers create motivation programs that could benefit both the company and employees, increase productivity, and increase employee loyalty.

Contribution to Business Practice

A study of job satisfaction and job empowerment may be valuable to the business sector because employee motivation is a significant problem in organizations worldwide. Improving job satisfaction and empowerment could enable businesses to retain their best employees. Correspondingly, employees can be expected to increase their desire to meet organizational goals, resulting in the business becoming more productive. Additionally, improving employee motivation and empowerment helps create a positive workplace environment. Department managers may be able to meet their employees' needs and keep them engaged and productive.

Implications for Social Change

Positive social change results in the improvement of human and social conditions and the betterment of society. Lumpkin et al. (2018) explained that social change is intended to benefit society more than an organization. Insights from this study may help managers develop employees into caring citizens of their community. Montessori (2016) explained that organizations should prioritize promoting social value and development versus capturing economic value. Increasing job satisfaction and job empowerment enables an organization to be a source for positive social change by fostering organizational growth and profits and enhancing sustainability, leading to new employment opportunities and stimulating prosperity for local families and communities through increasing and sustaining tax revenues.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

An extensive review of the academic literature produced evidence to enable the discussion, critical analysis, and synthesis of the historical and current literature to explore the motivational strategies used by department store managers to increase employee motivation through job satisfaction and empowerment. This literature review consists of 147 articles and books. Of the 147 articles, 85% were peer-reviewed and published between 2017 and 2021.

This literature review was conducted using multiple databases available through the Walden University Library and identified through Google Scholar. The core databases used were Academic Search Complete/Premier, ScienceDirect, EBSCOhost, Business Source Complete, PsyARTICLES (EBSCO), SAGE Premier 2020, Emerald

Management, Taylor & Francis, ProQuest Central, Education Source, and ABI/INFORM.
The keywords and phrases searched included *empowerment, expectancy theory,
Herzberg's two-factor theory, Maslow hierarchy of needs, McClelland's need theory
motivation, motivation theories, job satisfaction, how to increase employee motivation,
successful motivation strategies to increase employee motivation, workplace
environment, extrinsic factors, intrinsic factors*, and *leadership styles*.

A complete review of the existing literature provided the justification and
background information to the central research question: What strategies do department
store managers use to motivate their employees through job satisfaction and
empowerment? The first section of the literature review includes an overview of
Herzberg's two-factor theory as the conceptual framework. In addition, the first section
includes alternate theories not chosen for the study: Vroom's expectancy theory,
McClelland's need theory, and Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In the second section, I
discuss motivation. The third section is comprised of the motivation and hygiene factors
important for increasing employee motivation. The fourth section includes factors that
affect the motivation of employees in the retail industry, including age, communication,
compensation, employee performance, performance appraisal, empowerment, job
satisfaction, leadership, occupational stress, organizational culture, sustainability, and
work balance. In the fifth section, I explain why Herzberg's two-factor theory is a
motivational strategy to help department store managers improve employee motivation.
The sixth and final section includes facts about the retail industry.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was Herzberg's motivation–hygiene theory, also known as the two-factor theory. Herzberg et al. (1959) developed the two-factor theory in the 1950s. The researchers identified the external factors (hygienic) and internal factors (motivators) that influence people's work attitudes (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg's two-factor theory proposed that specific job factors result in satisfaction and other job factors prevent dissatisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017; Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg's motivation–hygiene theory was appropriated to understand the strategies that managers used to improve employee motivation. Researchers have used Herzberg's motivation–hygiene theory to focus on the importance of internal factors of achievement, recognition, and responsibility at work as motivating forces for employee motivation (Hur, 2018). Thus, leaders have used Herzberg's motivation–hygiene theory to increase and improve job satisfaction and reduce job dissatisfaction.

Employees who suffer from deficiencies in their organization may become less than satisfied with their job. Herzberg et al. (1959) linked job dissatisfaction to working conditions and environment, salary, benefits, interpersonal relationships, and company policies. The hygiene factor was connected to job dissatisfaction and linked with deficiencies in an organization (Herzberg et al., 1959). Hygiene factors do not increase or decrease satisfaction; however, when hygiene factors are scarce, dissatisfaction occurs (Alrawahi et al., 2020). Managers used hygiene factors to make employees feel comfortable, secure, and happy in the workplace (Porter et al., 2016). Therefore,

managers need to address hygiene factors to create an encouraging work environment and prevent dissatisfaction.

Employees who are more satisfied at work are better motivated and show higher work performance. Herzberg et al. (1959) linked job satisfaction to achievement, recognition, responsibility, and work advancement. In addition, Herzberg et al. connected the factor motivation to job satisfaction, which may motivate employees. Other researchers have noted that an employee's job satisfaction could lead to motivation (Hur, 2018). Employees are likely to experience satisfaction and be motivated when motivation factors are present in the workplace (Porter et al., 2016). In contrast to Herzberg et al. (1959), House and Wigdor (1967) noted that individuals could determine job satisfaction. Motivation extends to wanting to effect change in either self or an environment, directing a person to energize, direct, and sustain specific behavior (Reeve, 2016). Taking care of employee satisfaction is crucial for managers (Rožman et al., 2017). Managers who realize what motivates employees in the workplace may increase motivation and employee satisfaction.

Many researchers have used Herzberg's two-factor theory. Andersson (2017) noted that Herzberg's two-factor theory is one of the most influential theories for job satisfaction and motivation. Researchers have found that job satisfaction is essential for business leaders to increase employee motivation and decrease job dissatisfaction (Shakil, 2020; Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020). Andersson used a cross-cultural qualitative method to test the theory about job satisfaction on U.S. and Japanese insurance employees. Andersson (2017) gathered that Herzberg's theory of motivation factors did

lead to job satisfaction. Researchers may want to conduct more cross-cultural research on international business and culture to understand the effect on job satisfaction (Andersson, 2017). Furthermore, Andersson noted that caution is needed when conducting cross-country and cross-cultural research on job satisfaction.

Researchers have considered Herzberg's two-factor theory to understand employee motivation. The two-factor theory is the foundation for motivation and job satisfaction that may increase employee motivation in the workplace (Herzberg et al., 1959). Koziol and Koziol (2020) used Herzberg's two-factor theory as the framework for classifications of three motivation factors in the workplace: (a) motivators, (b) hygiene factors, and (c) demotivators that are part of an organization's system of employee incentives. Koziol and Koziol noted that the variables identified in Herzberg's two-factor theory were measurable using an expert method that included human resources management specialists and line organizational units to forecast motivation factors that affect employee incentives (Koziol & Koziol, 2020). The findings suggested that business leaders need to improve motivation systems for better business practice (Kosiol & Kosiol, 2020). Koziol and Koziol discussed that the identified motivators could be helpful for a business leader in developing a motivation system to increase employee motivation. Business leaders should employ a motivation system to track the motivational factor in the workplace to increase employee motivation.

Many researchers used Herzberg's theory to understand the effects of motivation. For example, a group of researchers applied Herzberg's two-factor theory to explore employee satisfaction in the workplace, determining the motivational and hygiene factors

that affect job satisfaction (Wen et al., 2018). In support of this, Bharathy (2018) reported

that employee motivation increased when leaders understood the importance of

motivational influence on their employees. Motivation in the workplace increases when

leaders support employees' commitment, growth, and performance (Budden et al., 2017).

Hygiene factors were noted as important for increasing employee motivation (Bharathy,

2018). Thus, both hygiene and motivational factors may be significant in increasing

employee motivation.

Herzberg's two-factor theory is valuable in understanding how employees find

meaning in the workplace. First, employees should do work that is personally significant

and worthwhile (Lysova et al., 2019). Second, managers must show employees the

significance they bring to the organization. Meaningful work aids organizations in

helping employees identify the value they bring to the organization (Carton, 2018).

Organizations that show their employees the significance they bring to the organization

instill self-pride. Employees see that their daily work is appreciated and that the

organization cares about their aspirations, which encourages them to do better.

Employees see that leadership is concerned about them and will take care of them

(Carton, 2018). Employees will be motivated because they can see the organization cares

about them.

Motivational factors in the workplace play a significant role in increasing

employee motivation. Using Herzberg's two-factor theory as the framework, Wen et al.

(2018) explored what motivated administrative staff to keep their jobs. The intrinsic

factors studied were professional growth and job responsibility. The extrinsic factors

studied were senior management and good relationship with coworkers (Wen et al., 2018). The outcome of the study was that positive intrinsic factors helped keep administrative staff motivated in their jobs. A motivated employee has a positive attitude to work (Feißel et al., 2018). Therefore, managers need to identify motivational factors in the organization and strengthen those factors to keep employees motivated.

Herzberg's two-factor theory supports organizations in understanding employee motivation and unfavorable working conditions on motivation. A toxic work environment could negatively impact employees in an organization (Anjum et al., 2018). A toxic workplace causes employees to have awful experiences (Chuan, 2014). In an organization with toxic leadership, the organization could cause employees to be stressed and work in a hostile work environment (Winn & Dykes, 2019). Toxic leadership engages in limiting interaction and micromanaging employees (Milosevic et al., 2020). Leaders should ensure they are not toxic leaders and create a nontoxic workplace environment for employees.

Supporting and Contrasting Theories

Researchers have used motivational theories to aid managers in finding ways to motivate their employees. Motivational theories have added to the understanding of what motivates people (Badubi, 2017). Each motivation theory has its distinctive use, basis, and impact on motivation. The major theories are Herzberg's motivation–hygiene theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and McClelland's need theory (Badubi, 2017). Other content theories considered for this study included Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, McClelland's (1985) need achievement theory, and Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs.

Vroom's Expectancy Theory

One theory I considered for this study was Vroom's expectancy theory. Vroom (1964) noted that individuals have certain factors within themselves that motivate them. Vroom's expectancy theory focuses on individuals having choices and using those choices to make decisions that lead to the best personal outcome (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Vroom (1964) developed this theory to help managers support workplace motivation. A key component noted in this theory is that an employee's effort would lead to performance and that performance would lead to the desired reward (Yanuar, 2017). However, Vroom's expectancy theory was not appropriate for this study because it is focused on employee performance rather motivating employees.

McClelland's Need Achievement Theory

Another theory I considered for this study was McClelland's need achievement theory. McClelland (1985) focused on three motivational paradigms: achievement, affiliation, and power. The theory helps to examine why some people are overachievers compared to other people in the workplace. McClelland noted that certain people seek success through personal achievement rather than rewards. McClelland's need achievement theory is focused on the reasons employees perform well for achievement (Rybnicek et al., 2019). However, McClelland's need achievement theory was not appropriate for this study because the theory is focused on overachievers rather than motivational strategies for all employees.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Another theory I considered for this study was Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow (1943) focused on the idea that individuals have a hierarchy of needs. The hierarchy levels comprise five crucial elements: self-actualization, esteem, belonging, safety, and physiology based on the home and job needs of an individual (Maslow, 1943). Maslow's theory is focused on human needs and their satisfaction level (Alajmi & Alasousi, 2019). However, Maslow's hierarchy of needs was not appropriate for this study because the theory is focused on an individual's needs in an organization on a hierarchal level.

Employing Herzberg's two-factor theory as the conceptual framework for this study may provide the lens to explore motivational strategies that department store managers have used to increase employee motivation. Herzberg's two-factor theory is a well-known theory on motivation (Badubi, 2017). Leader motivation is an important and complex topic because motivational needs differ from one employee to another (Uher, 2018). Herzberg's (1965) theory comprises motivational factors, such as promotions, opportunities for personal growth, recognition, responsibility, and achievement to increase positive attitudes toward work. Therefore, department store managers might consider using motivational factors to increase employee motivation.

Herzberg's two-factor theory may allow the exploration of strategies that department store managers have used to increase employee motivation by using motivation and hygiene factors. Herzberg's two-factor theory may help managers identify working conditions and approaches they can use to increase employee motivation

(Badubi, 2017). When leaders motivate employees, employees are likely to be productive workers (Fiaz et al., 2017). Researchers have employed this theory to explain how job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction link to motivation and productivity (Uher, 2018). Managers who acknowledge motivation and hygiene factors could implement successful strategies to increase employee motivation.

Motivation

Managers must fully understand the importance of employee motivation. Researchers define employee motivation as a psychological process that energizes and maintains human activity concerning work, tasks, or projects (Hitka et al., 2019). Employee motivation is a significant factor affecting job satisfaction (Ritter, 2021). Employee motivation is affected by different motivational factors and differs from employee to employee. Managers must develop strategies to address employee motivation.

Managers can improve the motivation in an organization. Managers must focus on implementing powerful motivators such as career advancement, recognition, growth potential, achievement, the job itself, and level of responsibility (Krczal, 2017). An individual's satisfaction level could increase when motivated and prevent dissatisfaction from developing if the business organization used hygiene factors (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Enthusiasm and motivation are essential ingredients needed for success on the job (Homisak, 2019). Therefore, managers can use motivational factors to increase motivation in the business organization.

The effectiveness of motivation by business leaders can aid in increasing employee motivation in the workplace. Researchers define motivation as "the psychological process that stimulates and maintains human activity concerning work, task, or widely understood project" (Hitka et al., 2019, p. 676). Employee motivation is a significant component of the management process (Koziol & Koziol, 2020). Business leaders must employ different motivation factors, tools, and principles to motivate employees effectively (Koziol & Koziol, 2020). Business leaders need to understand that motivation is the driving force used to enhance an employee to act.

Managers must understand the benefits employee motivation can bring to the workplace. The first benefit is an increase in employee commitment. Employee commitment helps to determine if an employee will stay with the organization or leave (Puni et al., 2021). When employees experience a healthy organizational culture, good commanders, and pleasing personalities, it helps create high employee loyalty (Rachmawati et al., 2020). Employees will develop a bond with their workplace. Loyal employees help organizations achieve their company's goals. Committed employees tend to put their best effort into completing tasks on time (Rachmawati et al., 2020). A loyal employee would gain a sense of commitment to the company.

The second benefit is improved employee efficiency. A motivated employee can allow for improved productivity (Menguc et al., 2016). The increase in productivity would help an organization achieve higher output levels than they can imagine. Employees would be able to balance the tasks given to them and their willingness to complete the task. Managers must constantly communicate with their employees on

developing ways to improve motivation in the organization. Organizations expect to have dips in their motivation but should fix it before it becomes a problem (Mani & Mishra, 2021). Managers need to understand the importance of motivating people if they aspire to be in management. The business world of today faces rapid changes that are happening each day. Therefore, managers must be vigilant to ensure that they are motivating their employees.

Factors Affecting the Motivation of Retail Employees

Age. Motivation varies among different age groups. The focus of motivating employees should occur on an individual basis (Ganesh, 2016). Organizations should offer employees suitable jobs (Feißel et al., 2018). Employees are not motivated by the same thing (Ganesh, 2016). To address the different age groups, a business organization should motivate employees on an individual basis.

Managers must motivate employees from different age groups. A crucial challenge for organizations is fostering job satisfaction across all age groups among employees (Kollmann et al., 2020). Calk and Patrick (2017) focused on finding the factors that motivate the millennial generation, noting that organizations try their hardest to recruit talent from this generation. The results showed that millennials valued being respected, liked their work to challenge them, and are motivated by the feeling of being needed (Calk & Patrick, 2017).

Motivation affects older adults. Older adults have a higher focus on the well-being of others (Nikitin & Freund, 2019b). Nikitin and Freund (2019b) conducted a study that explored the role of age, motivation, and relationship closeness. Their findings

concluded that age (a) influences older adults' genuine benevolence toward others, (b) allows older adults to maintain positive role identities and social connectedness, and (c) reduces conflicts with other social roles when they pursue prosocial goals (Nikitin & Freund, 2021). When managers are trying to motivate older employees, they could focus on creating meaningful work for them.

Communication. Communication was a significant factor that affected the motivation of retail employees. Communication is a powerful concept that can either make or break the performance and productivity of any organization (Turaga, 2019). Communication needs to be appropriate, open, honest, and timely (Shannon, 2019). Communication lines are essential for successful employee performance in the retail business organization.

Overcoming communication challenges was crucial for increasing employee motivation. Leaders must understand the dynamics of resistance among their followers (Ballaro et al., 2020). As new technologies integrate into organizations, communication channels available to employees continue to expand (Smith et al., 2018). Face-to-face interactions are still the most effective communication channel (Smith et al., 2018). A leader must know their employees' personalities. When a leader knows the personality of each of their employees, they will know what the most effective channel of communication that would work for that employee is.

Employee performance and performance appraisal. Appraisals can help to enhance employee motivation. Managers can provide employees with feedback about their performance to increase motivation (Tumi et al., 2021). Feedback provided from

managers needs to be consistent. Employees need to have their work appraised to be rewarded and acknowledged (Levy et al., 2015). Appraisals provide managers with the option to provide encouragement, build confidence, and create a sense of building for the organization (Tumi et al., 2021). An employee can be motivated when a manager discusses with them ways that they can make improvements through appraisals.

Performance appraisal helps managers increase employee motivation. Organizations should use employee performance appraisal to provide feedback and identify future development needs (Ali et al., 2019). According to Lira (2015), organizations should assess human resources to become aware of gray areas for performance improvement and employee development needs. Managers could ensure that they are just and fair and provide credible feedback to help the employee improve in any area of weakness. In addition, managers must be meticulous when presenting an employee with their performance appraisal (Kamphorst & Swank, 2018). Managers could merge the organizational context into the performance appraisal to ensure that the employee will recognize that appraisal as reasonable (Nikpeyma et al., 2014). The researchers noted that when employees have a good attitude about performance appraisal, they are motivated and want to participate in development activities (Nikpeyma et al., 2014). Supervisors should not just focus on negative feedback but provide an employee with positive feedback when addressing them through their employee appraisal (Kamphorst & Swank, 2018). Managers could use performance appraisals to increase employee motivation.

Management could understand the importance of motivating their employees to strengthen human capital. Employee performance, employee motivation, and succession planning are crucial aspects of an organization's development strategy (Ali et al., 2019). Leaders need to help their human capital achieve their long-term goals (Ali et al., 2019). Munro (2017) noted that succession planning is a critical driver of organizational and leader renewal. In addition, succession planning aids in improving employee satisfaction (Perrenoud & Sullivan, 2017). Therefore, managers could implement succession planning to motivate their human capital.

Empowerment. Managers must provide empowerment to employees to increase motivation. Managers that implement empowerment as a tactic could motivate employees (Balajee & Todd, 2018). Scholarly and practical interest in empowerment has primarily stemmed from its downstream effects on employee motivation, subsequently, performance (Sessions et al., 2021). Researchers explain that job satisfaction determines tangible factors such as remuneration and promotion, but it also depends on workers' self-determination in their job through empowerment (Idris et al., 2018). Thus, empowerment is a significant concept that managers must understand.

Empowerment gave employees self-worth. Empowerment is the process of decentralizing decision-making whereby managers give more discretion and autonomy to employees (Metcalf et al., 2018). Retail industry employees need empowerment from their managers. Retail employees encounter working long hours, including weekends and holidays (Solaja & Ogunola, 2016). Empowering an employee helps to enhance

employee performance (Guerrero et al., 2018). Retail employees need empowerment to deal with both customers and managers daily.

Empowerment was a crucial concept to motivate employees. Managers often underestimate the critical role of employee empowerment (Ganji et al., 2021). According to social exchange theory, when the organization psychologically empowers employees, employees try to compensate by cooperating with the organization (Ganji et al., 2021). Employee empowerment increased employee satisfaction by providing information about performance, work, and goals (Idris et al., 2018). Managers could begin to see that a part of their job is to keep their employees empowered (García-Juan et al., 2019). Managers are changing the ways that they empower employees.

Managers could use open-book management to empower employees. Open-book managers aid in showing that customer satisfaction is vital (Alkhamis, 2018). The open-book management style focused on improving employee empowerment, employee training, and employee participation in organization success. Organizations need employee empowerment to help employees contribute to organizational performance (Baird et al., 2018). The reason was that employees need to have a good sense of job empowerment. When employees have a good sense of job empowerment, they can provide their customers with excellent customer service.

Understanding the relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction is essential. Empowerment enables employees to provide input to help the organization become better and ensures that employees will have a high level of engagement and overall job satisfaction (Turkmenoglu, 2019). The more engaged an

employee is, the more the employee will enjoy coming to work (Lee et al., 2018a). When

an employee lacks empowerment at work, there is a higher failure rate (Turkmenoglu,

2019). Turkmenoglu (2019) discussed that employees like to have supervision to ensure

that they are completing their work correctly. Therefore, managers must address

employee empowerment and job satisfaction to keep employees satisfied.

Engagement. Engagement is a significant concept in the business world.

Employee engagement is a roadmap for an organization's competitiveness and success

(Devendhiran & Wesley, 2017). Business leaders need to determine the link between

engagement and business performance (Matthews, 2018). An engaged employee would

demonstrate the willingness to reach optimal performance (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). A

contrasting view is that Rastogi et al. (2018) noted that some employees would not

produce their best work regardless of how hard managers try to engage them. As a result,

managers could implement strategies that would increase employee engagement.

Another strategy managers used to increase employee engagement was to

promote workplace spirituality. Workplace spirituality helps to promote a culture that

acknowledges the employees' spirit at work (Devendhiran & Wesley, 2017). Workplace

spirituality helps employees to have (a) a higher quality of work-life and more

extraordinary camaraderie with the organization, (b) improved morale, (c) greater

creativity and innovation, and (d) lower levels of job-related stress (Daniel, 2015).

Employees who experience workplace spirituality are committed and connected to

organizational goals and values (Devendhiran & Wesley, 2017). Managers may promote

workplace spirituality in the workplace to create an engaged workplace.

The third strategy to increase employee engagement was to increase employee motivation. Motivation is a crucial component of engagement, and managers must determine which type of motivation, intrinsic or extrinsic, will influence employee motivation (Delaney & Royal, 2017). Putra et al. (2017) contended that intrinsic motivation helps an employee reach high productivity levels. When an employee is motivated, the employee becomes engaged and productive (Alam et al., 2020). Therefore, managers could motivate employees to increase employee engagement.

Business leaders may adapt several effective strategies to increase employee engagement. Antony (2018) noted an engaged employee helps to increase productivity. However, business leaders struggled with executing engagement strategies in the workplace to increase productivity (Mani & Mishra, 2021). Business leaders need to provide practical strategies to increase employee productivity and understand which strategy would work in their organization (Alam et al., 2020). Business leaders may find that implementing effective strategies used by other researchers may help increase employee engagement in the workplace.

Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction was essential to increase employee motivation. Job satisfaction is one of the most prevalent organizational psychology research topics (Kovacs et al., 2018). An employee's sense of gratification and fulfillment is considered job satisfaction (Chan, 2019; Ganji et al., 2021; Olcer & Florescu, 2015; Top et al., 2015). Enhancing public employees' satisfaction with their jobs can result in positive organizational outcomes (Park, 2020). Most employees are satisfied with their jobs if

they can engage in a task they find interesting and enjoy doing (Breaugh et al., 2018).

Therefore, having employees who are engaged tends to increase job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction was associated with employee motivation. Hur (2018) encouraged

public managers to know and understand the effects of motivators and hygiene factors on

improving job satisfaction at work. A leading extrinsic motivator in an employee's career

is the opportunity for advancement. When employees perceive that they have

possibilities, their job satisfaction will increase (Ritter, 2021). Furthermore, a top intrinsic

motivator for employees is personal meaning. Personal meaning at work enables

employees to have their basic needs met and experience appreciation for their

contributions (Lysova et al., 2019). Managers must understand the effect motivation and

hygiene factors have on job satisfaction.

Managers could ensure that they are meeting employees' needs to increase job

satisfaction. Job satisfaction is one factor that can increase work motivation (Breaugh et

al., 2018). Variables associated with job satisfaction include motivation, turnover

intention, job performance, organizational citizenship, and organizational commitment

(Park, 2020). Job satisfaction is generally affected by the feeling one gets from doing the

work (Hur, 2018). Recognizing the ever-changing nature of the business world, managers

must ensure that they are meeting their employees' needs to keep them satisfied.

Job satisfaction is of importance in an organization. Zhang (2020) noted that job

satisfaction is positively associated with employee work attitudes. The development of

employee engagement strategies aids in improving job satisfaction rates (Ritter, 2021).

Managers also must develop organizational goals that keep an employee engaged (Zhang,

2020). Managers must show employees that managers and employees have a commitment to the organization and want to increase job satisfaction. Managers might implement employee engagement strategies and develop organizational goals to increase job satisfaction rates.

Leadership. An organization needs leaders that will motivate their employees. Motivation is impossible to neglect in an organization (Gabriela & Dorinela, 2017). Leaders are responsible for encouraging teamwork, providing a flexible and changing organizational culture, encouraging creativity and innovation, promoting equality, and fostering interconnectivity between people (Gabriela & Dorinela, 2017). Researchers defined leadership as generating collective action to achieve specific goals (Lauritzen et al., 2021). Leaders understand the importance of motivating employees and identifying the company's resources to address the problem (Gabriela & Dorinela, 2017). Therefore, leaders must focus on motivating employees.

The behavior of leaders may contribute to the success of the organization. Leadership aids in empowering, creating affective organizational commitment (Hendryadi & Purwanto, 2019). Many different leadership styles comprise an organization. These leadership styles can cause different exchanges with each employee (Martin et al., 2016). These different exchanges can cause leaders to differentiate how they treat their followers (Martin et al., 2016). Therefore, leaders must ensure that they are treating employees fairly and just. In addition, leaders must make sure that their leadership styles help to motivate their employees.

Transformational leadership was the most used leadership style to increase employee motivation. A study discovered a positive link between transformational leadership and affective commitment (Lee et al., 2018c). The link was that committed employees volunteered for extra activities (Lee et al., 2018c). Transformational leaders motivate, inspire, and enlarge the vision of their followers. Transformational leaders have a motivational power that enables them to push employees to do the following: (a) surpass their expectations, (b) provide inspirational motivation, (c) help employees to commit to high standards, and (d) serve as role models (Guerrero et al., 2018). Managers need to know and understand their leadership styles to motivate their employees.

Another leadership style that helps increase employee motivation is transactional leadership. Transactional leadership focuses on transactions between leaders and their followers (Mgeni & Nayak, 2016). Transactional leaders used contingent rewards as a primary factor to increase motivation (Alrowwad et al., 2020). Mgeni and Nayak (2016) discovered from their findings that there was a correlation between transactional leadership and business performance. A transactional leader can motivate their employees by clearly stating their expectations to their employees and rewarding them for completing the task.

Ethical leadership decision making is of great importance. Lam et al. (2016) discussed the ethical action of leaders. Lam et al. (2016) noted that ethical leaders: (a) led a personal ethical life, (b) asked what the right thing to do was during decision making, (c) defined success by the steps taken to get the results (d) were trustworthy, (f) discussed business ethics and values with their employees, (e) had the employees' best interest in

mind, (g) set a good example by doing the right things, (h) disciplined employees who were violating ethical standards, (i) made fair decisions, and (j) listened to what the employees were saying. Motivational levels of employees are positive when leaders are ethical (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). The researchers concluded that a manager's leadership style is consistent with ethical leadership; their employees would voice concerns and feel more confident. The researchers also showed that employees were more willing to voice their concerns and stay with the organization rather than depart from the business organization.

Occupational Stress. Employees experience occupational stress daily. Pindek et al. (2020) identified work stress as a significant problem. Identifying the source or target of a stressor can support changed organizational models (Sprang et al., 2021). Stress can cause burnout. Researchers explained that we need to remedy occupational stress early if we cannot prevent burnout (Warlick et al., 2021). Leaders must encourage employees not to resist the change; however, changes bring stress and anxiety. Leaders and employees must develop solutions on how to relieve stress and anxiety.

Leaders might implement stress management programs to reduce stress in the workplace. Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) and stress management training (SMT) are practical stress management programs to reduce stress (Kröll et al., 2017). Flexible work arrangements help employees balance their personal lives and improve firm performance (Richardson & McKenna, 2014). A specific flexible work arrangement is teleworking. Teleworking allows an employee to have a work-life balance. The work-life balance enabled employees to handle both work and family-related matters (Galvez et al.,

2020.). Leaders might use flexible work arrangements in their organization to reduce stress and increase employee motivation.

Stress management training is effective in reducing stress in the workplace. Stress management training helps employees become empowered and learn how to manage work-related stressors (Kröll et al., 2017). Stress management training helps organizations address employee satisfaction and absenteeism (Lehmann et al., 2021). Leaders and employees could benefit from practical stress management training. Leadership must implement effective stress management training in the workplace to reduce stress.

Leaders and employees both have a hand in reducing stress in the work environment. These two groups of people must consistently find a strategy to reduce stress (Lehmann et al., 2021). If these two groups do not work hand in hand, they will fail each other (Selzer et al., 2021). Leaders and employees need to have the best interest of each other in mind as the two groups make up the business. If one group is lacking, the other group should be willing to lift them. These two groups are better together than apart. Leaders that implement stress management programs might minimize stress in the organization.

Absenteeism influences the organizational environment and productivity. Mastekaasa (2020) augured that either employment or working conditions can drive absenteeism. Employees who suffer from workplace bullying are absent from work and do not have to deal with the negative (Magee et al., 2017). Nunes et al. (2018) suggested that organizations implement employee assistance programs (EAPs) to help reduce

employee absenteeism. Leaders might create a positive work culture that encourages strategies to reduce employee turnover and absenteeism.

Organizational Culture. A positive organizational culture could aid in increasing employee motivation in the workplace. When an organization has a supportive and excellent working environment, employees desire to help each other (Ujjah et al., 2020). Organizations should build and maintain work environments characterized by (a) well-designed, good-fitting, and quality jobs that provide opportunities to job craft, (b) facilitative leaders, cultures, policies, and practices, and high-quality relationships; and (c) uniform access to decent work (Lysova et al., 2019) Managers must develop an organizational culture where emotionally committed employees are present. When an employee is emotionally committed to their organization, motivation and loyalty increase (Ujjah et al., 2020). In comparison, Saltson and Naish (2015) noted that an employee's point of view of the organization does not necessarily increase motivation. Leaders could create a vibrant and positive organizational culture that encourages employee motivation.

Organizational culture influences job satisfaction. Managers and employees experience decisions that they must make daily. These decisions have to do with previous actions taken, daily interactions, and the shared values and norms of the organizational culture (Janićijević et al., 2018). An organizational culture focused on job satisfaction allowed employees to perform their work and obtain what they value to a greater or lesser degree (Janićijević et al., 2018). Employees are attracted to organizations with a culture that values employees and provides organizational well-being (Jigjiddorj et al., 2021).

Therefore, managers need to create an organizational culture that encourages an employee to surpass work outcomes in a favorable environment that values employees.

Sustainability. Industries must develop sustainability strategies to address the lack of employee motivation. Lorincová et al. (2019) noted that effective employee management supported motivation. According to research, companies that implement sustainability activities could have employees who showed higher work-related motivation (Huber & Hirsch, 2017). Delmas and Pekovic (2018) argued that employee motivation, commitment to the organization, knowledge sharing, and learning could boost labor productivity. Educated leaders can help their organization understand sustainability and help benefit the organization.

Executives in the retail industry are developing ways to improve sustainability to stay with the company. Researchers discovered that organizations are beginning to focus on employees' organizational citizenship behavior to achieve sustainability (Lee & Ha, 2018b). The researchers noted that employees help an organization achieve economic productivity and upbeat performance. Organizations identified that employees are the key to the success of any organization (Lorincová et al., 2019). Executives in the retail industry understand that this industry is tough to manage.

Leaders may address the sustainability of a company. Different leadership styles would affect how a company's sustainability would be addressed by an organization. Leaders must understand that sustainability would help them be competitive in the market that they serve (Nging & Yazdanifard, 2015). Different leadership styles will either have a positive or negative effect when addressing sustainability in an organization. Haque

(2021) stressed that responsible leadership would focus on multi-level motivations and commitment to internal and external stakeholder achievements. Leaders must understand their leadership styles to know how to address sustainability.

      Work–Life Balance. Managers could pay attention to unmotivated employees who are experiencing personal life issues. Workers face many pressures in job settings to make enough to pay their bills (Carleton & Kelly, 2019). Patel (2019) defined quality of work as either favorable or unfavorable of the job environment for people working in a particular organization. Patel further explained that managers need to understand the effect the quality of work life has on employee satisfaction (2019). Quality of work life is the backbone for organizational development.

      Managers could use different strategies to increase work–life balance in the retail industry. People are the primary resources to help with delivering services within organizations (Antony, 2018). Retail employees work long hours that include weekends and holidays. Work life balance policies can help managers increase engagement for retail employees. Work life balance helped employees with balancing work and home responsibilities (Talukder, 2019). An example of a work life balance was allowing employees to work flexible hours. Retail managers could use work life opportunities in the workplace to increase engagement.

      Common incentives that are associated with work life balance may include additional benefits that the organization offers. The benefits could include education assistance, time off and temporary leave, health insurance, alternative work schedule with flexible hours, paid parental leave, assistance with adoption, and childcare (Barber et al.,

2019). Each benefit would vary depending on the nature of the job. Working mothers are faced with the challenge of work life balance when it comes to their children (Toffoletti & Starr, 2016). When looking for employment, working mothers look for organizations that provide childcare as a benefit (Sorensen, 2017). Organizations that provide additional benefits that enhance employees' work life balance might have an increase in employee motivation.

Another benefit that managers might add to enhance work life balance was a healthy work environment. A healthier employee is a happy employee (Segal, 2018). Leaders might encourage employees to develop a healthier lifestyle. Leaders can create a healthier work environment by encouraging employees to support and use the local fitness club or rewarding top-performing employees with a free gym membership (Harwiki, 2016). Managers could provide employees with healthier food options and make healthier snacks available (Harwiki, 2016). Leaders are needed to implement specific values, ideals, and morals in the business organization (Owens et al., 2019). Benefits offered by leaders in the retail industry could improve employee motivation.

Strategies to Increase Employee Motivation

Reinforce Hygiene Factors

Hygiene factors influence employee motivation. Herzberg et al. (1959) described that hygiene factors are a necessity in the workplace for motivation. Herzberg et al. noted that hygiene factors do not necessarily lead to positive satisfaction with time. Hygiene factors are extrinsic to work. Hygiene factors aid in keeping employees pacified, not to be dissatisfied (Ward, 2019). The hygiene factor symbolizes the physiological needs that

individuals want and expect to fulfill. A few examples of hygiene factors are pay, fringe benefits, and job security. Leaders need to focus on both hygiene and motivation factors to motivate employees.

Provide Reasonable Compensation

Management can motivate employees through compensation. Yanuar (2017) defined compensation as the benefit received by workers from a job done. Employees used the compensation received from their jobs to take care of themselves, their families, and society (Sudiardhita et al., 2018). When employees feel that they have received enough compensation, they will be highly motivated (Yanuar, 2017). Therefore, the organization's management must ensure that they offer reasonable compensation to employees to keep them motivated.

Compensation had a significant effect on work motivation. Compensation could help enhance an employee's contribution to achieving organizational goals (Tumi et al., 2021). The exchange between employers and employees helped to strengthen within a reward system (Tumi et al., 2021). Papilaya et al. (2019) noted that motivation pushed someone to do something to accomplish a particular objective. Therefore, compensation helped organizations motivate employees, thereby increasing work motivation.

Compensation has a significant effect on job satisfaction. Workers become dissatisfied when they are feeling that they are not getting what they are worth. Motivation would increase to a higher degree when an employee was satisfied with their compensation (Do, 2018). According to Alshmemri et al. (2017), employees would improve their work performance when reasonable compensation was received. Therefore,

an employee's job satisfaction would increase when they receive reasonable compensation.

Strengthen Interpersonal Relationships

Social relationships affect employee motivation. Herzberg et al. (1959) listed interpersonal relationships as a hygiene factor that directly influences employee motivation and satisfaction. Therefore, leaders should focus on building strong interpersonal relationships. Alshmemri et al. (2017) emphasized enhancing social relationships; there must be interactions and discussions in the work environment and break times. Interpersonal relationships help employees engage in knowledge sharing (Zhang et al., 2020). Knowledge sharing allows employees to mutually exchange knowledge (implicit or explicit) and create new knowledge (Van Den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004). Therefore, employee motivation might be increased by using social relationships to share knowledge with peers.

The interpersonal relationship between employees and managers was essential. Mammen (2020) noted that an organization where managers and employees have a good working relationship could create a productive work environment. Employers must create a culture of trust (Chen et al., 2014). Szostek (2020) explained that social relationships are the organization surrounding the individual and the constructs for the functioning of the employees. Social interactions help to improve individual well-being (Nappo, 2020). Managers might consider the relational ties and emotional bonds that can impact whether an employee remains with or leaves an organization (Hyang, 2017). Managers may create interpersonal relations that would encourage an employee to stay with an organization.

Strengthen Motivational Factors

Motivational factors in the workplace can help job satisfaction. Motivational factors yield positive job satisfaction and are also called satisfiers (Rahman et al., 2017). These factors are intrinsic to work (Herzberg et al., 1959). These factors helped to motivate employees to do their best work. The motivational factors symbolize the physiological needs perceived as an additional benefit. Managers who employ Herzberg's two-factor theory can introduce motivational forces that can inspire employees to do their best work and become productive in the workplace.

Increase Employee Growth and Development

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are essential to employee development. Managers are responsible for handling people management issues (Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2018). Managers must ensure that their employees have high job satisfaction. Employees who are satisfied at work are more motivated and perform better (Hur, 2018). High job satisfaction ensures that an employee has an optimistic passion for their job. Managers should include job satisfaction and organizational commitment when implementing strategies for employee development.

The feedback helped to support development and growth for employees. Feedback allows managers to have an open dialogue with their employees to talk about performance expectations and individual development (Budworth et al., 2019). Alshmemri et al. (2017) stated that the possibility for growth helped employees to undergo training in new techniques, gaining new professional knowledge, and learning new skills. Positive feedback helped employees believe that they can continue to be

successful and develop within their careers (Dimotakis et al., 2017). Managers could provide employees with feedback to help them reach their potential and advance in their careers.

Meaningfulness of the Work

Employees can perform a job that they love and bring them flexibility and autonomy. Breaugh et al. (2018) explained that intrinsic motivation occurs when individuals engage in a task because they find the task enjoyable. An employee can do something that they love and brings them joy. Sessions et al. (2021) noted that scholars from diverse disciplines such as management, organizational behavior, and vocational psychology explained the reasoning behind meaningful work experience. These researchers have made theoretical contributions to understand factors that facilitate the meaning of the work (Lysova et al., 2019). Providing the employee with meaningful work can help to add flexibility and autonomy.

The work itself should allow the employee to have pride in themselves. Sunyoung and Sang-Choong (2019) suggested employees' motivation, well-being, and practical work behaviors are crucial to identify because they help leaders promote employee well-being. Lysova et al. (2019) noted that work should be personally significant and worthwhile. Additional researchers noted that leadership could facilitate or constrain employees' meaningful work experience (Cai et al., 2018). Leaders that give employees good work experiences that are meaningful can increase their work motivation.

Increase Employee Responsibility

Managers must acknowledge the responsibility of their workers to increase employee motivation in the workplace. Employees gain satisfaction from being given the responsibility and freedom to make decisions (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Herzberg et al. (1959) listed responsibility as a motivator factor that can affect job satisfaction. Hur (2018) noted that responsibility at work could help to increase employee motivation. Therefore, managers might boost employee motivation by giving employees responsibility at work.

Implement Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory as a Motivational Strategy

The strategy of using Herzberg's two-factor theory in motivating employees was focused on identifying the motivational factors or hygiene that affect employee motivation in the workplace. Some employees suffer from a lack of employee motivation, and comprehending the reason is crucial for increasing employee motivation. Lorincová et al. (2019) suggested that business leaders could build motivational programs within their organization that encourage employee motivation. These motivational programs can aid in helping set realistic company goals and engage employees. Alshmemri et al. (2017) noted that when an employee is motivated, they are engaged. Therefore, managers must understand what factors keep employees motivated.

The lack of employee motivation could encourage leaders to develop strategies to increase employee motivation. The first motivational strategy was creating a positive organizational culture (Kuo & Tsai., 2019). An example of this was a company culture where employees are happy in their roles and feel fulfilled. The second motivational

strategy was creating a work-life balance (Barber et al., 2019). Examples include allowing employees flexible work hours, paid time off, and access to employee assistance programs. The final and third motivational strategy was providing meaningful work (Sunyoung & Sang-Choong., 2019). An example was allowing employees to make a difference in humanity through their jobs. Finally, when employees lack employee motivation, using Herzberg's two-factor motivation allowed the organization to increase employee motivation.

Retail Industry

Managers must understand the reasons why employees are leaving the business. Many researchers have attempted to understand the reasons for high turnover rates in the retail industry (Cho et al., 2017; Olubiyi et al., 2019; Pantano & Gandini, 2018). Managers must understand the reasons why employees are leaving the business. David and Venatus (2019) defined turnover intentions as the likelihood that an employee will leave their position. Managers need to implement retention strategies to help reduce employee turnover (Mulijana & Tian, 2019). A vital issue with employee turnover was that organizations lose talented and skilled employees who know about the organization and its practices. Employees are the heart and soul of an organization.

Employees in the retail industry have challenging jobs. Employees in the retail industry interact with customers to create remarkable memories. Interacting with store personnel also contributes to creating a pleasant store experience when employees are perceived to have the capacity to provide good customer service and support customers with advice and suggestions when requested (Pantano & Gandini, 2018). Kim et al.

(2020) noted that organizations could experience sustainable growth by satisfying customers. On the other hand, Pantano and Gandini (2018) noted that a negative in-store experience could cause limited shopping activities. Therefore, employees need to be motivated so that they can provide customers with superb customer service.

Employees in the retail industry deal with emotional labor. Emotional labor helps employees present an acceptable emotional appearance to members of the public (Zou & Dahling, 2017). Geng et al. (2018) discussed that allowing employees to be creative helps increase emotional labor. Zou and Dahling (2017) noted that emotional labor was a crucial concern for organizations dealing with employees who work with the public. Managers could implement strategies to help employees deal with emotional labor.

Managers could help employees to manage emotional labor. Richards et al. (2019) defined emotional labor as the emotions required in the interpersonal interaction between line managers and neurodiverse employees. Lindqvist et al. (2019) discussed that emotional labor was vital when coping with emotionally distressing situations. Wang and Xie (2020) noted that emotional labor was an essential aspect of relationship-building because it aids employees in taking a step back to cope and deal with the demands of their role. Understanding the importance of emotional labor could help managers to increase customer satisfaction and organizational performance.

The retail industry faced the challenge of keeping its employees motivated. In the retail sector, employees face direct responsibility for the customer relationship, which is a powerful indicator of a company's success (Bharathy, 2018). Employees are a crucial part of the business equation (Han et al., 2021). Employees are essential to the retail

industry because they are the first people in contact with the customer. Employee satisfaction levels are directly related to the satisfaction level of the customer (Bharathy, 2018). Therefore, management must continue to work hard to keep their employees motivated.

Summary of the Literature Review

This qualitative, single case study aimed to explore department store managers' strategies to increase employee motivation. The literature review was based upon the research question revealed topics and solutions available to a department store manager to be successful in this process to increase employee motivation. The retail industry has recognized that keeping employees motivated to be a crucial resource to an organization's success. Some findings to support the problem statement and purpose statement were using intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The results of motivational strategies would help department store managers to focus on using strategies to increase employee. The study and literature review background disclosed the retail industry is facing a lack of employee motivation and decreased job satisfaction and empowerment. The solutions found in the literature reviews summarized the importance of increasing employee motivation in the retail industry.

Transition

In Section 1, I conceptualized the factors that managers manipulate, in the workplace, to impact employee behavior in the retail industry. Herzberg's two-factor theory served as the conceptual framework for analyzing the dynamic between the manager and the employee. The subsection topics included age, communication,

compensation, employee performance, performance appraisal, empowerment, job satisfaction, leadership, occupational stress, organizational culture, sustainability, and work balance. The literature review incorporated the critical factors that affect motivation, ways to improve employee motivation using hygiene and motivation factors, and the synergy in the retail industry. Bharathy (2018) signified the importance of using department store managers' strategies to increase employee motivation. The strategies include having a positive company culture, retaining a talented workforce, and building employee morale. Organizations must continue motivating their employees to keep their competitive advantage as the business world is rapidly changing (Hitka et al., 2019; Ristic et al., 2017). The literature review addressed that employee motivation is an important topic that any leader in an organization needs to address.

Section 2 contains information distinct to this study. I include the procedures for conducting this research study. I present my role as the researcher and the primary data collection instrument. The data collection techniques include semistructured interviews with participants and the department store documents. To ensure the reliability and validity of the study, I use a researcher log, conduct an audit trail, and conduct member checking. Also, as part of Section 2, I address ethical research by providing an informed consent form to study participants and validate the use of four study participants in the population and sampling. The in-depth descriptions I provide in Section 2 justify the choice of a qualitative single case study to explore the motivational strategies used by department store managers to increase employee motivation through job satisfaction and empowerment.

In Section 3, I will explain the analysis of the study findings and how it related to the successful motivation strategies department managers used. The data sources included semistructured interviews with participants and the department store internal documents. Finally, I will present recommendations for action and future research on the topic.

Section 2: The Project

In Section 2 of the study, I discuss my exploration of increasing employee motivation through job satisfaction and empowerment. I present my role as the primary researcher in this research study in which I used purposeful sampling to select study participants from the selected population of four department store managers within the retail industry. I conducted my research ethically and provide the ways I protected the participants. I supply an in-depth description of my data collection and organization techniques. I ensured the reliability and validity of my study by conducting member checking, and I provide a detailed description of my study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that department store managers use to motivate their employees. The target population consisted of four area managers who have implemented successful strategies to motivate employees at a department store in southeastern South Carolina. Potential implications for positive change that could result from this study are that members of the community may benefit from company-sponsored events that will increase community services activities that provide opportunities for family togetherness, promote generational wealth, and improve families' and the community's financial well-being.

Role of the Researcher

I was the primary data instrument for this qualitative study. Yin (2018) indicated that the researcher's role is collecting, interpreting, and organizing data. As the primary data collection instrument, I collected, processed, and reported on the data collected and

analyzed findings. I collected data using an interview protocol and conducted interviews using Microsoft Teams. I reviewed documents, such as employee handbooks, strategic plans, and business forecasts for triangulation.

Researchers should take the necessary steps to build a trusting and harmonious relationship with their participants. Cheng et al. (2017) noted that building trust is of extreme importance when communicating. In qualitative studies, researchers use an interpretive, naturalistic approach to study the phenomena and their meanings in individuals' lives (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). I have no experience in the retail sector. My aim with the participants was to establish a trustworthy relationship and mitigate biases in the research process to become knowledgeable about researching the phenomenon. My relationship with the topic and research area was from my 10 years of experience in the customer service industry in the South Carolina area. I have experienced how low employee motivation can affect the morale of both the employee and the organization.

To conduct my study ethically, I followed the principles of the Belmont Report. The Belmont Report provides ethical principles for researchers to follow when researching human subjects (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1979) described the three ethical principles as (a) respect for persons, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice. I ensured participants' confidentiality by not revealing any identifying personal information of the participants. Based on Adashi et al.'s (2018) recommendation, I implemented three

strategies to comply with all ethical standards during my research. I respected

participants' rights and privacy by sharing that participation in this study was voluntary

and receiving consent from participants before starting data collection. Also, I discussed

the informed consent form with each participant and highlighted the risks and benefits of

participating in the study. Josephson and Smale (2020) noted that informed consent

informs research participants of their rights as research participants. I showed

participants' beneficence by not revealing their identifying information and I assigned

codes instead of names, ensuring limited adverse actions by sharing employee

motivational strategies. The codes for the participants were JR01, JR02, JR03, and JR04.

To show justice, I selected participants with the knowledge and experience to answer my

research questions, and I treated the study participants with fairness and equity.

To mitigate bias and avoid viewing the data through a personal lens, I used

bracketing and member checking. Researchers should understand that their world views,

cultural experiences, and upbringing may impede their interaction with study participants

(Saunders et al., 2015). Morse (2015) listed the four common types of researcher bias in

qualitative research: (a) conceptual biases, (b) anticipated outcome biases, (c) incorrect

sampling, and (d) biased questions. My role as a researcher was to avoid biases about

employee motivation in the retail sector while collecting and analyzing data, protecting

participants' rights and ensuring the study findings reflect the participants' perspectives. I

mitigated researcher bias by using bracketing. Researchers can use bracketing to mitigate

preconceptions related to the researcher and research topic (Tufford & Newman, 2012).

My plan of bracketing included the use of a reflexive journal. Fusch et al. (2017) noted

that researchers use a reflexive journal in a case study to reflect on the data gathered in a short time. In the reflexive journal, I documented my preconceptions to keep me aware of them throughout the study. I used member checking to reduce bias. Candela (2019) explained that member checking aids in ensuring the accurate portrayal of participants' voices by allowing participants the opportunity to confirm or deny the interpretations and accuracy of the data. Researchers use member checking to minimize personal biases and to enhance the trustworthiness of the study results. I used bracketing and member checking to reduce researcher bias.

An interview protocol is critical in a qualitative study. I collected data using an interview protocol (Appendix A) and six semistructured interview questions with probing follow-up questions. Yeong et al. (2018) noted that a researcher needs to have a reliable interview protocol to acquire a good-quality interview. Researchers use nonstandardized data, including interviews, to analyze and answer research questions (Saunders et al., 2015). Karagiozis (2018) stated that interviews are the primary data source for qualitative studies. Kahn and Cannell (1957) identified interviews as purposeful discussions between two or more people. Yeong et al. (2018) pointed out that an interview protocol aids a researcher in ensuring alignment between the research questions and interview questions. The interview protocol guides the interview process with each participant. I used an interview protocol (Appendix A) to ensure that each participant responded to the same interview questions, providing consistency in the data collected.

Participants

The participants for this single case study were department store managers from one organization who have implemented successful strategies to increase employee motivation. The criteria included department store managers who have used strategies to motivate employees and who were willing to participate. All participants were current department managers of the research site located in South Carolina. Participants are a critical element of qualitative research. Knechel (2019) noted that the selection of appropriate participants is essential to the research design phase. Patino and Ferreira (2018) stated that qualitative researchers should target participants with the necessary knowledge and experience to answer the interview questions. The selected participants helped me to answer the interview questions for my research questions.

My strategy for gaining access to department store managers was through professional relationships with department store managers. Vuban and Eta (2019) suggested to gain access to managers, a researcher should become familiar with the gatekeepers. Lancaster (2017) noted the importance of receiving trust from participants by contacting organization leader and asking for an appointment to meet. In the email to the gatekeeper, I asked for contact information for multiple managers. Once I had the contact information from the gatekeeper, I sent the participants an invitation email and the informed consent form for their review. The invitation email provided guidelines for the participant to review the informed consent form and reply by email with their consent if they wanted to participate in the study. All participants were requested to respond by email within 3 days of receiving the invitation email with "I consent" to participate.

I established a working relationship with managers once they had agreed to participate. Successful communication helps build a relationship with trust and connection that begins a long-lasting, trusting relationship (Turaga, 2019). During this meeting, I shared and reviewed the informed consent form. I explained the purpose of the study, disclosure of voluntary participation, disclosure of confidentiality procedures, and contribution to business practice for the selected organization. I answered any questions they had about the study. Turaga (2016) noted that speaker and listener being on the same page is critical for effective communication. I developed a working relationship, and I ensured that the participants and I communicated effectively throughout the entire process. Adiguzel (2019) noted that effective communication aids in strengthening the relationship of structuring, evaluating, and understanding messages in personal environments. I reminded the participants that their participation in this study was voluntary. Lastly, I explained to the participants that they could reach out to me if they had any questions or concerns.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

One of the decisions a researcher must make when conducting research involves choosing the research design and method for the study. The three research methods are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Yin, 2018). The research design is one of the criteria used to determine the feasibility of a study. I used a qualitative research design method for this study. The qualitative method involves researchers using open-ended questions to learn the strategies business leaders have used to solve a business problem (Lanka et al.,

2021). Researchers use a qualitative method to understand the phenomenon being studied by gathering data about the participants' experiences (Haven & Van Grootel, 2019). Smith (2018) suggested that qualitative research aims to help researchers examine people's lives in rich detail. The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because the research question used to guide the research was focused on identifying the strategies that department store managers use to increase employee motivation by improving job satisfaction and empowerment. Before choosing a qualitative research method, I conducted a thorough review of the quantitative research method and ruled out quantitative research as an appropriate research method for this study.

A quantitative approach was not appropriate for this research study because answering the research question did not involve testing a hypothesis or comparing variables. Quantitative researchers collect data to test hypotheses (Lenger, 2019). Researchers use a quantitative methodology to collect and analyze numerical data using statistical methods (Apuke, 2017). Rutberg and Bouikidis (2018) stated that quantitative research measures the relationship between variables and outcomes, and this research study's purpose was not to measure the relationship between variables and outcomes. Another method that was not appropriate for this research study was mixed-methods research.

Mixed-methods research includes the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study. Conducting research using a mixed-methods design allows a researcher to collect two sets of data (Rutberg & Bouikidis, 2018). Hendren et al. (2018) indicated that a mixed-method research study involves a researcher using elements of

both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and must meet the requirements of both methods. The mixed-method approach was not appropriate for my study because answering the research question that guided the study did not require examining the statistical relationships between variables. The quantitative research element used in a mixed-method design was not appropriate.

Research Design

Selecting the research design is another critical decision a researcher must make when conducting a research study. For this study, I chose a single case study research design. Yin (2018) noted that researchers could use case study, phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative design when conducting qualitative research. Researchers use a case study design to study a complex phenomenon using one case or multiple cases (Ridder, 2017). Researchers use a single case study to study one representative case of a specific phenomenon (Heale & Twycross, 2018). The single case study design was appropriate for this research study because the research question guiding this study was focused on how department store managers in one organization improve employee motivation. Yin (2018) postulated that a single case study explores the research questions for qualitative research. A case study is an appropriate design when researchers want to take a complex and broad topic and narrow it down into manageable research questions (Heale & Twycross, 2018). For this research study, I selected a single case study to explore strategies department managers use to motivate employees. Other research designs were considered but not chosen before selecting a single case study as the research design.

Before choosing a single case study, I considered the phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative research designs. Moser and Korstjens (2018) noted that researchers use a phenomenological research design to explore the personal meaning of participants' lived experiences. A phenomenological research design was not appropriate for this study because the intent for this study did not include exploring the personal meaning of the participants' lived experiences. Hammersley (2018) noted that the ethnography research design focuses on describing and interpreting a culture or a social group. An ethnographic study design was not appropriate for this study because the focus of my research was not on exploring the values of a particular culture or social group. Shiller (2017) noted researchers use the narrative research design to explain events lived by individuals to help them advance their self-interest. A narrative research design was not appropriate for my study because the focus was not to promote self-interest or explain events lived by the participants in this study.

Regardless of the design type chosen by the researcher, reaching data saturation is critical for a qualitative researcher. Braun and Clarke (2021) noted that data saturation is embedded securely within qualitative researcher logic. Constantinou et al. (2017) pointed out that researchers achieve data saturation when the participants bring forward no new information or themes. Data collection would continue via store manager interviews, company employee handbooks, strategic plans, and business forecasts until no new information, themes, or codes connected to the research question emerge to ensure data saturation.

Population and Sampling

The sample size for this qualitative single case study was four department store managers who implemented successful strategies to increase employee motivation. The managers would come from a department store that sells a variety of products to consumers. Small sample sizes are appropriate for qualitative research to help support the depth of case-oriented analysis (Vasileiou et al., 2018). A sample size of four to five cases is appropriate for case study research (Creswell, 2013; Sim et al., 2018). Therefore, a sample size of four department store managers was appropriate for this study. Data saturation was reached with four department store managers.

I used purposive sampling to select participants. Researchers use purposive sampling to select respondents who yield appropriate and valuable information (Campbell et al., 2020; Kelly, 2010). A researcher used purposive sampling to identify units from the selected target population based on the purpose and specific inclusion and exclusion criteria (Adewumi & Ogunnubi, 2019; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). As defined by Marcus et al. (2017), snowball sampling is a recruitment strategy of using study participants to recruit another study participants. Snowball sampling was not inappropriate for this study because participants would be selected based on specific prerequisite qualifications. The participants included in this study must be managers that (a) had implemented motivational strategies to increase employee motivation, (b) are current employees at the research site, (c) were willing to participate, and are 21 and over.

Data saturation helped to add transparency to the research. Reaching data saturation is critical for a qualitative researcher because it is the baseline to stop collecting data (Constantinou et al., 2017). van Rijnsoever (2017) stated that a researcher could reach data saturation when no new codes or patterns emerge. To ensure data saturation, I collected data until I saw repetition in the information and no new themes emerged.

I conducted all interviews by videoconferencing. Lobe et al. (2020) noted that the pandemic forced face-to-face qualitative data collection to transition to a "socially distant" method. Jongsma et al. (2020) suggested that study participants choose the location to conduct their interviews. The participants chose the date and time that was convenient for them. Ngozwana (2018) noted that researchers should keep study participants in their natural world. Using Microsoft Teams, interview guidelines provided participants to reduce distractions, such as requiring them to be secluded or in a quiet area with no distractions, no telephones, and children/family during the interview. Also, the interview guidelines included those participants who had access to a computer.

Ethical Research

Researchers should address ethical issues in each research study. Before interacting with participants, I gained approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Walden IRB approval number is 09-23-21-0982746. Additionally, I adhered to the recommendations outlined in *The Belmont Report* to ensure that my research complies with U.S. federal regulations. Before data collection, I obtained informed consent from each participant, assigned codes to protect participants'

names and the organization, discussed incentives for participating, and ensured that

participants understood how to withdraw from the study. To ensure that I provided

participants with ethical protection, I adhered to the three ethical principles of the

Belmont Report: (a) respect of person, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice (National

Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral

Research, 1979). To conduct research ethically, a researcher must receive each

participant's informed consent and voluntary participation (Josephson & Smale, 2020). I

used an interview protocol and obtained an informed consent form to ensure respect and

ethical protection for each participant.

After IRB approval was received, I emailed the gatekeeper. The informed consent

form would provide participants with background information on the study, the

procedures, the study's voluntary nature, and the risks and benefits of being in the study.

Before conducting interviews, I reviewed the consent form with each participant and

collected a signature before continuing. Researchers use informed consent to advise

research participants of their rights (Josephson & Smale, 2020). In addition, tangible and

intangible incentives could encourage participants to partake in a research study (Stovel

et al., 2018). Participants received a $10.00 gift card from Starbucks to participate in this

research study. The informed consent form would indicate this. During the initial

telephone conversation with potential participants, I discussed the procedures for

withdrawing from the study. I advised them that they could withdraw by contacting me

either by telephone or email at any time, with no fear of repercussion.

Researchers must ensure the protection and confidentiality of both participants and the organization. The use of pseudonym codes could protect the confidentiality of participants (Surmiak, 2018). I distinguished participants by number as JR01, JR02, and so on for department store managers, assigned in sequence when I received the participant's signed consent form. I distinguished the organization by a letter, not by name. The participants and the organization's names and individualized codes will be stored in a file on my password-protected USB. Researchers have the ethical responsibility to protect their participants' confidentiality in their research study (Turcotte-Tremblay & Mc Sween-Cadieux, 2018). Ensuring confidentiality was crucial for researchers in building trust with their participants, aiding in the potential for participants to provide honest, rich data for their research questions (Turcotte-Tremblay & Mc Sween-Cadieux, 2018). Therefore, I ensured confidentiality by protecting the information collected from participants.

I stored all data collected for this research study on a password-protected flash drive for five years once the study was complete. After five years, I will destroy the flash drive and shred all documents. Walden's approval number for this study is 09-23-21-0982746, and it expires on September 22, 2022.

Data Collection Instruments

For this proposed qualitative single case study, I was the primary data collection instrument. McGrath et al. (2019) stated that the researcher is the primary data collection instrument in a qualitative research study. As the primary data collection instrument, I collected information from department store managers to understand their motivational

strategies to improve employee motivation. Yin (2018) noted researchers could gather evidence for their case study from documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts. As the primary data collection instrument, I collected data from semistructured interviews and documentation collected from the selected organization. I asked for the organizational documentation during the interview. I collected the organizational documentation by email.

The interview protocol (Appendix A) guided the beginning, during, and end of all interviews. Castillo-Montoya (2016) suggested that a researcher develop a robust initial interview protocol to receive meaningful data that elicit a participant's rich experience. The interview protocol (Appendix A) included a script that guided me to conduct Microsoft Team interviews with my study's eligible participants. It consisted of the actions that happen for each phase at the beginning, during, and after the interview. I followed each step in the interview protocol. I asked each participant to hear and respond to the same interview questions and provide honest answers. To collect rich and meaningful data, I followed the interview protocol to explore strategies department store managers used to improve employee motivation.

The secondary data sources were semistructured interviews and documents collected from the selected organization, such as employee handbooks, strategic plans, and business forecasts. Interviews are the most common data source used in qualitative research studies (Kallio et al., 2016; Taylor, 2005). Semistructured interviews contain open-ended responses from participants and provide in-depth information. Semistructured interviews allow for usage in either an individual or group setting

(DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Kallio et al., 2016). To explore the strategies department store managers used to motivate their employees. I conducted semistructured interviews consisting of six open-ended questions.

I used an expert panel to validate the interview protocol to enhance the data collection instrument's reliability and validity. Rengarajan et al. (2021) stated that an expert panel allows researchers to receive instantaneous feedback to improve their qualitative views. An expert panel aids the researcher in obtaining a better understanding of the research question from different perspectives from experts (Côrte-Real et al., 2019; Rengarajan et al., 2021; Winkler et al., 2015). The expert panel was my doctoral committee. I used the expert panel's recommendations to make corrections, if necessary, to interview questions before I conducted my interviews.

I used member checking to improve the reliability and validity of my research. Korstjens and Moser (2018) noted member checking gave the participant a chance to review the researcher's interpretation of the data for accuracy. Allowing the participants to review that data is critical for establishing trustworthiness (McGrath et al., 2019). Member checking allowed the participants to ensure that their strategies, insights, experiences were interpreted correctly and are their point of view or what they intended to say. I digitally recorded the interview, transcribed the data, and emailed my interpretation to the participants for accuracy. I requested that participants respond within 5-7 business days to email.

Data Collection Technique

I followed the interview protocol to collect data for my research study Appendix A. Constructing a reliable interview protocol is the goal for data collection (Yeong et al., 2018). Castillo-Montoya (2016) explained that researchers use the interview protocol to structure the interview process to collect rich data related to the study's research question and be conversational. Saunders et al. (2015) described the different types of interviews defined by levels of formality and structure: structured, semistructured, and unstructured or in-depth interviews. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) asserted that researchers use semistructured interviews to obtain information from key informants related to the topic of interest. I used semistructured interviews to understand the participants' experiences and perceptions of motivational strategies to increase employee motivation. I followed the interview protocol throughout the interview process while collecting data.

There are advantages and disadvantages to using an interview protocol and conducting semistructured interviews. Yeong et al. (2018) explained the advantage of using an interview protocol to guide the interview into a sequence way to probe deeper conversations to obtain richer data. In qualitative studies, researchers use semistructured interviews to gather rich data to capture the experiences of study participants in a research study (Brown & Danaher, 2019). A disadvantage of using an interview protocol that is unreliable and valid is that the research findings may not be rigorous (Yeong et al., 2018). A disadvantage of using semistructured interviews is that participants may not want to share or reveal sensitive and personal information (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). A disadvantage of using video conferencing is that the participants may have

trouble connecting because of limited webcams, outdated hardware, microphone

functionality, and low bandwidth (Archibald et al., 2019; Florczak, 2020). I maximized

the advantages of semistructured interviews by following the interview protocol.

I followed the interview protocol outlined in (Appendix A) for each participant to

guide my interviews. I coordinated with the participants a date and time to conduct the

interviews via Microsoft Teams. I digitally recorded the interviews. Correia et al. (2020)

pointed out that digitally recording an interview can help the researcher with reflexive

observation. Once I had received consent from each participant, I started both the

interview and recording process.

I started the interview by (a) introducing myself, (b) I went over the consent form

and asked the participants if they had questions or concerns, (c) I explained to

participants that their participation in the research study was voluntary and they could

withdraw from the study before member checking was complete without the fear of

retaliation, (d) I went over the member checking process with the participants, (e) I

reminded participants that the interviews would be digitally recorded and ask for their

consent to be recorded before I started the interviews, (f) gave participants appropriate

time to answer my six interview questions and the follow-up questions, and (g) Once

interviews were done, I thanked each participant for their participation in my document

collection and schedule a follow-up time for member checking.

The interview took place via video conferencing. Saunders et al. (2015)

mentioned that managers are more likely to agree to an interview when they find the

interview topic exciting and relevant to their current work. Roberts et al. (2021) stated

that the COVID-19 era has caused qualitative researchers to switch from in-person data collection to virtual methods to comply with social distancing and keep both researcher and participant safe. Conducting videoconferencing interviews could be flexible, convenient, and interactive for both the researcher and participants (Correia et al., 2020). Dodds and Hess (2020) stressed that following ethical procedures is essential when conducting interviews online or face-to-face.

I analyzed company documents that were pertinent to this study. Alam (2021) indicated that the data collection process includes interviews, observations, and document analysis in case study research. Document analysis aids in triangulating the interview data and works with different strategies like member checking (Yeong et al., 2018). The company documents that I analyzed were employee handbooks, strategic plans, and business forecasts.

I used member checking for data saturation with the participants. Candela (2019) noted that member checking allows the participant to check the accuracy of the account. Member checking was a way for each participant to ensure that their realities were represented and not the researcher's (Iivari, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By employing member checking, the research data might be seen as credible and allows the researcher to be transparent in presenting the findings of the data (Varpio et al., 2017). I used member checking so that the participants could validate the interpretation of that data.

Data Organization Technique

I used NVivo qualitative data analysis software to organize the collected data. Williams and Moser (2019) suggested that qualitative researchers use electronic filing

systems to organize data and develop coding to identify distinct concepts and themes for categorization. Using NVivo qualitative software helps researchers record, analyze, and display data (Robins & Eisen, 2017). Furthermore, researchers should implement file naming systems to organize their data into digital files to sort the raw datasets into themes and make the data more accessible for analysis (Cypress, 2018). Once I finished data collection, I organized the information by constructing and labeling folders. Rhodes and Brook (2021) asserted that researchers could use a reflective journal to document participants' feelings and emotions during interviews. I used Microsoft Word to maintain a reflective journal to store notes and log daily activities.

I will store all raw data securely for 5 years. Cypress (2018) stated that long-term data storage protects the confidentiality of the information obtained from study participants. To satisfy Walden University's requirement, I will store all private and confidential raw data on a password-protected flash drive for 5 years once the study is complete. After 5 years, I will destroy the flash drive and shred all documents.

Data Analysis

The data analysis method for this qualitative single case study was thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is among the most used techniques to analyze qualitative data (Lehmann et al., 2019). Thematic analysis is an interpretative approach to qualitative research based on placing data into themes to understand the phenomenon's complex meaning (Lehmann et al., 2019; Smith, 2015). Braun and Clarke (2006) noted that thematic analysis aids researchers in simplifying the description and categorization of the data as the base for further interpretations and theoretical developments. Shah (2017)

used thematic analysis in a qualitative study to identify and integrate themes to identify

why firms delete brands from their portfolios. Researchers should use sound and

respected data collection and analysis techniques to create trustworthiness for their

readers (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). By using the appropriate data analysis method, I

could exude trustworthiness to the findings of my research.

I used the six phases of analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyze the data.

Braun and Clarke (2006) provided an outline guide for the six phases of analysis: (a)

familiarizing yourself with your data, (b) generating the initial codes, (c) searching for

themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining and naming themes, and (f) producing the

report. I would use the phases identified by Braun and Clarke (2006) as follows:

Phase 1

I became familiar with the data. I immersed myself in the data by repeated

readings of the data to search for reappearing meanings and patterns. Nowell et al. (2017)

noted that researchers need to actively immerse themselves with the data to search for

meanings and patterns. Castleberry and Nolen (2018) stated that when a researcher

becomes familiar with the data, it allows for a more excellent grasp of the data. The

repeated reading of the data will help aid in the formal coding process.

Phase 2

I developed initial codes from the data. I developed the codes by organizing my

data into meaningful groups. Nowell et al. (2017) stated that coding aided the researcher

to streamline and zero in on the data's specific attributes. Castleberry and Nolen (2018)

noted that qualitative researchers use data analysis software to simplify the data analysis

process, allowing for a more complex, profound data analysis. I used NVivo software to

organize the data and discover themes and codes to understand the phenomenon.

Phase 3

I searched for emerging themes. I took the data that I initially coded and extracted

it into identified emerging themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) stated that themes capture

something important concerning the overall research question. Nowell et al. (2017)

explained that initial coding begins to form main themes and form subthemes. I arranged

the coded data into main themes and sub-themes. Through this process, I identified

significant individual themes related to my research question.

Phase 4

I reviewed the themes and generated a thematic map. I reviewed and clarified the

main themes and subthemes that I developed in Phase 3. During this phase, a researcher

should show how each theme originates from the data (Nowell et al., 2017). Braun and

Clarke (2006) clarified that the researcher should have different themes, show how they

fit well together, and summarize the data at the end of this phase. At the end of the phase,

I had varying candidate themes and subthemes to summarize the data.

Phase 5

I defined and named themes. I defined and labeled each theme during this phase.

Braun and Clarke (2006) noted that a researcher identified each theme's importance at

this phase and determined the data aspect that each theme captures. Themes are patterns

in codes that show a bigger picture of what is portrayed (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). I

reviewed each candidate theme and sub-theme to determine which one related to my research question.

Phase 6

I produced the report of the findings of data analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) noted that the findings' write-up should be concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive, and give a complete account of that information within and across themes. Castleberry and Nolen (2018) noted that writing the conclusion was the response to the research question. After identifying the themes and thoroughly analyzing them, I comprised an analytic narrative of the findings. I organized the data into main themes generated from the reviewed academic literature and conceptual framework to improve the data credibility by showing alignment.

Data collection from multiple sources is critical in qualitative studies. Aarikka-Stenroos et al. (2017) stated numerous sources of evidence to be essential in collecting data. Yin (2018) noted that researchers could achieve triangulation when data are collected from different sources through the data collection process to strengthen the results' validity. Farquhar et al. (2020) noted that researchers who use a qualitative case study could gather data from multiple sources such as interviews, focus groups, and archival analysis. Joslin and Müller (2016) identified the four kinds of triangulation: (a) data triangulation, (b) investigator triangulation, (c) methodological triangulation, and (d) theory triangulation. Methodological triangulation is the most used type of triangulation (Hastings & Salkind, 2013; Joslin & Müller, 2016). I used methodological triangulation to strengthen the validity of my study.

I used methodological triangulation to receive a better understanding of the collected data. Methodological triangulation includes numerous sources to provide a more robust understanding of the specific phenomenon (Battaglio & Hall, 2018). For methodological triangulation to occur, researchers need to combine two or more data sources to aid in understanding the phenomenon in greater depth (Joslin & Müller, 2016). I used semistructured interviews and reviewed company employee handbooks, strategic plans, and business forecasts for analysis to attain methodological triangulation.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

A quality indicator of reliability is dependability. In qualitative research, dependability is the stability of research findings (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Achieving reliability ensured the reproducibility of the data produced by the research instruments involved (Jordan, 2018). To address dependability, I had my doctoral committee review my data collection sources, conducted member checking, and provided a detailed description of the study. Researchers use procedures to map out and follow the research process to migrate biases, establish trustworthiness, and grant reliability to the study (Xerri, 2018). To achieve dependability, I conducted member checking with every participant. I also provided extensive descriptions regarding the study to allow future researchers to mimic the same steps.

Validity

Validity is a crucial tool used to measure research quality. Validity ensured that the data collected accurately reflected the research phenomena (Jordan, 2018).

Researchers and research panel members view rigor as the necessary marker of quality in qualitative research (Smith & McGannon, 2018). The four main criteria of a study's trustworthiness are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Xerri, 2018). I achieved validity by using these criteria and bringing rigor to the research process and findings.

Credibility

To ensure credibility, I conducted member checking, used methodological triangulation, and maintained a reflexive journal. Credibility ensured that the findings of the study reflect reality (Constantinou et al., 2017). Member checking is a strategy researchers use for establishing credibility because participants can review the researcher's interpretation of the data for accuracy (Xerri, 2018). Researchers use triangulation to establish credibility in qualitative research by using multiple data sources to ensure that the research study's data, analysis, and conclusions are accurate (Moon, 2019). The use of methodological triangulation aids researchers in validating the data, brings rigor to the study, and increases credibility (Battaglio & Hall, 2018). Levitt et al. (2017) noted that researchers use reflexive journals to understand and analyze participants' answers. I used member checking, a reflexive journal, and methodological triangulation to ensure the credibility of my study.

Transferability

Transferability is the transfer of knowledge from one context to another context. Transferability relates to transferring the study results to other situations and individuals (Constantinou et al., 2017). A study's transferability occurs when the findings from a

qualitative study can transfer to another setting or under other conditions (Monsen & Van Horn, 2008; Xerri, 2018). Xerri (2018) noted that transferability occurs by providing a thick description that can enable researchers to consider if a transfer to another context is possible. To ensure the transferability of this study, I provided a thick description of the research design, participants, data sources, coding of the themes, analysis, and results.

Confirmability

Confirmability consists of the extent to which other researchers can review the study's data to confirm the results of a research study to get the same results. Xerri (2018) explained that an audit trail could enhance the confirmability of a study. A comprehensive audit trail requires specific information about the data and data analysis to be recorded and, through transparency, can increase the study's trustworthiness (Carcary, 2020; Xerri, 2018). An audit trail should include in detail: the research design, data collection and analysis, data sources, and the findings (Carcary, 2020). To ensure the confirmability of my study, I provided an audit trail of the research design, data collection and analysis, data sources, and the findings.

Data Saturation

Data saturation is used as the criterion for calculating sample size in qualitative research. A researcher has achieved data saturation when no new information develops (Constantinou et al., 2017). Qualitative researchers must select the appropriate sample size. The goal in choosing a sample size is to yield rich data to understand the researched phenomenon (Hennink et al., 2019). Boddy (2016) indicated that a sample size of one is an appropriate sample size if it sufficiently describes the researched phenomenon and

answers the research question. I interviewed study participants until no new data was developed and no new themes emerged.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies department store managers use to motivate their employees to increase job satisfaction and empowerment. Section 2 began with the purpose statement and an explanation of my role as the primary researcher. I provided a detailed description of my sample size, sampling technique, and participant section. The reasoning for using a case study design and implementing an interview protocol to ensure consistency while conducting the interviews. Being the primary data collection tool was my main responsibility. Compiling with all IRB requirements helped me to conduct my research ethically. I ensured the reliability and validity of the interview data collected through member checking, doing a researcher log, and conducting an audit trail. NVivo 12 helped to store and organize the data from the interviews and the data collected from other sources such as employee handbooks, strategic plans, and business forecasts to conduct my analysis.

Section 3 I explain the analysis of the study findings and how it relates to the successful motivation strategies department managers used to increase job satisfaction and empowerment in the retail industry. The data sources include semi-structured interviews with participants and the department store documents. Finally, I present recommendations for action and future research on the topic.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore and identify department store managers' strategies for motivating their employees to increase job satisfaction and empowerment. Employee motivation unfavorably impacts organizations by having low-performance levels (van der Kolk et al., 2019). Because of this unfavorable effect, employee motivation is a significant issue in the workplace (Homisak, 2019). Koziol and Koziol (2020) stressed that employee motivation is a significant component of the management process. Department store managers must develop effective motivational strategies to increase employee motivation. Therefore, managers may consider implementing motivational strategies to increase employee motivation in the workplace.

I used a single qualitative case study method and thematic analysis of participants' feedback, insight, and experiences to determine themes and codes. Data for this study came from manager interviews and company documentation at one department store in South Carolina. The findings showed methods the managers have used to motivate employees to improve job satisfaction and empowerment.

Presentation of the Findings

Participant Overview

This qualitative research study addresses the following research question: What strategies do department store managers use to motivate their employees? To answer the research question, I conducted semistructured interviews via Microsoft Teams with three

department store managers in the southeastern region of South Carolina. Initially, the

target number of participants was four, but one manager was relieved of their duties

within the organization. To not reveal their identifying information, each participant was

assigned codes instead of names. The codes for the participants were (JR01, JR02, and

JR03). The department store managers provided strategies, insights, and experiences in

response to open-ended questions, explaining how they implemented strategies to

increase employee motivation. I reviewed company documents such as company

employee handbooks, strategic plans, and business forecasts provided by the department

store managers. I used the six phases of analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyze

the data into themes and patterns. I used NVivo software to organize the collected data. I

identified three primary themes through analysis of the data collected from the three

department store managers: (a) effective leadership attribute, (b) understanding

motivational influence, and (c) relationships and environment. Table 1 displays the

themes and the participants whose responses contributed to the found theme. All three

participants talked about the three themes recognized in this study.

Table 1

Summary of Emergent Themes and Participant Acknowledgement

Description of themes	Occurrence
Managers use effective leadership attribute to motivate employees	JR01, JR02, JR03
Managers recognize and understand motivational influence to motivate employees	JR01, JR02, JR03
Managers use empathy to develop strong manager–employee relationships and environment	JR01, JR02, JR03

Emergent Theme 1: Effective Leadership Attributes

Leadership attributes play a critical role in department store managers' ability to motivate employees to increase job satisfaction and empowerment. Leaders should be composed, transparent, flexible, and strong in an organization. The primary advantage of leaders empowering employees is that it provides department store employees with opportunities to increase their knowledge and abilities. In return, employees can develop upward mobility to increase motivation and job satisfaction. Employees view leaders (managers) as inspiring when they use motivating language to communicate with their employees and are hands-on in their daily operations. Organizations that do not equip their managers with proper training and resources to communicate with their employees in a motivating way create managers that have poor leadership skills. The emergent subthemes attached to leadership attributes were (a) efficient communication and (b) employee empowerment.

Efficient Communication

The findings from the interviews divulge that communication is a vital concept in department stores. Being transparent and having an open line of communication with employees is essential in motivating employees. JR01 stated relating to communication,

> I have realized that every manager has a different leadership style. I like to communicate that we are all on the same accord. I like to recognize and engage with my employees. I want to engage with them authentically. I want them to feel [comfortable] that I care about them.

> I think that my employees can talk to me about anything; that is a comfort level
> they can share with me. When you have an open-door policy, and someone is
> willing to walk through it and sit down and share their life, and it doesn't have to
> be about work.

JR02 shared: "I like to talk to my employees and ask them what ways that I can motivate them." JR03 said, "I think communicating with [employees], trying to recognize those little things. You know, you have to find a way to communicate with them."

Managers cannot be productive without efficient communication. Mayfield et al. (2021) identified that when managers use motivating language to communicate with their employees, there is an increase in employee motivation. Efficient communication helps ease, encourage, and produce the flow of communication in an accessible and aided environment (Kamal Kumar & Kumar Mishra, 2017). Kamal Kumar and Kumar Mishra (2017) stated that employees are willing to communicate and voice their concerns to their superiors when communication is efficient.

Connection to the Conceptual Framework. The alignment of the efficient communication theme supports Shannon (2019), who explained that communication should be appropriate, open, honest, and timely. Managers who communicate with their employees can cause an increase in performance and productivity in an organization (Turaga, 2019). Adiguzel (2019) stated that communication of employees hinges on expected communication flows, level of the request and feedback, and supplying helpful information. Lack of efficient communication can inhibit an employee from being motivated.

Efficient communication is essential to motivating employees; efficient communication aligns with Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation–hygiene theory. The managers who implement efficient communication motivate employees and increase job satisfaction and empowerment. Strengthening efficient communication in an organization bolsters daily interactions among employees and increases motivation. Sanders et al. (2020) posited that establishing a range of communication from managers to employees is crucial in optimizing effective communication. Sanders et al. also stated that managers should identify which range of communication works best for their employees.

Employee Empowerment

All participants noted that through empowering their employees, motivation increased. Participants also noted that when employees are given duties and responsibilities that are purposeful in worth, they advance their skillset, surpassing merit performance and accomplishing tasks autonomously. JR01 stated,

> I think we kind of look at what the individual job title is for us as a company. We set parameters, contests, and other things, set attainable goals, and offer bonuses. We want the employees to feel that they are being successful, held accountable, and motivated.

JR02 shared: "I make sure that I always let [employees] know when they're doing the right thing, thank them for it, and give them recognition when recognition is due." The primary advantage of leaders empowering employees is that it provides department store employees with opportunities to increase their knowledge and abilities. Employee empowerment also provides input that helps to make decisions on organizational and job

matters and relate to their peers by interacting in decision-making programs (García-Juan et al., 2019). Ganji et al. (2021) stressed that employee empowerment helps an organization to be effective and efficient. Ganji et al. noted that empowering employees increases job satisfaction.

Connection to the Conceptual Framework. The alignment of the employee empowerment theme supports Guerrero et al. (2018), who inferred that employee performance is enhanced by empowering employees. García-Juan et al. (2019) stressed that managers should empower their employees as a part of their job. Budden et al. (2017) noted that motivation increases when leaders support employee commitment, growth, and performance. Herzberg et al. (1959) listed responsibility as a motivation factor that can affect job satisfaction. When employees are empowered, they experience the intrinsic motivation arising from the responsibility and freedom to make decisions. Empowered employees are motivated to increase job satisfaction. The findings from Theme 1 appear to address what was sought in the research question.

Emergent Theme 2: Understanding Motivational Influence

Participants shared that being motivated helps employees stay loyal and committed to the department store. The proper understanding of upward mobility within an organization is vital to an employee's decision to leave or remain employed there. Managers must evaluate and develop strategies that recognize what satisfies employees and implement tools such as bonuses, contests, and suggestion boxes to allow employees to voice their points of view for a change. Employees' lack of satisfaction discourages them, and ultimately, the employee's satisfaction is gone. The emergent subthemes

connected to understanding motivational influence were (a) employee development and growth and (b) employee engagement.

Employee Development and Growth

Developing employees is essential to improving motivation in the workplace. As Ali et al. (2019) stated, leaders need to help their human capital achieve their long-term goals. The three participants in this study communicated the significance of employee development to keep employees motivated. JR01 talked about holding people accountable and using diversity and inclusion training that involves participation. JR02 discussed taking time to provide employees with additional instructions on what was necessary. JR03 divulged that giving employees positive feedback and positive reinforcement is vital for each employee to advance and move forward.

While each method is distinct, looking for opportunities that develop employees could particularly affect motivation. Managers should ensure that employees have the necessary tools and resources to make progress in their careers. JR01 shared:

> I like to pour into my employees by sharing my wisdom and experience to help them make informed decisions about advancing in their careers. The outcome is to give the employee the desirable information and all the knowledge they need to do the job.

JR02 discussed "talking with employees to find out what motivates them to advance in their careers. This exchange empowers the employees and shows that I care about their growth and development."

Connection to the Conceptual Framework. The alignment of the employee development and growth theme supports Alshmemri et al. (2017), who divulged that possibility for growth helps employees undergo training in new techniques, gain new professional knowledge, and learn new skills. Bharathy (2018) reported employee motivation increased when leaders understood the importance of motivational influence on their employees. Budworth et al. (2019) supported that feedback allows managers to open dialogue about performance expectations and individual development with their employees. Herzberg et al. (1959) listed employee growth and development as a motivation factor for positive satisfaction. When employees' development and growth are acknowledged, they experience the intrinsic motivation arising from receiving feedback that helps their individual development. Employee development and growth motivate employees, thus increasing job satisfaction and empowerment.

Employee Engagement

All participants revealed that engagement is a significant concept they deal with daily. Each participant shared strategies they have used to engage employees. JR01 explained,

> You recognize and engage with your employees and engage authentically, you know, and that people feel organic that you care about them. We have weekly meetings, managers meeting on engagement. How do we engage? Do you know a bit of everybody in the store? Have you had an engagement with the new associates? For us, we're making a weekly meeting that we talk about our new

associates. And then we bring how many new people have we met that week? So

that's what we do to keep the engagement going to motivation.

JR02 stated,

It depends on the individual. I learned that employees respond better to praise.

Everyone likes to be thanked. Everybody likes to know when they're doing the

right thing. Everybody, whenever they're given the attention and given sound

advice and hearing that they're doing a good job, that will always, you know,

motivate someone no matter what their personal preferences.

JR03 shared: "You must find a way to engage them and have a rapport with them."

Connection to the Conceptual Framework. The alignment of the employee

engagement theme supports Delaney and Royal (2017), who divulged that motivation is a

crucial component of engagement, and managers must determine which type of

motivation, intrinsic or extrinsic, will influence employee motivation. Alam et al. (2020)

stressed that an engaged employee would become motivated and productive.

Devendhiran and Wesley (2017) noted that employee engagement is a roadmap for an

organization's competitiveness and success. According to Herzberg et al. (1959), job

responsibility is a motivation factor that can give positive satisfaction. When employees

are engaged, they experience the intrinsic motivation arising from receiving recognition

and conditions of the job itself. Engaged employees are motivated to increase job

satisfaction. The findings of Theme 2 also appear to satisfy the research question.

Emergent Theme 3: Relationships and Environment

Effectual strategies to increase employee motivation vary. A business

organization should motivate employees on an individual basis. In support, the standard

answers from the department store managers disclosed that their employees' motivation

increased when the organizational culture in the workplace was positive. Employees can

thrive in an organizational culture where they are supported and have excellent working

conditions (Ujjah et al., 2020). Managers should build a rapport with their employees that

cultivates trust. This trust allows employees to voice their concerns and feedback to

managers on areas that need improvement. Interpersonal relationships allow employees

to learn new information about each other outside the work environment. The emergent

subthemes connected to relationships and environment were (a) interpersonal

relationships, (b) positive work environment, and (c) interpersonal trust.

Interpersonal Relationships

Employee motivation is affected by social relationships. It is essential for an

interpersonal relationship between employees and managers. JR01 shared,

> I ask my fellow managers, do you know the new associates. I also ask my
>
> managers, do you know how many new people you have met that week? I make it
>
> my business to talk to every one of my employees daily. I want to know how their
>
> day is going and how I can help it become better.

JR02 said, "Everyone likes to be thanked. Everybody likes to know when they're

doing the right thing. I ensure that daily, I talk to my employees and thank them for

everything they are doing." JR03 stated, "You must find a way to engage them and have

a rapport with them. You know, you must find a way to communicate with them. Try to find something that you have in common, and you grow from that."

Interpersonal relationships help managers to practice what they preach. Almeida Migowski et al. (2019) divulged those interpersonal relationships should include trust, systemic leadership, and communication. Almeida Migowski et al. stressed the absence of interpersonal relationships could result in a lack of belonging, create distance, and minimize the significance of employee work. Le et al. (2018) posited that motivation and well-being are needed in interpersonal relationships. Positive interpersonal relationships between managers and employees help to motivate employees to increase job satisfaction and empowerment.

Connection to the Conceptual Framework. Herzberg et al. (1959) listed interpersonal relationships as a hygiene factor that directly influences employee motivation and satisfaction. Nappo (2020) noted that social interactions help to improve individual well-being. Szostek (2020) explained that social relationships are the organization surrounding the individual and the constructs for the functioning of the employees. Interpersonal relationships help employees to socialize, collaborate, and develop strong relationships. These relationships encourage employees to unify and interact to complete duties assigned to them successfully.

Positive Work Environment

A work environment should be clean and free from drama. All participants revealed that they aim to maintain a positive work environment. JR01 expressed, "a motivated employee brings a person to the team to say, and I'm working in a great

environment; I want you to be here and grow in this great environment." In addition, JR01 shared,

> Right now, we have dealt with COVID for the last two years. For me, I am
> focused on praising my employees. I want them to know that I care about them. I
> perform our wellness check. During the wellness check, I asked how you are
> doing mentally and physically. This wellness check helps me engage with my
> employees, see their interests, and know that I care about their health. I like to for
> them to come into a clean store. I want my employees to know that we're here as
> a company, as a family, and we're here to support you.

JR02 voiced, "everybody, you know, whenever they're given the attention and given, you know, sound advice and hearing that they're doing a good job." JR03 said, "I try to encourage the employees to have a positive attitude."

Connection to the Conceptual Framework. The alignment of a positive work environment supported Choi's (2020) findings that managers should ensure that employees' work is encouraged to promote self-directed behavior to thrive and survive in an ever-changing business environment. Sutanto et al. (2018) stressed that employees are motivated to stay with an organization when the working conditions are good. Rachmawati et al. (2020) noted that when employees experience a healthy organizational culture, good commanders, and pleasing personalities, it helps create high employee loyalty. Herzberg et al. (1959) listed working conditions as a hygiene factor influencing employee motivation to work; managers need to focus on hygiene factors to motivate employees.

Interpersonal Trust

Trust is important in all relationships. The participants explained that they strive to create trust in the workplace, as trust helps to improve loyalty and the enthusiasm to stay with a company. When employees experience trust in an organization, they are motivated. Two of the three participants explained how they developed trust in their organization. JR01 expressed,

> You state to your employees that we are in this together and have honest
> feedback. During COVID, my appreciation for my employees has grown. I ensure
> that my employees know that I care about them. I have an open-door policy,
> where if someone walks through it, I talk to them.

In addition, JR02 said,

> To improve motivation, you must be present for your employees, make sure that
> you're there to listen, to trust them to give them viable feedback. Let employees
> know that you part of their success and their growth and that you're there to
> develop them and be engaged with them in anything that they need, that you're
> there for them. You're not just there to, you know, try to make numbers. It's
> about their growth as well.

Connection to the Conceptual Framework. The alignment of interpersonal trust supported Hasche et al.'s (2020) findings that interpersonal trust is essential in vertical and horizontal relationships. Yang and Xin (2020) identified that interpersonal trust is vital to economic growth and personal happiness. Lam et al. (2016) noted that ethical leaders were trustworthy. Herzberg (2003) recognized positive relationships among

leaders and employees as one of the sources of motivation. Building a culture of trust in the workplace could lead the way for managers and employees to initiate, maintain, repair, and evaluate social relationships at work (Dirks & de Jong, 2021). The findings of this final theme also appear to answer the research question.

Applications to Professional Practice

I concentrated on three managers at one department store in Southeastern South Carolina to acquire their strategies to motivate employees for this study. The strategies acquired in this study may be beneficial to create a culture of motivation, determine the needed training and education for managers to have the understanding and skill to motivate employees. The strategies could be applicable for department store managers who are struggling with employee motivation. Managers in the retail industry could benefit from (a) effective leadership attributes, (b) understanding motivational influence, and (c) relationships and environments.

The managers in the study supplied examples of leadership and motivational influence. The different outlook on manager leadership and motivational strategies might help managers recognize the best motivational influence to motivate employees. Chang and Teng (2017) identified that managers should implement strategies to increase employee motivation, or individual and organizational goals will not be accomplished. Department store managers in the retail industry can apply the findings of this study to implement successful strategies to motivate employees to increase job satisfaction and empowerment.

Based on the research results, relationships and environment signify to motivate employees. Özduran and Tanova (2017) noted that having positive interactions between managers and employees can improve employee motivation. When employees feel that their managers care about their well-being and want the best, they become more motivated. Department store managers across the world may consider these recommended strategies implemented from the data discovered from this study.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for positive change are that community members may benefit from company-sponsored events that will increase community services activities that provide opportunities for family togetherness, promote generational wealth, and improve families' and the community's financial well-being. The implications for social change that appeared from this research study entailed supplying a positive work environment that incorporated words of praise, reasonable compensation, and growing the local economy by having a healthy work-life balance. Choi (2020) noted that a positive work environment includes the ability for the employee to be self-directed, self-driven, and self-organizing. Compensation benefits, interpersonal relationships, career advancement, pay, and job security was essential to making a positive work environment (Mwangagangi & Nahashon, 2018). Department store managers who cultivate a positive work environment develop employees motivated to endorse positive social change.

This study's findings may contribute to social change by aiding department store managers with strategies to motivate employees to increase their job satisfaction and empower them. As in the study by Ristic et al. (2017), the findings revealed that

motivation could help organizations reduce employee turnover. These results may assist

department store managers in having more motivated employees and reducing their

employee turnover ratio. Minimal employee turnover would provide citizens in the

community job opportunities to provide for their families (Sainju et al., 2021). Being

employed also aids employees in having disposable income to use in their community,

contributing to the wealth and vitality of the community. The knowledge gained can help

current and future department store managers in the retail industry develop new

approaches needed to motivate employees, increase job satisfaction, and empower

employees. Department store managers may use this study's findings to improve business

performance, enabling them to give the community employment opportunities.

Recommendations for Action

The results of this study could help department store managers develop new

strategies to motivate employees, increase their job satisfaction, and empower them.

Department store managers who implement the study's findings could influence

employee motivation, communication, and employee-leader relationships. Hitka et al.

(2019) indicated that managers need to know the factors that motivate employees.

Department store managers must understand each employee's needs to know how to

motivate them. Kaliannan and Adjovu (2015) noted that employees might become

frustrated and detached when leaders show poor motivational skills. Using these

strategies can help department store managers to increase employee motivation.

Department managers should consider (a) using Herzberg's theory to help them

determine motivational strategies for employees, (b) understand the extrinsic and intrinsic

motivators that influence employees, and (c) provide a positive organizational culture that

allows employees to develop new ideas, voice their concerns, and be supported. Kreye

(2016) specified that fostering a positive work environment that helps build assurance

and support is the role of a leader. Department store managers who work in the retail

industry could benefit from the findings of this research to develop an effective channel

of communication in the workplace between managers and employees. An effective

channel of communication could take place through weekly meetings and daily

interactions. Finally, I recommend that department store managers attend leadership

classes to become influential leaders and understand and develop their leadership styles.

Attending leadership seminars may allow department store managers to understand how

their leadership style can affect their employees. This study's results could be valuable in

future studies on employee motivation.

After completing the study, each participant will receive a one to two page

summary of findings to help them as leaders. In addition, I plan to attend the National

Society of Leadership Success and NSLS conferences to share my study with classmates

and colleges. This study will be published in the ProQuest Dissertations and Theses

database for future use and review.

Recommendations for Further Research

I explored strategies that department store managers use to motivate employees to

increase job satisfaction and empowerment. The recommendations for further research

include sections for future research and limitations. Continued research is needed to

understand the effects job satisfaction and empowerment have on employee motivation in

the retail industry. The findings of this study were limited to one department store in South Carolina. Future researchers should expand the geographical location to other locations both in and outside South Carolina and other industries besides the retail industry. Exploring motivation strategies in different geographical locations and business contexts could better understand employee motivation.

This study was limited to the methodology used for data collection. Interviews were the tool used for data collection to provide feedback, insight, and experiences of department store managers in the retail industry. Positive strategies used by department store managers led to increased employee motivation. However, the study did not consider employees' feedback on what motivates them and helps increase their job satisfaction and sense of empowerment. Future researchers should investigate employee points of view regarding ways to increase employee motivation. In addition, quantitative researchers should analyze the relationship between employee motivation and other variables such as productivity, work motivation, and engagement on a larger, statistically significant scale. A quantitative study would help to eliminate the need to conduct interviews and reach a wider pool of respondents.

Reflections

As I reflect upon my experience, all I can say is thank you, Holy Ghost. The process of earning this degree was both overwhelming and stressful. I wanted to quit this process multiple times. Attending residency one and two, I encountered other classmates that were frustrated with the process of completing this doctoral degree. I experienced multiple stumbling blocks during the prospectus phase, and things started to turn around

during the proposal phase. Attending the weekly Zoom session with my chair and classmates helped me perseverance and kept me motivated to stay the course. I am thankful to my husband, parents, twin sister, aunts, and granddaddy for their many prayers to help me conquer this massive task of becoming a Doctor of Business Administration.

I began this doctoral program with limited knowledge of strategies department store managers used to increase employee motivation. During the writing of my literature review and section two, I realized that my writing style needed to be improved so that my readers could understand the flow and content of the information that I was trying to provide to them. I learned to use the website Grammarly and post to the discussion board to help me with my writing to receive feedback to improve my document. Being in this doctoral program has improved my writing skills.

I came into this research with numerous biases. I believed that employees' paramount satisfaction and empowerment issues were propelled by their salary and fringe benefits. I figured that management's focus was to do any means necessary to meet the obligations and requirements to keep the organization operating and reaching sales profit. I figured that most managers were focused on meeting and surpassing quotas. After interviewing the participants in this study, I recognized that managers are concerned about their employees' health and wellness. Managers want to create positive interpersonal relationships and an excellent work-life balance for employees. Managers want the very same things as their employees, including meaningful work, praise, and trust. Managers want a positive work environment just like their employees. The possible

effects that I might have on the participants could cause them to evaluate which behaviors need to be changed and develop new practices to motivate employees. My doctoral study has allowed me to collect data and present findings that department store managers may use to motivate employees to increase job satisfaction and empowerment.

Conclusion

Department store managers should focus on the importance of keeping employees motivated to increase job satisfaction and empowerment. Some department store managers require a better understanding of other department store managers' strategies to motivate employees. To motivation employees, department store managers must address the challenges by implementing motivational strategies. Utilizing these strategies to motivate employees to increase job satisfaction and empowerment in their organizations' department store managers can have more motivated employees. The study findings identified department store managers who wish to motivate employees in the organization benefit from (a) effective leadership attributes, (b) understanding motivational influence, and (c) relationships and environments. Herzberg's two-factor and extant literature supported the three identified themes in reply to the research question on employee motivation. Department store managers who develop and implement strategies could position their organizations to have more motivated employees and experience organizational success.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Research question: What strategies do department store managers use to motivate their

employees?

What I will do	What I will say
Upon receiving the Informed Consent Form by email, I will e-mail participants to obtain a scheduled time to conduct Microsoft Team for the interview. Once received - I will send out a meeting request for the agreed-upon time and include: • The Microsoft Team link,	
Make sure that I am 15 minutes early for the Microsoft Team meeting.	
Once connected with the participant, I will begin with salutations, personal introductions, and an overview of the research topic.	(Participant Name) Thank you for participating in my study and agreeing to allow me to interview you today. My name is Alicia Banks, and I am a graduate student at Walden University conducting my doctoral study in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Business Administration degree requirements, emphasizing leadership. This semistructured interview will last 30-60 minutes and include six interview questions about your strategies to motivate your employees in the retail industry. All information obtained is confidential. The answers received from your interview will help to understand how you and your counterparts motivate employees and what other department store manages may do to motivate their employees to increase job satisfaction and empowerment.
Confirm eligible to participate in the study	I will ask the participants three criteria to ensure that: • 21 and over

	• Willing to participate • A current department manager of the research site
State Date, Time, and Location of Interview	I will state the date, time, and location of the interview
Review Informed Consent and Confirm Agreement.	I will supply participants with their signed informed consent forms. I will state to them that all information obtained is confidential. I will ask if there are any questions or concerns regarding this form or this process?
Permission to record and begin	Can I please have your consent to record this session? Any other questions or concerns before we begin?
During the Interview:	I will ask the six interview questions and follow-up probing questions.
• Watch for non-verbal queues • Paraphrase as needed • Ask follow-up probing questions to get more in-depth	1. What strategies have you used to motivate your employees? 2. How did your department store managers measure the success of the implemented employee motivation strategies? 3. How did your employees respond to your different motivational techniques? 4. What key obstacles did you and your employee overcome to implement successful employee motivational strategies? 5. What method did you find worked best to motivate your employees? 6. What additional information can you

	share with me to understand the method you used to improve your employees' motivation?
End of the interview	I will thank the research participant for allowing me to interview them and participate in the study.
Schedule follow-up member checking interview	I will remind participants that I will meet them in two weeks to verify the accuracy of the transcription. I will provide my synthesis in advance of our meeting for your review. Could you provide an email address so that I send it to you?
Before the Member Checking Meeting: 48 hours before the scheduled meeting, e-mail participants the summary of their interview answers and confirm the meeting date and time.	Email to include: Good Morning (Participant Name), Thanks for your participation in the interview on ___, where we discussed the six interview questions. As promised, I have attached the synthesis of that meeting for your review. Please review and ensure that I have accurately synthesized your answers. I look forward to talking with you again on ____ to discuss. If there are errors, you will be able to make changes or corrections to your responses or clarify my interpretations at that time.
Introduce follow-up interview and set the stage	(Participant Name) Thanks for talking with me today. As I stated at our previous meeting, I am allowing you to review my interpretation of your interview answers before I include them in my study. Member-checking ensures that I have accurately represented your answers. You can modify or clarify your answers as you deem appropriate.

Share a copy of the synthesis for each question in advance of the meeting. Review each question and synthesis with the participant and ask: Did I miss anything? Does this correctly represent your response? Is there anything you would like to add?	What strategies have you used to motivate your employees? How did your department managers measure the success of the implemented employee motivation strategies? How did your employees respond to your different motivation techniques? What key obstacles did you and your employee overcome to implement successful employee motivation strategies? What method did you find worked best to motivate your employees? What additional information can you share with me to understand the method you used to improve your employees' motivation? .
Wrap up the member-checking interview.	(Participant Name), thank you for your time today. It was a pleasure sharing and discussing my results with you. I will provide you with an update on my progress. I will send you a 1-to-2-page summary of the results.