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Employee Retention in the Mining Industry

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Walden University
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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Low employee retention can decrease mining companies' productivity and financial performance in the United States. Human resource managers in the mining industry who do not implement employee retention strategies observe decreased employee productivity and financial performance. Grounded in the job embeddedness theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies human resource managers of mining companies use to improve employee retention to support high productivity and high financial performance. The participants were five human resource managers within the southeast region of Arizona who successfully used employee retention strategies. Data were collected through semistructured interviews and internal organizational documents and were analyzed using thematic analysis. Four themes emerged: (a) employee engagement, (b) compensation and benefits, (c) effective communication, and (d) recognition and job satisfaction. A key recommendation is for human resource managers to implement diverse professional development programs for employees. The implication for positive social change includes the potential to enhance economic growth that supports family well-being in local communities.

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Dedication

To God be the glory! Great things He has done! I dedicate my whole research to the almighty God, the author, and finisher of everything in this life. I could not have come this far without God's guidance and love for me. I dedicate this Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) to my late mother, Katherine A. Boadi, whose tutelage instructions, love, and prayers instilled in me the love and fear of God. With the motivation and encouragement of my mother, I grew up to understand that with God, all things are possible. A woman who loved the Lord with her whole heart and never gave up in life made me understand that God can make a way even where there is no way. My mother, though never stepped foot in any formal classroom, yet believed that to be successful in life, education is the ultimate, besides God.

I dedicate this research study to all my children: Marilyn, Mykelti, and Mirabelle, whose contribution and encouragement motivated me to pursue further for my dream. There were times when things became complicated, combining full-time work and full-time school as a doctoral student, a husband, and a father. My two daughters and son had to make so many sacrifices for me when I had to deprive them of children and father fun times. God bless you, my 3M's, daddy loves you and wanted to set up a high mark for you to follow.

I finally want to dedicate this doctoral study as a special gift to my queen, wife, friend, sister, mother, and all in all–Mrs. Esther Ansah Nuamah for her love, devotion, motivation, encouragement, sacrifices for standing by me every step of the way. The support of my wife has made me understand the true meaning of the saying that: "To every successful man, there is a woman." Sweetheart, I want to take this opportunity to say a big "Thank You" for believing in me and supporting me to attain such a great height. May the Lord Bless us in our new chapter of life. I genuinely love you.

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Thank you for your time and the vital information you shared with me to make my study complete to all my participants. I could not have done it without your immense support. I am grateful to all of you. I thank my manager, who is also a friend and more than a brother–Mr. Kambiz Andrew Pezeshki who saw my leadership potentials and recommended I pursue this tremendous academic height. Kam, I am so grateful for your motivation and encouragement not to settle for less. To Mr. Robert Allgood, my former supervisor, I appreciate your recommendation letter that paved my way into this great institution–Walden University. I want to acknowledge my beloved wife, Esther, and my precious children (Marilyn and Mykelti), who took time out of their busy schedule to

read over my papers from time to time to correct me of any petty mistakes. Bravo to you all for being my partners in this ship to sail through successfully to the shore.

I am asking myself the most critical question: How did I get here? “This is the LORD’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.” (Psalm 118:23). Thank you, Jesus.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Employee retention is vital for the stability and longevity of the business. Organizational leaders should understand how to encourage their employees for better retention. Employees are the human capital that serves as the intellectual capital and innovation to every organization and are vital contributors to the success and profitability of the business (Kianto et al., 2017). Therefore, organizational leaders should have a particular interest in retaining their employees. The strength of a company can be affected in terms of financial performance, efficiency, and productivity if its human capital is not stable (Kraemer et al., 2016). According to Hilorme et al. (2019), human capital is a total asset that should be considered a priority for value creation and maintaining competitive advantage in the global market. Managers within companies lose organizational knowledge and incur additional costs to replace their talented employees if human capital is not managed correctly. Although employers cannot remove employee turnover entirely, organizational leaders can devise strategies to improve retention to increase productivity and financial performance (Silaban & Syah, 2018). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some successful human resource managers (HRMs) in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

Background of the Problem

Employee turnover and attrition have become a significant concern in many industries (Abdul Azeez, 2017). The need to lower employee turnover and improve retention is high for all industries in the 21st century, including the mining industry (Kim

& Fernandez, 2017). Furthermore, there was a 191,000 reduction in mining-related jobs since September 2014 in the United States (Terence, 2016). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, though there were employment gains in federal and health sectors, there were still some job losses in the mining industry (U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). The topic for this doctoral study is improving employee retention in the mining industry. The purpose of this study was to explore the strategies some successful human resource (HR) practitioners and managers in the mining industry use to improve employee retention in their organizations.

Similar to other industries, companies in the mining industries lose organizational knowledge through retirement, downsizing, resignations, and attritions (Makhubela & Ngoepe, 2018). The turnover rate in the mining industry is 55%, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, which is the seventh highest industry out of 27 industries (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). The cost of hiring and training to replace a lost employee is about half to 200 % annual salary of the previous employee (Hebenstreit, 2008). The instability of commodity pricing in the mining industry usually causes some mining companies to reduce the number of employees (Logdon et al., 2016). To increase productivity, growth, revenue, and organizational stability, managers in HR of competitive companies like mining, must develop and implement successful employee retention strategies to retain their experienced and qualified employees (Cloutier et al., 2015). Although many scholars have researched, the literature reviewed indicated that some mining companies still struggle to retain their experienced employees (Makhubela & Ngoepe, 2018). The cost of recruiting and training for such companies is detrimental

(Azanza et al., 2015). Therefore, the study explored the strategies human resource managers in other mining companies use to sustain their highly skilled employees.

Problem Statement

Mining companies, like other industries, lose a substantial amount of organizational knowledge through employee resignations, retirement, downsizing, and attrition (Makhubela & Ngoepe, 2018). The cost of replacing an employee is estimated to be 90% to 200% of the employee's annual salary (Reina et al., 2018). The general business problem is that mining companies have high turnover rates resulting in a loss of organizational knowledge, which leads to low productivity and financial performance. The specific business problem is some HRMs in the mining industry lack strategies to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. The targeted population for this study was a minimum of five HRMs in the mining industry from three companies and two HRMs from each company. Four to six participants can provide comprehensive data in a qualitative research method (Malterud et al., 2016). The geographic area for the study was the southeast part of Arizona. This geographic part of Arizona has many mining companies (Poole, 2016). The implications for positive social change include the potential to retain mining employees, create new job opportunities resulting in increased revenue for the local communities, and this region benefiting the quality of life for residents. The findings of this study may improve relationships between organizations and local shareholders and external stakeholders represented in the local community.

Nature of the Study

There are three research methods available: (a) quantitative, (b) qualitative, and (c) mixed methods. I used a qualitative multiple case study to gather information, analyze, and interpret the data from HRMs of mining companies regarding employee retention. Business researchers use a qualitative method to understand participants' awareness of a phenomenon to gain insight into behavior, attitudes, or motivation (Allen, 2015; Barnham, 2015). In exploring the views and experiences of participants, the qualitative method is preferred (Yin, 2018). Researchers use the quantitative research method to examine relationships between variables using analytical methods and closed-ended questions (Martin, 2015). The quantitative method includes analytical procedures researchers use to examine relationships among variables to test hypotheses (Queiros et al., 2017). This method was not the best option since numerical data and variables were not needed. Research using a mixed method combines quantitative and qualitative methods (Clinning & Marnewick, 2017). Since I did not need quantitative data, it was not suitable for the study. The purpose of the study was to explore the strategies used by HRMs in various mining companies by primarily interviewing HRMs. Researchers can use interviews in a qualitative method to collect data (Simoni et al., 2019). Therefore, the qualitative method was preferable because interviewing participants was used for this study.

There are many qualitative research designs to choose from, and I considered the following three: phenomenological, ethnographic, and multi-case study. Researchers use the phenomenological design to understand participants' lived experiences of a phenomenon to achieve in-depth outcomes regarding the participants' experiences (Bliss, 2016). I rejected the phenomenological design since my focus is not on participants' lived experiences. A researcher uses ethnography when the intention is to describe the beliefs, culture, values, skills, and knowledge of the group's environment (Wall, 2015). The ethnographic design was not appropriate for my research study as I was not seeking to explore the cultural background of the participants. Researchers use a case study design to conduct an in-depth study because they intend to address research questions regarding what and how of the participants' capabilities (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) explained that researchers use a case study design to explore an organization's or individual's experience on a phenomenon. When researchers describe a particular activity, a single case study design is appropriate. However, researchers use a multiple case design to understand two or more situations (Battistella et al., 2017). I consequently selected multiple case study design to explore the strategies HRMs from various mining companies used to improve employee retention because it is the most suitable to use semistructured interviews of HRMs to collect, analyze, and interpret the data collected.

Research Question

The research question for this study was: What strategies do some human resource managers in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance?

Interview Questions

The following open-ended questions used to explore the retention strategies that HRMs in the mining industry uses to improve employee retention to sustain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

1. What retention strategies have you implemented to retain qualified and experienced employees in your organization?
2. How have you assessed the effectiveness of the strategies you have implemented to help increase employee retention in your company?
3. In your experience, what are some frequent factors leading to mining professionals to leaving the organization?
4. What are some of the challenges in the implementation of your employee retention strategies?
5. How do employees' knowledge retention affect your business in terms of production and financial performance?
6. What motivational factors (on-the-job embeddedness) do you have in place to support your employees to stay in their position?
7. What other external benefits (off-the-job embeddedness) do your workers have that may influence them to leave their positions?

8. What else would you like to add regarding retention strategies for mining industry as it relates to knowledge retention for high productivity and financial performance?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was job embeddedness theory (JE). The theory was developed by Mitchell et al. in 2001 to help managers explain why people stay on their jobs (Mitchell et al., 2001). The job embeddedness theory suggests that multiple forces may compel a person to stay in his or her current job (Yao et al., 2004). Factors that motivate an employee to maintain his or her job regardless of existing circumstances could correlate with marital status, job contract, coworkers, and involvement in the community (Holtom & Darabi, 2018). There are two main job embeddedness factors: (a) on-the-job embeddedness and (b) off-the-job embeddedness. The on-the-job embeddedness is related to the employee being enmeshed or attached to the company, and off-the-job embeddedness is related to the individual’s commitment to the community, among other off-the-job embeddedness factors (Mitchell et al., 2001). There are three primary constructs of the theory that applies to both on-the-job and off-the-job embeddedness: (a) fit–the goals and values that relate to the individual's task, (b) links–how connected is an employee to other coworkers and events of the company, and (c) sacrifice–how will the individual be affected if he or she leaves the job (Mitchell et al., 2001; Yao et al., 2004).

I used the JE theory constructs to explore and analyze strategies supporting employee retention. The three constructs are interrelated in one way or the other. If an employee's duties align with the objectives of an organization and are connected to the activities of the business and the community, leaving the company will have much impact on their life, the individual would therefore like to stay (Mitchell et al., 2001). Employees who are more embedded are engaged, productive, and are less likely to be absent (Holtom & Darabi, 2018). The identified constructs of job embeddedness could enhance the perspectives of practitioners and researchers on staying employees (Holtom & Darabi, 2018).

Operational Definitions

Idealized Influence-Construct of TLT Idealized Influence-Construct of TLT is the ability of the leader to create loyalty and commitment among team members, thus helping them to connect with the leader (Sangeetha & Sundharavadivel, 2018).

Inspirational Motivation- Construct of TLT: Inspirational Motivation- Construct of TLT is related to the leadership's ability to provide its followers with a vision and motivate them to work in that direction (Sangeetha & Sundharavadivel, 2018).

TLT - Intellectual Stimulation: Intellectual stimulation is when leaders stimulate the followers to be creative and risk-taking at work (Sangeetha & Sundharavadivel, 2018).

TLT - Individualized Consideration: *TLT* - Individualized Consideration is linked to the leader's actions to pay attention to the followers' individual needs (Sangeetha & Sundharavadivel, 2018).

Job Embeddedness: Job Embeddedness is a construct or factor that may compel a person to stay in his or her current job (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Fit: The goals and values related to the individual's task (Mitchell et al., 2001; Yao et al., 2004).

Links: Links explain how connected an employee is to other co-workers and company events (Mitchell et al., 2001; Yao et al., 2004).

Sacrifice: How will the individual be affected if they leave the job (Mitchell et al., 2001; Yao et al., 2004). Sacrifice is one of the three constructs of job embeddedness theory.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are issues, ideas, or positions taken for granted and considered rational and widely accepted (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). Researchers sometimes accept that certain information is accurate without objective support or factual information (Dziak et al., 2020). According to Wiersma and Mills (2014), assumptions are areas of the study that researchers consider trustworthy but have no evidence of proof. In this research, I assumed that improving employee retention rate will help mining companies retain organizational knowledge, which will reduce operational costs and increase profitability. I assumed that the HRMs selected as the study participants are subject matter experts (SME) and should, therefore, have the right strategies to improve employee retention in the mining industry. Another assumption for this study was that participants will be truthful and provide accurate information. In a qualitative research method, the validity and reliability depend on the participants' transparency given information to justify the data (Hadi & Closs, 2016). Finally, I assumed that the participants understood the interview questions intended to provide the proper responses.

Limitations

A study's limitations are possible shortcomings outside the researcher's control and are closely related to the research design selected (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). According to Theofanidis and Fountouki (2019), a constraint in this regard is a forced restriction and is therefore ultimately out of the reach of the researcher. Limitations are factors such as statistical model constraints and funding constraints that a researcher has no control over but can affect the validity of the study (Henderson, 2014; Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). Among the potential limitations in this research study is the geographic location. This study was limited to only the southeast part of Arizona, which may not represent employees in the entire mining industry. Another limitation is that the study was conducted on only five HRMs from three mining companies. The findings of this research may be a limitation as the sample was only collected from HRMs in mining organizations, without data from employees in other industries. Last, Yin (2018) posited that qualitative research might be subjected to common issues like biases, inaccurate expressions of participants which may have limited my analysis.

Delimitations

Delimitation are factors that limit the scope of the study findings (Dowling et al., 2016). In other words, delimitations are components of a study that outline the boundaries set forth by the researcher (Bernard & Bernard, 2013). Theofanidis and Fountouki (2019) stated that delimitations are reasons for a researcher to reject a particular action for an alternative activity during the process of a research study. One of the delimitations for my study was conducting a semistructured one-on-one interview with HRMs in three mining companies in Arizona's southeast region. Another delimitation was interviewing HRMs in the mining industry with experience in developing and implementing employee retention policies. The last delimitation was using multiple case-study as the design of the research process.

Significance of the Study

Employee turnover affects organizations because of its relationship with recruiting and training costs, low productivity, and loss of company knowledge and valued skills (Massingham, 2018). Retention and engagement of high-potential employees are challenging for many organizations, especially during times of financial difficulties (Aguenza & Som, 2018). Consequently, if HRMs fail to retain their experienced employees, organizational knowledge in the form of human capital is also lost.

Contribution to Business Practice

Establishing and operating a mining company involves capital investment, including recruiting and retaining qualified employees (Fordham et al., 2018). Mining is complicated and includes challenging processes requiring diverse skills and technical knowledge acquired over time (Palka et al., 2017). Managers in the mining industry should develop strategies to retain their talented employees. The study may provide leaders of mining companies with an understanding of effective strategies for employee retention. The resulting retention of employees could potentially enhance efficiency in operations resulting in high productivity and high financial performance by retaining organizational knowledge.

Another value to business practice is the potential reduction in employee turnover and unnecessary hiring and training. A decrease in hiring and training could positively affect a company's cost control and improve profit margin (Qazi et al., 2015). Subsequently, an organization may gain a competitive advantage if the skill sets and knowledge of the employees are not lost from new recruitment and pieces of training. According to Steiner and Atterton (2014), a business's success can create opportunities for positive social change. New HRM strategies for employee retention could increase financial performance that the business could pass on to increased wages and salaries, improving the standard of living of the employees and their families. As employees in the mining industries retain their jobs, it can benefit other businesses in the local community with increased economic stability. In addition, local communities could benefit from increased taxes resulting in economic growth.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies some HRM in the mining industry uses to improve employee retention to preserve organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. According to Caron et al. (2019), employee retention is one of the significant challenges in the mining industry. In this section, the background of the theory that was used as the conceptual framework is discussed. I analyze JE theory as the leading theory of the study. Under the JE theory, the two main dimensions, on-the-job and off-the-job embeddedness, are discussed. According to Mitchell et al. (2001), there are three constructs under each of the dimensions: (a) fit, (b) link, and (c) sacrifice

Mitchell et al. (2001) explained that when an employee feels comfortable in an organization and the business environment, they consider their aspirations and career goals to be in line with that of the company and will, as such, plan to stay. The formal or informal connections of an employee and organization and other people in the company and the community indicate the links of the employee to the business and the environment. An employee leaving an organization must perceive the cost of benefits they will forfeit, either financially or psychologically, related to the sacrifice the employee must make (Mitchell et al., 2001). Mitchell et al. (2001) posited that these three tenets of JE determine whether an employee will stay with an organization or voluntarily turnover their position. Voluntary turnover is the purpose of professed ease of movement and perceived desirability of movement (Safavi & Karatepe, 2019). When an employee thoroughly assesses the current job by considering the losses and gains, a final decision is reached to determine if a voluntary turnover is necessary.

Mitchell et al. (2001) described perceived ease of movement as the alternative an employee has if they are to vacate their current job, and the perceived desirability of movement indicates the job dissatisfaction of the employee leaving their job. According to Safavi and Karatepe (2019), the perceived desirability of movement, also known as voluntary turnover, goes up when employees are not satisfied with their jobs. Safavi and Karatepe (2019) claimed that HRMs could retain organizations’ skillful employees by using JE to decrease perceived ease and desirability of movement. JE may also minimize the gap of employment, which is explained as the difference between the current employment situation of a person and the employment situation of the new job available to be considered (Acikgoz, 2019). I discuss each of the constructs related to each of the dimensions. Limitations and applications of the job embeddedness theory will also be reviewed before paving the way to other complementary and opposing theories for the study.

The literature review for this study comprises peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, government reports, seminal books, and publications. I used the following keywords to search for peer-reviewed journal articles: *employee*, *retention*, *on-the-job*, *off-the-job*, *embeddedness*, *turnover*, *attrition*, *fit*, *links*, *sacrifice*, *community*, *cost*, *human resource managers*, *strategies*, *knowledge*, *productivity*, *performance*, *profitability*, *organizational*, *transformational*, *leadership*, *theory*, *self-determination*, *motivation*, *engagement*, *Vrooms Expectancy*, *Social Identity*, and *central others.* The databases used from Walden University Library included EBSCO eBooks, ProQuest, Science Direct, SAGE Premier, and Emerald Management. I used Google Scholar as well, and accessed government reports and publications websites. See Table 1 for a breakdown of the various sources used for this review.

Table 1

Literature Review Sources by Year of Publication

Reference Type	Total	<5 years	>5 Years	%Total <5 Years
Peer-reviewed journals	92	83	9	90
Dissertations	3	3	0	100
Books	2	1	1	50
Non-peer-reviewed journals	2	1	1	50
Total	99	88	11	89

The main theoretical framework for this study was necessary and informed how this study was created and how data were analyzed. In the following sections, I analyze the theory used as the conceptual framework; two other complementary theories will also be discussed, and I present an opposing theory. A summary then explains why the leading theory was selected and how the other two theories complemented the study. I will also briefly discuss why the opposing theory was rejected.

Introduction to Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was JE. This theory was developed by Mitchell et al. (2001) in 2001 to explain why people stay in their jobs for a more extended period. The JE theory is used to describe factors that may compel a person to stay in his or her current job (Yao et al., 2004). Some factors that can motivate an employee to maintain his or her job regardless of existing circumstances could be marital status, job contract, coworkers, and involvement in the community (Holtom, 2016). JE has two subfactors: on-the-job (organizational embeddedness) in which an employee is embedded in the company, and off-the-job (community embeddedness) in which an employee is committed to their community (Mitchell et al., 2001). There are three constructs from the two dimensions of JE: (a) *fit*–the goals and values related to the individual's task. (b) *links*–how connected is an employee to other coworkers and events of the company, and (c) *sacrifice*–how the individual will be affected if he or she leaves the job (Lee et al., 2004).

Employee Job Satisfaction and Job Embeddedness

Organizational leaders persistently seek for means to reduce employee turnover rate and improve the retention of their talented employees (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). HRMs must find a way to satisfy their employee if they can retain the potential workers. Li et al. (2016) posited that job dissatisfaction is one of the potential causes of turnover. Organizations that depend on human capital can be successful if the employees have trust and confidence in the leaders (Spangenburg, 2012). In the event of financial difficulties, employees must have confidence in the organizational leaders that the right decisions will be made, and layoffs will not occur (Mo & Shi, 2017). Leaders who build a culture of trust benefit from the organizational commitment from the employees during changes (Lightfoot, 2014).

Leaders can establish trust and engage their employees by demonstrating integrity and ethical leadership (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Employees must be engaged in their work to support the growth and sustainability of the business (Pandita & Ray, 2018). Managers should be able to ascertain situations that will nurture employees' work engagement. Workers who are engaged tend to be more efficient and actively involved in their tasks. Engaged workers are likely to enjoy performing their duties; they are more productive and may stay longer with their current employers (Engelbrecht et al., 2017).

Employers can trust employees who are engaged to perform their assigned tasks without strictly monitoring their activities (Buckley, 2011). Organizational leaders should demonstrate their credibility to their engaged employees (Jiang & Men, 2017). When leaders treat employees with respect and fairness, the workers consider their relationship with the managers as social exchange and turn to be more engaged.

JE is an antiwithdrawal or retention strategy that is used by organizational leaders to retain their skillful employees (Safavi & Karatepe, 2019). Organizational leaders use of JE to gain better understanding of why employees remain at their current jobs, regardless of the job environment (Lee et al., 2004). Company leaders make efforts to create a conducive work environment by investing in their human resources through training and other helpful services. Although JE assists employees to remain in an organization for a longer period, workers may get overwhelmed with job insecurity during the economic downturn of a firm (De Witte et al., 2016).

JE is based on two main dimensions: Organization-related or on-the-job and community-related or off-the-job factors that motivate employees to remain in their companies (Cortzer et al., 2019; Mitchell et al., 2001). Each of the two major dimensions of JE has three main constructs fit, link, and sacrifice (Mitchell et al., 2001; Nicholas et al., 2016).

On-the-Job Embeddedness

On-the-job embeddedness are organization-related factors or internal factors within the confines of the firm that help managers explain why employees choose to remain in their organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). These work-related factors are (a) relationships with coworkers and supervisors, (b) compensation, and (c) benefits (Dawley & Andrews, 2012). HR practitioners and managers should create an environment of job satisfaction to motivate their skillful employees. Although the financial benefit is a key incentive for workers who switch jobs, not all employee turnover is finance-related (Tran et al., 2019). There should be a climate of respect among employees where they could cordially relate to each other without fear or resentment regardless of gender, racial, religious, and ethnic background (Rogers & Ashforth, 2017). Employees should be able to put their differences aside and work together as a team (Lacerenza et al., 2018). Similarly, supervisors should have a positive working relationship with employees without fear or intimidation (Chiniara & Bentein, 2018). In the next Section I will discuss and analyze the on the job fit embeddedness

Constructs of On-the-Job Embeddedness Dimension

On the Job Fit. On-the-job fit is related to how well-suited a person is to an organization and its general environment (Word & Park, 2015). Fit is a determination of whether an individual is capable of doing the job based on personal abilities and values (Word & Park, 2015). An employee's job fit improves his or her satisfaction, socialization, and commitment for the job, therefore the intention to quit the job is reduced (Chhabra, 2015). If an individual is deemed fit in an organization, that employee is likely to remain in the firm. The values of a person must be compatible with an organization's culture to be considered fit (Ma et al., 2018). If an employee determines that his or her values do not comply with an organization's culture, the worker may increase their intention to leave. Therefore, organizational leaders who increase employee fit have the potential to improve retention.

Some organizational leaders begin their employee fit strategy during recruitment, selection, training, and development stages (Ma et al., 2018). Since the cost of replacing employee is high, HRMs of organizations must pay special attention when they are recruiting new candidates to their companies (Mitchell et al., 2001). The hiring managers must ensure that the candidates have the right qualifications and experiences that meet the job description of the position. The managers should also make sure the candidates have a clean background with no criminal records. As part of their business strategies, some managers provide psychological contracts (PC) by way of fulfilling their promises to their workers and assessing the response of employees' readiness to contribute to the objectives of the company (Kiazad et al., 2018). Kiazad et al. (2018) explained PC to be a legal binding agreement between an employer and employee. Employees are embedded in an organization because of the benefits associated with fulfilled PC (Alcover et al., 2017). Alcover et al. (2017) described the PC as the implicated and clear promises and obligations exchanged in an employment relationship between and individuals and organizational agents. Although it is typically supposed that every worker establishes the PC with a single agent, it is more realistic to treat PCs as multi-focused, which involves different organizational agent (Alcover et al., 2017). Therefore, managers should improve their organizational values or job demands to attract both current and prospective employees.

Organizational leaders use the PC as an opportunity to hire candidates who are a good fit for the firm. HRM use assessment methods like job previews and predictive index (PI) or situational judgment test that can be used to describe the positive and negative features of a job to assist leaders to evaluate and select people who fit the business needs (Ma et al., 2018). Managers can develop employees' perceived fit by way of including them in decision-making; this will motivate the employees to recognize the goals of the firm and become committed to it as they help to formulate the objectives. For organizational leaders to improve employees' fit, there must be development planning to identify employees' long-term career goals with the company to support them through in-service training, apprenticeships, other opportunities like promotions that will align the employee and the organizational goals together (Simpson et al., 2015). Successful implementation of this fit strategy will benefit both the individual employee and the company.

On the Job Link. An employee's link describes how connected that employee is to other colleagues and associated activities in the company (Lee et al., 2004). An employee's JE becomes stronger as he or she links to the organization and other co-workers and the intention to stay is solidified. The support from family and friends in the firm enhances the employee's decision not to sacrifice the relationship he has established in both the organization and the community (Karatepe, 2016). It is the connection a person has in an organization. An employee with more links in an organization, whether with co-workers or directly with the business, is likely to remain in the company, though they may not like the company in totality (Ma et al., 2018). When people form close associations with their work colleagues, it may be more difficult to break the bond. Individualism-collectivism, which is expressed as the national cultural characteristics that may be judicious to the links between job embeddedness and employee turnover principles (Jiang et al., 2012). The authors commented that it is easier for people with the same cultural values to be well connected; breaking individual or group connections in an organization may be challenging to a well-connected employee. Companies must have a way of creating and implementing such links either directly with the firm or with the individual employees among themselves. (Holtom & Darabi, 2018). According to Holtom and Darabi (2018), employees who are linked to their organizations are more rooted and less likely to be absent or involve in negative job behaviors.

Employee referrals and talent inventories are some of the strategies used by organizations as internal hiring methods to identify prospective candidates from existing employee networks. Employees' referral strategy support connections among employees (links) as well as improving fit as employees may be willing to recommend people, they know would be a good fit for the business. To enhance effective and immediate connection, employers can implement a mentoring program, which will allow new and existing employees to get to know each other and form close associations (links) (Ma et al., 2018). Companies can also form different clubs and groups and encourage employees to participate in the activities of various groups within the firm. There could be professional bodies associations such as engineering or departmental clubs etc.

On the Job Sacrifice. This delineates the impact on an individual if he or she should leave the current job (Mitchell et al., 2001). Sacrifice is perceived as social, psychological, and any material benefits or liabilities related to leaving one company or from one community to another (Cortzer et al., 2019). Some employees may be well established in a community such that they acquire property and become more involved in the activities of the neighborhood. Leaving the company would mean that the employee would have to forfeit some benefits in the organization and the community (Dawley & Andrews, 2012). It is the social, psychological, and material benefits individuals may lose as they leave an organization (Cortzer et al., 2019). An employee may have reasonable financial compensation with an organization but may be dissatisfied over the lack of promotion or issues with a supervisor or colleague; however, the individual may accept these negative issues because of better financial or other benefits. On the other hand, a worker's salary might not be high enough compared to colleagues in other companies but would decide to remain in the current job because of the prestigious name of the company (Ma et al., 2018). Some employees feel proud of just working with a particular organization; therefore, as long as it is within the reach of such employees' they would like to work for the company, no matter the job condition.

To improve employee retention, organizations would increase the sacrifices that one would have to make if he or she decides to leave the firm by way of improving the working conditions of its employees. For example, organizations can provide employees either with a competitively high benefits package, which is top-notch or among the highest such that an individual cannot forego the benefit. Another way for organizations to get their employees embedded is annual bonuses and salary increases, especially as an incentive to high-performing employees (Ma et al., 2018). The strategy would not only increase sacrifice and improve employee retention, but it could also create positive and healthy competition among workers for better engagement and improved performances (Okoro et al., 2018). The use of non-material benefits like convenient work schedules could increase employee sacrifice and improve employee retention. Organizations can increase the retention rate of their employees by finding ways of getting the people embedded through fit, links, and sacrifice (Ma et al., 2018; Mitchell et al., 2001).

Organizational leaders should perceive what is important to their employees and align the strategies of the business with the interest of the workers. Some employees are motivated to work for particular companies, not only because of the monetary gain but how they are treated gives them a sense of belongingness and purpose to stay with the organization (Tran et al., 2019). Mitchell et al. (2001) purported that employees are prepared to remain in business for a longer period, if they deemed fit in the values of the company and have links with both peers and the organizational leaders, the workers would therefore not like to sacrifice the benefits they are already enjoying.

Off-the-Job Embeddedness

Constructs of Off-the-Job Embeddedness Dimension

Another dimension of JE is off-the-job or non-work-related, which pertains to the employee's community. Non-work-related or off-the-job embeddedness dimensions relate to the community: owning a home, belonging to a club, being a member of a church, the bond of family and friends, and the type of association an employee finds himself (Dawley & Andrews, 2012).

An employee’s values and a company’s vision become compatible with a person-organization fit. However, firms consider person-organization fit to be essential to the business's success (Anaza, 2015). Links are a sub-dimension of JE, and it is defined as how connected an employee is to other colleagues and associated activities in the company. (Lee et al., 2004). An employee’s JE becomes more robust as he links to the organization and other co-workers and solidifies the intention to stay. The support from family and friends in the firm enhances the employee’s decision not to sacrifice the relationship he has established in the organization and the community (Karatepe, 2016). The last attachment of JE is sacrifice. Sacrifice delineates how an individual will be impacted if he or she should leave the current job (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Sacrifice is a perceived social, psychological, and material benefit of quitting from one company to another or from one community to another (Cortzer et al., 2019). Some employees get well established in a community such that they acquire properties and become more involved in the activities of the neighborhood. Leaving the company would mean that the employee would have to forfeit some benefits in the organization and the community (Dawley & Andrews, 2012). JE theory is a construct that describes why people decide to stay in their organizations, no matter what the circumstances might be, by considering the fit, the links, and the sacrifice (Cortzer et al., 2019). Mitchell et al. (2001) suggested that the two dimensions of job embeddedness theory, which are: On-the-job and off-the-job, and the three constructs, the fit, link, and sacrifice makes it a six-dimensional model consisting of on-the-job fit, on-the-job link, on-the-job sacrifice as organizational embeddedness.

The off-the-job fit, off-the-job link, and off-the-job sacrifice are considered community embeddedness. Coetzee and Stoltz (2015) posited that HRMs and organizational leaders should not only focus on the internal structures within the company in creating job satisfaction, but leaders should also consider external organizational factors of employees' embeddedness that may impact the retention of the employees. According to Odetunde and Ufodiama (2017), job embeddedness comprises issues impacting employee retention. Organizational leaders in industries like mining, oil, and gas deem JE theory vital as it helps the leaders to assess their strategies on how to retain talented employees (Odetunde & Ufodiama, 2017). Employees become embedded in their organizations and willing to retain their positions as they improve on the level of their links to both the organizations and the neighboring communities (Rubenstein et al., 2018). Rubenstein et al. (2018) then suggested that organizational leaders use their employees' talents to develop the firm's human capital by improving employees' job embeddedness. HRMs need to understand how JE can impact the organization's human capital. Lu et al. (2016) expressed that since it takes time and extra resources to develop human capital, it should not be left for individual employees; instead, companies must spend enough time developing human capital.

Organizational leaders should deem it essential to utilize the job embeddedness theory through the six-dimensional tenets; job fit, link, sacrifice, and of the job fit, link, and sacrifice to enhance their employee retention strategies. Allen et al. (2016) and Castro-Palaganas et al. (2017) posited that it is difficult for employees to leave behind beautiful neighborhoods, good friends, current job titles, and easy commute to and from the workplace decision stay in their current jobs. The connections employees establish with their colleagues, team members, families, and groups within the organization and their associations in the communities make it difficult for employees to quit their jobs. Mining companies are usually in small towns, and employees tend to form a close association with other people as part of social sustainability, either at the workplace or in the communities (Segerstedt & Abrahamsson, 2019). This type of relationship, both at work and nonwork environment, enhance employees in the mining industries to retain their work. When talented employees remain in an organization, their tacit knowledge is retained. The talented employees' innovative ideas enhance the organization's performance, which supports productivity and improves the organization's financial performance. Therefore, leaders and HRMs in the mining companies should develop and implement strategies that will link employees together to promote such relationships. Employees who are linked together and work collaboratively feel fit to align with the organization's goals and would not like to sacrifice all the benefits from both the organization and the community. Therefore, JE theory supports my study of the strategies HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

Transformational Leadership

Leadership is one of the most challenging phenomena globally but is commonly practiced (Burns, 1978). Scholars have many different perspectives about this topic, and Burns (1978) posited that though there has been an improvement, there will never be a consensus among researchers on leadership. Burns Transformational leadership theory in

1978 is one of the most familiar theories that has been discussed and practiced by many leaders both in circular and religious arenas (Wintston, 2018). Transformational leadership is effective for organizational change as transformational leaders can edge employees' opinions to consider change as an opportunity but not a threat (Wang et al., 2017). According to Steinmann et al. (2018), Leaders who operate with transformational leadership style build meaningful relationships with their employees and promote employee growth potential within the company by establishing self-expression and enabling employees to reach a higher level of success.

Burns established his argument of the two types of leaders, transformational and transactional on the idea of an exchange between the leader and the followers (Burns, 1978). The basis of Burns's model was on the fact that both the leader and the follower have something to compromise with each other. The mission of transformational leaders is to offer excellent purpose to address the greater needs of their followers as well as themselves. In an attempt to accomplish this mission, both the leaders and the followers are transformed, consequently the term transformational was derived (Conger, 2004). Transformational leadership, however, leads to a reciprocated relationship among leaders and followers, which can promote the follower to become a leader while the leader becomes a moral agent (Burns, 1978). The notion that leadership is an exchange transcends from the early 1970s (Sahu et al., 2018). Gan (2017) posited that the relationship between leaders and followers is contingent upon some bargains of mutual benefits and this relationship will remain cordially in as much as the gain is greater than the costs. Burns (1978) attributed this type of exchange as more transactional than transformational as they do not fulfill the greater needs or leads to elevation of the leader and the follower to an advanced state of being. Burns described this type of exceptional leadership that supports high order needs as serious in support of leadership theory. Conger (2004) posited that Burns's idea of leadership was not necessary an exchange, rather the fact that some aspect of leadership can provide a series of upcoming objectives that will eventually transform leaders and their followers.

Transformational leadership is one of the commonest styles of leadership to determine the behavior of leaders that can transform and motivate employees to be of their highest potential to their organization (Ghadi et al., 2013). Employee turnover is a complicated, ongoing problem that affects stability climate, performance, productivity, and skilled worker retention (Alatawi, 2017). Alatawi stated that the transformational leadership style has a detrimental deliberate association with turnover. Business executives who follow this leadership style should expect lower turnover rates; therefore, they should stay competitive in an unstable economy and increased productivity, improved performance, and reduction in expenses (Alatawi, 2017). Organizations need to cut costs, optimize income, boost efficiency, and actively prepare to attract workers with the overall goal of being competitive in a volatile economy. According to Alatawi (2017), too much employee turnover hurts organizations by delaying services and minimizing profits as companies continue to hire new employees and decrease innovation as skillful workers leave the organization. In their study, Alatawi concluded that there is a strong correlation between transformational leadership style and employee turnover to enhance the productivity of workers. Organizational leaders can, therefore, implement this management style to motivate and inspire their followers to reduce turnover rates, increase efficiency among workers, improve performance, and reduce expenditure.

As visionaries, transformational managers act as coaches, create a supportive environment, and listen to the concerns of the workers. A transformational leader involves workers in the decision-making process, delegate jobs to the workers, and celebrate the successes of the followers (Suifan et al., 2018). Employees would like to feel the sense of belongingness to the organization, encouraging them to take up the challenge would stimulate innovative ideas and come out with solutions to problems. Transformational leaders encourage new ways of problem-solving and act as an employment model and deliver on their promises (Pradhan et al., 2018). They are enthusiastic and can be trusted and known for making good organizational decisions. Leaders who exhibit transformational style distinguish themselves from other leaders by way of been supportive (Avolio, 2011).

An effective leader creates a good environment not only for the employees but for customers as well (Liu, 2017). Transformational leadership climate help to shape the inspiration of a company’s level of customer contact on its perceived level of prosocial impact and eventually productive organizational energy as a transformative leadership climate is likely to guide organizational processes in favor of the company’s positive customer contribution (Kipfelsberger et al., 2018).

Bass (1998) who further developed upon the transformational leadership theory suggested four dimensions of transformational leadership: (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration.

By way of projecting and proper communication, transformational leaders encourage and motivate their followers with attractive visions, shared values, and mutual objectives (Sahu et al., 2018).

Idealized Influence

A leader's aptitude to build loyalty and commitment between team members by way of supporting to identify with the leader is considered as an idealized influence (Sahu et al., 2018). Transformational leaders allow workers to do more than they expected by motivating them to grow in their ability to develop potential innovative problem-solving talents (Suifan & Al-Janini, 2017). Suifan and Al-Janini (2017) posited that transformational is a process of developing people who will also support the development of the organization for the company to realize its essential set goals. This means that when ordinary people are given the opportunity in the right environment, they can put up an extraordinary performance to exceed business targeted results (Olaisen & Revang, 2018).

To bring out the best in employees, there must be someone in the organization that they can live up to as their role models. Idealized influence is leaders who followers admire, respect, and can imitate them for their good examples (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Bass and Avolio (1994) refer to this type of leaders as people with integrity who exhibit good behaviors, good work ethics, values, and can be trusted. Idealized influence as transformational leaders promote innovation for followers by instilling energy in them to challenge their followers to search for new solutions to work (Li et al., 2019).

According to Suifan and Al-Janini (2017), transformational leaders have an idealized influence on their followers such that the leaders serve as inspirational motivators by providing significance and challenge to the followers' effort as they offer exciting messages to stimulate emotions. Sometimes, all that employees seek is the leader who can raise the level of motivation in them when they are facing difficulties on a new task to propel them to go beyond their expectations (Mittal & Dhar, 2015). Employees, therefore, perceive the new task as a challenge and by way of inspirational motivation from a transformational leader, the followers are ideally influenced, which stimulates their ability to think creatively and come out with solutions to the challenging problem (Suifan & Al-Janini, 2017).

Inspirational Motivation

Inspirational motivation is about the ability of the leader to give the followers a vision and to motivate them in a particular direction (Sahu et al., 2018). Transformational leaders meaningfully impact the performance of their followers (Le & Lei, 2018), since transformational leaders promote a philosophy of company characterizing beneficial emotions and shared trust (Li et al., 2019). When employees' can establish trust with their leaders, it motivates the followers to perform their jobs beyond expectations. This type of trust results in a mutual relationship between leaders and followers (Bligh, 2017).

The mediating effect of trust between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior is significant and has greater implications (Li et al., 2019). Li et al. (2019) indicated that there are two aspects of trust, which are trust in leadership and trust among team members. The scholars posited that each of the aspects of trust has two versions, which are disclosure and reliance on knowledge collecting (KC) and knowledge donating (KD). Each of these versions of trust can be applied to either the leaders or among members to serve as intermediaries in the relationship among transformational leaders and knowledge sharing processes. Applying these types of trust in an organization creates an atmosphere for both the transformational leader and followers to have confidence in each other to express their views, which in effect creates positive impact in the organization to gain a competitive advantage over their competitors (Phong et al., 2018).

Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation encourages employees' to be risk-takers and creative in their daily activities when working (Sahu et al., 2018). TL has a positive relationship with employees' creativity although the influence of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation dimensions of TL is not as high as that of idealized influence and individualized consideration (Suifan & Al-Janini, 2017). According to Suifan and Al-Janini (2017), organizational leaders are challenged to change their level of decision making to reflect on how their workers handle the day to day issues during an extreme industrial competition, with difficult problems under a vibrant environment. An organization's leadership style is essential to the success of the business such that it may have an impact on the company's knowledge management (Al-husseini & Elbeltagi, 2018). Al-husseini and Elbeltagi (2018) posited that intellectual stimulation is the strongest construct among the four transformational leadership dimensions in terms of both knowledge donating and collecting. For an organization to gain and maintain a competitive advantage over its competitors, the employees of the company must be highly skillful and possess good knowledge of the business (Muthuveloo et al., 2017). The employees of such companies must share their tacit knowledge among their counterparts. Transformational leaders would, therefore, have to know how to stimulate the potential workers to donate their knowledge for proper documentation. Employees who are not well vested in certain areas of the business can learn from their colleagues.

Employees' knowledge sharing through knowledge donating and knowledge collecting have essentially and positively influence innovative work performance (Akram et al., 2018). Akram et al. (2018) claimed that when employees find it easy to gain the needed knowledge from other co-workers, it makes their work easier and relieves them from unnecessary stress. Employees who are relieved from stress by acquiring knowledge from other people in the same company are likely to stay in their position. When somebody leaves an organization, their tacit knowledge does likewise. An exiting employee may require coworkers to cover for the missing person, and the extra work may create more stress, greater absenteeism, and lower productivity (Ma et al., 2018). Departure can be contagious and cause others to consider leaving, potentially creating further turnover cycle (Cascio & Boudreau, 2011). Ma et al., (2018) stated that businesses need to build strategies and practices to maintain their employees because of turnover related issues such as cost, low productivity, etc. One of the most effective ways to reduce turnover is by increasing employees' job embeddedness–the forces that retain a person in a job (Lee el at., 2004). Employees who are able to train other workers by donating knowledge to others feel proud of themselves and would want to remain in the same organization for a longer duration (Gerpott et al., 2017). The highly skilled followers are likely to be promoted to become leaders of the company to help transform their fellow workers. Transformational leadership is therefore a complementary theory to the job embeddedness theory as both theories promote employees' retention.

Individualized Consideration

The behavior of a leader to devote his or her time to address the needs of the individual followers (Sahu et al., 2018). Ghadi et al. (2013) stated that there is a strong association between leadership behavior and desirable outcomes of followers. Practitioners as well as researchers have agreed that leadership coaching has a great effect on the leader's behavior, which consequently can influence the relationship of the leaders and their employees (Anthony, 2017). Leadership coaching enables the ambition of the leader to provide more individual support for their followers. Companies, therefore, need to encourage more chances and practices to generate this type of interaction. When employees have this type of interactions with their leaders, it boosts their morale to express their views whenever necessary. The opportunity for followers to communicate freely with their superiors without fear may build the confidence level.

The individual employees are able to think outside the box and come out with creative ideas (Montag-Smith & Maertz, 2017). According to Montag-Smith and Maertz (2017) range information improved originality of idea generation for individuals high in creative thinking skills, which in turn enhanced novelty of creative outcomes but reduced usefulness of results. Factual information, both helped and hindered the usefulness of creative consequences under different conditions. In general, sharing knowledge throughout the production of ideas will increase the efficacy of innovative results (Montag-Smith & Maertz, 2017).

An organization can achieve high performance by acknowledging the contributions of the employees, building trust, promoting self-development activities, constructive communication, mentoring and coaching (Ogola, 2017). According to Munyiva and Kihara (2018) individualized consideration is people's enclosure in the process of a transformation of a firm. The process includes the evaluation of the employees' desires, wants, beliefs, and capacities in the healthy way. This form of behavior is contributing to higher levels of leader trust, so on top of a global one picture, a transformational leader has to know what motivates any member of his team individually (Munyiva & Kihara, 2018).

In summary, organizations operate in a dynamic world where products, processes, and business model innovation are constantly changing (Schoemaker et al., 2018). For businesses to thrive, there must be some dynamic capabilities, which will motivate the employees in the organization to stay (Schoemaker et al., 2018). Li et al. (2019) suggested that it takes transformational leaders to improve the innovative work behavior (IWB) of the employees to gain trust in the leader by empowering and engaging the employees. According to Li et al. (2019), for organizations to gain and maintain competitive advantage, IWB is one of the essential factors that management team need to consider. Wang et al. (2017) agreed that transformational leadership is an effective approach that organizations should use to bring the needed change required and should be work through such that employees will not see the change as a threat. Using transformational leadership builds a cordial relationship between the leaders and employees, which fosters growth as the workers are able to express themselves very well and become successful. Employee turnover is a challenging issue that affects stability, productivity, performance, and skillful employees, and it takes transformational leadership style to reduce the rate of turnover in companies (Alatawi, 2017). As expressed by Alatawi (2017) and other scholars, uncontrolled employee turnover may negatively impact an organizations' vision and economic growth. Alatawi suggested that corporations should use the transformational leadership style to motivate and inspire the followers to decrease workers turnover rate to enhance employees' efficiencies and performance by reducing production cost (Alatawi, 2017).

The transformational leadership theory relies on four main tenets (a) the idealized influence, which deals with the leader's ability to establish commitment and loyalty among team members to support the leader (Sahu et al., 2018). Leaders with idealized influence style motivate followers to go above and beyond to reach their maximum potential according to their talent capabilities (Suifan & Al-Janini, 2017). (b) Inspirational motivation is the leader's ability to motivate, direct, and provide to the employees a strong vision to follow by positively impacting the performance of the workers (Le & Lei, 2018; Sahu et al., 2018). According to Bligh (2017) a common relationship can be established when the employees can trust their leaders, which in effect motivates the workers to put up their best performance above expectation. (c) Intellectual stimulation is when leaders encourage workers to take risk by been creative in the day-to-day activities (Sahu et al., 2018). Leaders with this type of transformational leadership style are always challenged to change the mindset of the employees on how to address or approach issues during difficult times to sustain the business (Suifan & Al-Janini, 2017). The intellectual stimulation leadership style under the transformational leadership is vital to the success of the business as it supports an organization's knowledge management (Al-husseini & Elbeltagi, 2018). (d). Individualized consideration is a way of leaders devoting quality times to address the concerns of followers (Sahu et al., 2018). Researchers agreed that there is a strong correlation between the leader's behavior and the expected needs of the followers (Ghadi et al., 2013). Leaders serve as coaches and their lifestyles have direct impact on their employees (Anthony, 2017). Employees exhibit similar behaviors as emulated from the leaders by building their confidence level to express their views and making right decisions. Employees with such confidence with the support base are likely to remain in an organization. Organizational leaders looking to retain employees should therefore develop strategies to improve transformational leadership tenets to improve the level of employee retention in the organizations.

Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

One of the supporting theories of my study was Herzberg's two-factor theory, which is also referred to us as the motivation-hygiene theory. The two-factor theory was first initiated by Herzberg et al. (1959). The intention behind the motivation-hygiene theory was an attempt to answer the question, what makes employees happy? (Herzberg et al., 1959). Many organizational leaders desire to create happiness for their employees to achieve organizational goals and objectives (Rao, 2017). Rao (2017) emphasized that the companies that are thriving in global business place employees first before customers and shareholders. In the two-factor theory, Herzberg et al. (1959) used the motivation-hygiene theory to explain job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction to delineate the behavior of employees and attitudes portray at work. The motivation-hygiene theory was further developed by Herzberg in 1974 to describe fourteen factors that could either make an employee satisfied or dissatisfied. According to Herzberg (1974) employees were either happy based on the nature of work and unhappy due to the kind of treatment-experienced at work. The factors for employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction were categorized under two main tenets. The factors for job satisfaction were grouped under motivator factors and the factors for employee dissatisfaction were considered as hygiene factors (Herzberg et al., 1959; Herzberg, 1974).

The motivator which is also considered as job satisfaction comprised of (a) responsibility, (b) recognition, (c) achievement, (d) actual work, (e) growth, and (f) advancement. The hygiene or the job dissatisfaction comprised of (a) supervision, (b) salary and compensation, (c) company policies, (d) job security, (f) status, and (g) interpersonal relationship. Herzberg et al. (1959) stated that although factors of motivators can bring satisfaction but does not mean that there cannot be dissatisfaction without motivators. Similarly, though the hygiene factors cannot give job satisfaction, the hygiene factors can avoid job dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). The motivator factors and hygiene factors form the two tenets of Herzberg’s two theory

Motivator Factors

Motivation factors is one of Herzberg’s two-factor model, which distinguishes how satisfied or dissatisfied an employee is in an organization (Herzberg et al., 1959). According to Alshmemri et al. (2017), motivation factors may result in employees’ job satisfaction as the individuals require self-actualization and self-development. Actualization. Researchers in the nursing field has to use Herzberg’s two-factor model as the main theoretical framework to test the Swedish mental health nurses’ job satisfaction (Holmberg et al., 2017). Some of the study’s findings have confirmed that motivation factors are most important to job satisfaction compared to hygiene factors, as they are intrinsic whereas the hygiene factors are extrinsic (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Motivation factors are intrinsic in the sense that the motivation factors work to enhance job satisfaction, as the hygiene factors are there to reduce job dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959).

Employees have job satisfaction if organizational leaders create an environment of belongingness such that employees are motivated to share their opinions. Alfayad and Arif (2017) postulated that using Herzberg’s two-factor theory in practicing employee voice enhances job satisfaction. The findings of Alfayad and Arif revealed that there is a positive correlation between employee voice and job satisfaction. The researchers then suggested that organizations should strengthen and support employees’ expression of opinions by creating a motivational environment that will allow employees to contribute to the development and productivity of the business effectiveness (Alfayad & Arif, 2017). Employees’ voice is a fundamental part of problem solving and organizations must rely on the collective ideas of their employees to resolve issues in achieving a common goal of success (Yin, 2018). According to Tan et al. (2019), employees whose voices are heard feel a sense of belongingness and are likely to remain in their current post as they become more embedded in the organization. To urge voice habits, companies need to try to boost employees' job embeddedness by taking on human resource strategies such as training that help staff members to meet long-lasting job goals (Tan et al., 2019). HRM and organizational leaders, should therefore develop strategies and create an atmosphere of free speech, which will allow workers to share their views and lead to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is an important factor of an organization to attain better workforce retention rates and quality services (Hussein et al., 2013).

Hygiene Factors

The hygiene factors in businesses are to avoid repulsiveness (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Researchers agreed that certain factors at a workplace may lead to positive attitudes towards work, whereas other factors may result in negative attitudes towards work (Herzberg et al., 1959). According to Herzberg et al. (1959), the factors that create negative environment and result to bad attitude have the potential to bring job dissatisfaction to employees. As the motivation factors are considered to be intrinsic, the hygiene factors are described to be extrinsic (Herzberg et al., 1959). The hygiene factors are essential to moderate or lower employee's job dissatisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Herzberg and colleagues related the hygiene factors in organizations to that of medical sense, such that as medical hygiene attempts to eliminate all health hazards, organizational hygiene is to remove all unhealthy conditions at the work environment

(Herzberg et al., 1959). According to Herzberg et al. (1959), if diseases from health hygiene is avoidable, then organizational hygiene can be avoided to bring sanity to the work environment.

Employee turnover rate continue to be one of the most challenging issues for many organizations. Chiat and Panatik (2019) posited that the turnover rate has increased over the past decades in every industry. Chiat and Panatik suggested that researchers should use Herzberg's two factor theory to investigate the impact of the framework on employee's turnover intentions. The researchers presented a systematic approach of experiential studies to understand the correlation between Herzberg's motivation-hygiene factors and employees' turnover rate (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). Enukurthi (2015) argued that employees' job satisfaction is no longer in monetary gain, but it is more of humanistic attitude. Employees' in many organizations are looking for stress free environment. Chiat and Panatik (2019) describes hygiene factors as those that takes away discomfort from the work environment.

In summary, Herzberg's two-factor theory supports my study's framework, because employees become embedded in an organization when satisfied with their jobs (Mitchell et al., 2001). Employees who are motivated with their work are those who achieve what they want and get the necessary recognition. When employees get the necessary advancement and are motivated with their work, there is that possibility of growth, which makes the employees responsible (Herzberg et al., 1959; Herzberg, 2010). Organizational leaders can use these motivation factors as propounded by Herzberg and colleagues to create job satisfaction in the companies. Similarly, leaders can utilize the hygiene factors to prevent job dissatisfaction (Lalwani & Lalwani, 2017). When leaders create job satisfaction and prevent job dissatisfaction, employees become more embedded by acknowledging that money is not everything the workers are looking for, organizational leaders are then able to retain their employees and reduce turnover rate (Lalwani & Lalwani, 2017). Herzberg's two-factor theory can therefore be used by business leaders and HRM's in the mining industry to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

Alternative Theories Considered

Besides the transformational leadership and Herzberg's two-factor theories to support my conceptual framework-job embeddedness, I also considered other alternative theories. Among the alternative theories considered were (a) employee adaptation to work theory and (b) human capital theory.

Employee Adaptation to Work Theory

The employee adaptation to work model was originally developed by Rosse and Miller in 1984 (Rosse & Hulin, 1985). The theorists established various withdrawal attitudes and also efforts to alter functioning conditions as alternate types of adjustment to a dissatisfying work environment (Lyu & Zhu, 2019; Rosse & Hulin, 1985). The employee adaptation to work theory was to investigate the impact of job-related issues on the employees' different behaviors (Lyu & Zhu, 2019). Factors like workers' plan to vacate the current positions, voluntary turnover, decision to switch jobs may be a result of the employees' job dissatisfaction (Lyu & Zhu, 2019). The researchers further explained that individual employees may find it difficult to adapt to particular work when they are dissatisfied, therefore leading to turnover (Lyu & Zhu, 2019). According to Rosse and Hulin (1985), 42 new hospital employees were used to analyze the worker's intention to quit, absence, the desire to change jobs, health issues, and turnover had a negative impact and directly correlated with the employee’s job satisfaction.

Adaptation to work theory was used to predict that there is a positive relationship between perceived motivating task qualities and also happiness throughout job activities is moderated by encouraging work attributes at the task level and individual differences in quality favorable effect (Oerlemans & Baker, 2018). In line with Oerlemans and Baker’s research findings, when employees perceive that there is motivation in the work environment, it stimulates the happiness of the workers during a particular task. However, the researchers did not state whether the perceived motivation will be permanent, and that the employee’s happiness will last forever or lead to retention. Petrou et al. (2018) agreed that employee organizational change communication is one of the efficient ways to enhance employee adjustment to change. However, the extent to which change communication affects employee reactions to the change is not known. The researchers then suggested employee job crafting behaviors, seeking job resources, seeking job challenges, and reducing job demands to be a good tool for employees to cope with and positively react to organizational change (Petrou et al., 2018). Petrou et al. (2018) further explained employee job crafting behaviors as work engagement and work adaptivity. Employees who are well engaged and adaptive to work are likely to respond positively to the organization's change communication, according to the analysis of Petrou et al. (2018).

In summary, HRMs implementing retention strategies should have good policies that will support employees to adapt to the work environment to avoid turnover. Organizational leaders must ensure that there is ample availability of motivation at the workplace to create some sort of happiness for employees. Since people do not easily adapt to change, leaders looking to retain employees should employ better communication strategies that will enhance acceptance and cope with the changes for better engagement and adaptability of the work environment. I did not choose adaptation to work theory because the theorist did not focus on employee retention, rather the emphasis of the researchers was on how workers can be familiar and adapt to the companies, be motivated, and accept organizational change.

Human Capital Theory

Becker developed the human capital theory in 1964 and later renamed it the economic approach to human behavior (Teixeira, 2014). The human capital theory approached evaluation rather than a presumption regarding human inspirations came to be an effort to discuss different aspects of human habits through a set of streamlined presumptions concerning human actions (Becker, 1976). Furthermore, an outcome of private selections characterized by utility maximization, a favorable position, consistent rationality, as well as steady and persistent choices (Becker, 1976). According to Teixeira (2014), Becker used the concept of human capital or human wealth to describe the economic importance of education and training. Teixeira (2014) stated that the economists conveyed the historical importance of human capital theory, and it is not attached to any economic benefits to education before World War II. Furthermore, the economists referred to the theory for ignoring political and moral purposes (Teixeira, 2014). However, post-war academic economists noticed the essence of human capital and its value on education (Petrakis, 2020; Teixeira, 2014). Petrakis (2020) postulated that human capital for organizations has become a source of economic growth and contributes to microeconomics' extensions.

Wright and Constantin (2021) used human capital theory to analyze employer motivations for hiring experienced migrants on momentary funded visas. Despite being a progressively integral part of the workforce in several organizations and nations, a team is getting limited interest within human resources management (HRM) scholarship. The human capital theory is an essential lens through which HRMs can evaluate the employers' hiring motivation (Nyberg & Wright, 2015). However, Wright and Constantin (2021) discovered the responsibility of government regulations in identifying the process of attaining a visa. The human capital theory allows people with higher forms of education to relocate from their countries of origin to other countries for employment opportunities (Shirmohammadi et al., 2019). According to Shirmohammadi et al. (2019), organizations that use human capital gain a competitive advantage over its competitors.

Leaders applying the human capital theory support the economic analysis approach to human behavior, showing the different aspects of human habits through individual actions (Teixeira, 2014). Human capital theory delineates the importance of education in the political arena or for moral purposes, but it can help in a nation's economic development (Petrakis, 2020). Wright and Constantin (2021), human capital theory helps employers understand government policies on recruiting international professionals with high educational backgrounds and skillful experience and mobility restrictions on the individuals. Furthermore, I did not choose human capital theory as the conceptual framework for this study because I am not analyzing how organizations can gain a competitive advantage over their competitors or the economic impact of talented employees on the companies. The human capital theory will not address the strategies some human resource managers in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

Transition

In Section 1, I described the background of the study and discussed the problem statement, purpose statement, and the nature of the study. I stated the research question and outlined some interview questions align with the purpose of the study. In addition, I discussed the conceptual framework, operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and significance of the study to support HRMs to improve employee retention strategies in the mining industry. I discussed the various constructs for JE theory as the main conceptual framework for the study and further reviewed the academic and professional literature in relation to employee retention strategies in the mining industry.

In Section 2, I restated the purpose statement of this study and provided an overview of my role as a researcher, the study participants, and the research method and design. I further discussed the study population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments, data collection techniques, data organization technique, and data analysis. I explained the reliability and validity of the study data. I discussed the credibility, transferability, confirmability of the study, and explained how data saturation can be achieved. In Section 3, I will present the findings of the study, application to professional practice, implications for social change, and recommendations for actions. I will finish Section 3 with recommendations for further research and provide reflections of the study before concluding the study.

Section 2: The Project

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. In this section, I provide a detailed discussion of (a) the role of the researcher, (b) the participants, (c) research method and research design, (d) population and sampling, (e) ethical research, (f) data collection instruments, (g) data collection techniques, (h) data organization techniques, (i) data analysis, and (j) reliability and validity of the study. I will also discuss the (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) conformability, and (d) data saturation of the study. I will conclude the section with a summary of the transition to section 3.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. The targeted population for this study was a minimum of five HRMs in the mining industry from three companies, two HRMs from each of the companies. Four to six participants can potentially provide comprehensive data in a qualitative research method (Malterud et al., 2016). Consequently, the number of participants was appropriate for this study. The geographic area for the study was the southeast Section of Arizona. This geographic section of Arizona has multiple mining companies (Poole, 2016). The implications for positive social change include the potential to retain mining employees, create new job opportunities potentially resulting in increased revenue for the local communities, which in turn increasing the quality of life for local residents. The findings of this study may improve relationships between organizations and local shareholders, and external stakeholders represented in the local community.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is the primary instrument for data collection (Naicker & Maharaj, 2020; Yin, 2018). In this qualitative multiple case study, I functioned as the primary data collection instrument. Scholars posited that the role of a researcher includes identifying the right participants, planning to conduct ethical interviews that would be interpreted to understand the phenomenon under study, then draw conclusions based on the findings (Thorpe et al., 2018; Yin, 2018). Productive researchers are attentive to listen to their participants Yin (2018). According to Yin (2018), researchers may use document reviews, direct observations, or conduct interviews using a case study design. As part of my roles as a researcher, I inquired from the participants if there are any company internal document such as: organizational retention strategies, retention policies that I could review during the interview process. Researchers can articulate an in-depth answer from participants when they use what, how, and why questions in a semistructured interview (Fusch et al., 2017). In this process of data collection, I requested for participants to identify the appropriate persons in the organization who could grant me access to the company's retention strategy documentations. The participants also guided me to identify the appropriate location, like the firm's website or library, where I found additional information on the company's retention strategies.

I have direct experience in the mining industry, and I am aware of the research topic on how the low rate of employee retention can affect mining companies. I have also lived in the research area in which the participants will be recruited from 2014 to 2019, but I do not have direct experience or relationships with the prospective participants. However, I must recognize biases that may have existed and so I strictly adhered to a well-prepared interview protocol to mitigate any potential biases. I used the interview protocol alongside with consent form to minimize and mitigate bias.

According to Attia and Edge (2017), a qualitative researcher has a significant influence on the research process to build trust. There is therefore the need to devise a strategy to avoid biases to support trust. Researchers' personal experiences, cultural background, convictions, and philosophical positions can affect the findings of a research study (Berger, 2015; Theron, 2016). Fusch et al. (2018) suggested that researchers should isolate from any practices that may negatively impact the results of their study. To mitigate any of these issues and avoid biases, I kept a journal with me to record my daily activities regarding data collection and analysis and during the interview process. I reviewed the notes in the journal from time to time to remind myself of any biases and how to separate my views from the participants' viewpoints.

Using the Belmont Report to ensure ethical behavior is essential to avoid biases (Anabo et al., 2019). The Belmont Report of the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research in 1978 established three mandatory ethical principles for researcher compliance: the principles of (a) respect for persons, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice (Schultz & Hendrickse, 2018; White, 2020). For this qualitative multiple case study, I used Belmont's report as a guide. I followed Belmont's ethical research guide to create awareness of participants' up-to-date consent and demonstrate respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. In dealing with the individual participants, I communicated every information about the study to stress on the importance of participants' opinions.

Heydon and Powell (2018) suggested that researchers should have an interview protocol. A written interview protocol can enhance the completeness and quality of evidence, as well as to protect the integrity and understanding of both the researcher and participants (Heydon & Powell, 2018). According to Heydon and Powell, interview protocol provides a framework for designing and reporting methods that are consistent with best-practice interviews, which maximizes the quality and consistency of the reporting data. The use of interview protocol may also support a professional working relationship with the participants, avoid biases, provide consistency with the interview questions among all interviewees, add validity to the study, and affirm data saturation (Fusch et. Al., 2018; Constantinou et al., 2017). I therefore used interview protocol to maintain a professional relationship with all participants and be consistent with interview questions, by avoiding biases and not to view the data through my own personal lens or perspective. I conducted all interviews professionally by treating each participant with respect and not to make presumptions about any of their answers.

Participants

Researchers use eligibility criteria for objective support to select participants for any given study (Guar & Kumar, 2018). According to Wessels and Visagie (2017), it is significant for participants to have the expertise required in the subject matter for the study. Participants should have credibility in the field of study, which qualifies them to provide legible answers to the research question(s) through the interview process (Fusch et al., 2017). The number of years served in an organization or a particular position does not make an individual a qualified participant (Naicker & Maharaj, 2020; Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) posited that the role of a researcher is to identify eligible participants. Responses from eligible participants may be interpreted to enhance the understanding of the study phenomenon for better conclusions based on the findings (Thorpe et al., 2018). I used eligibility questionnaire with each participant during my initial contact to confirm their eligibility for the study by using the following eligibility criteria. The eligibility criteria for participants in this study included (a) employed as HRM in the mining industry who have successfully developed and implemented employee retention strategies to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to gain high productivity and high financial performance, (b) HRM employee working with mining companies within the southeast part of Arizona, and (c) HRM who has played or plays a role in employee recruitment within a mining company.

My strategy to gain access to participants was through personal contacts with HR specialists in the mining industry. I also obtained the addresses of the mining sites, by searching through the internet with the keywords mining companies in the southeast part of Arizona. I also used yellow pages, and other public data to confirm the physical locations of the companies and obtained the contact information of the companies. I contacted the leaders of the companies and ask to speak with the HRM to inquire about who to contact to gain permission to conduct the study. Based on the recommendations from the HR specialist, I asked for the phone numbers of the potential participants. After gathering the contact numbers of the potential candidates, I made initial contact either through phone calls, emails, or visit in-person to establish eligibility and invited participants to be part of the study. To establish eligibility, I asked if participants had implemented retention strategies in the respective organization. Successful study progression can occur if there is a researcher-participant working relationship (Webb et al., 2020). Webb et al. (2020) disclosed that spending adequate time with study participants is essential and that besides getting to know each other, researchers and participants can go over important documentation. As part of establishing a working relationship with the participants, I thoroughly explained the details of the research including the main purpose of the study. Marshall and Rossman (2016) stated that participants are likely to devote more accurate information if they have a clear understanding of the research purpose. I gave participants the chance to ask questions for further clarification. I requested participants to contact me either through email or phone calls. This served as open communication between the participants and me as the researcher. Having routine communication with study participants and providing them with the necessary information may build their confidence and trust level, which can establish a good rapport between the researcher and the participants (Roulston, 2018). The use of interview protocol is to develop a good working relationship with the participants, avoid biases, ensure consistency with the interview questions among all interviewees, add validity to the study and affirm data saturation (Constantinou et al., 2017; Fusch et al., 2018). I used an interview protocol to establish a good working relationship with all study participants.

The participants' characteristics must align with the overarching research question. According to Johnston (2017), researchers can build up alignment between study participants and the overarching research question by utilizing an appropriate research design. Researchers need to choose participants who have insight and adequate information on the study phenomenon (Wessels & Visagie, 2017). For researchers to answer the overarching research question, they must ensure that participants meet the eligibility criteria for the study (Yin, 2018). In this study, I selected participants who had the requisite knowledge and the experience of retaining employees in the mining industry to establish alignment with the overarching research question.

Research Method and Design

The three methods used for research are (a) quantitative, (b) qualitative, and (c) mixed-method (Huyler & McGill, 2019). In this study, I used a qualitative method and multiple case study design to explore the strategies some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to maintain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. According to Yin (2018), a case study is an empirical method that scrutinizes an existing phenomenon in the context of the real-world, mostly when there is no clear evidence within the confines of the phenomenon.

Research Method

Three research methods are available to researchers and these are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method (Lo et al., 2020; Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) posited that the preferred method of exploring the views and experiences of participants is the qualitative method. Business researchers use a qualitative method to understand participants' awareness of a phenomenon to gain insight on behavior, attitudes, or motivation (Allen, 2015; Barnham, 2015). Johnston (2017) claimed scholars have concluded that qualitative research facilitates understanding of the thoughts, experiences, emotions, and justifications of the participants, which serve as the source of data for research. Qualitative research also focuses on creating accounts of the participants' perception of a phenomenon or how the participants make sense of their experiences (Thirsk & Clark, 2017). Participants' experience becomes of prime importance such that it can additionally support the understanding of the phenomenon, especially when the research is focused on the topic (Thirsk & Clark, 2017). I therefore used the qualitative method to collect, analyze, and interpret data from HRMs of mining companies regarding employee retention in their businesses.

Researchers use the quantitative research method to examine relationships between variables by using analytical methods and closed-ended questions (Martin, 2015). The quantitative method includes analytical procedures researchers use to examine relationships among variables to test hypotheses (Queiros et al., 2017). Huyler and McGill (2019) stated that quantitative research is apprehensive with evaluating unintentional assertions, without the use of numbers to substantiate the facts. Since numerical data and variables are not needed, it is not the best option for this study. According to Zyphur and Pierides (2019), quantitative researchers discuss ethical issues in research as if certain ethical problems can be reduced to normal logic with the use of numbers and variables. Zyphur and Pierides emphasized that such an approach neglects how principles are integrated into any dimension of quantitative techniques, including observations and facts as well as objectivity (Zyphur & Pierides, 2019). I rejected the quantitative research method because this study will be based on the facts and experiences of participants. The mixed-method combines both quantitative and qualitative methods (Clinning & Marnewick, 2017). Sekhobo el at. (2017) posited that researchers can use the mixed-method approach to analyze qualitative data by way of evaluating, informing, and interpreting quantitative data. Since I do not need quantitative data, it is not suitable for the study. The purpose of the study was to explore the strategies used by some HRMs in various mining companies by primarily interviewing HRMs. Therefore, the qualitative method was the preferable method for this study.

Research Design

In a qualitative study, researchers have the option to choose from many research designs such as phenomenological, ethnographic, grounded theory, and multiple case studies (Johnston, 2017; Yin, 2018). In this study, I considered phenomenological, ethnographic, and case study design but opted for a multiple case study to be the most appropriate for the study. Hodgins and McNamara (2017) posited that researchers use phenomenological design to facilitate an in-depth study of participants' lived experiences. According to Bliss (2016), the phenomenological design is another way for researchers to understand participants' lived experiences of a phenomenon to achieve detailed results regarding the experiences of the participants. There is the need to stress openness to the lifeworld and the focused phenomenon when researching lived experiences, by way of maintaining curiosity and keeping an open mind while searching for meaning (Sundler et al., 2019). There are many criticisms about phenomenological design on its lack of clarity regarding the philosophical foundation (Sundler et al., 2019). I rejected the phenomenological design because data relating to the participant's lived experiences are not suitable to address the research question.

Researchers use ethnography design when they intend to describe the culture, beliefs, values, skills, and knowledge of the group’s environment (Ottrey et al., 2018; Wall, 2015). The ethnographic design was not suitable for my study because I was not seeking to explore the cultural background of the participants. Yin (2018) explained that researchers use a case study design to conduct an in-depth study because they intend to address research questions regarding the what, why, and how of the participants’ capabilities. Yin further claimed that researchers may utilize a case study design to explore an organization’s or individual’s experience on a phenomenon (Yin, 2018). The use of a case study is to understand the complexities of institutions, processes, and relationships to investigate complex issues by testing unintentional mechanisms that can be applied across multiple disciplines (Harrison et al., 2017). When researchers are describing a particular activity, a single case study is appropriate (Yin, 2018). However, researchers use multiple case designs to understand the differences and similarities of two or more situations (Battistella et al., 2017). I rejected phenomenological and ethnography designs because the focus of this study is not to investigate the human or cultural experiences. I selected multiple case study design to explore the strategies HRMs from various mining companies use to improve employee retention because it is the most suitable to use semi-structure interviews of HRMs to collect, analyze, and interpret the data collected. I used the qualitative method and the multiple case design to collect, analyze, and interpret data from HRMs of mining companies regarding employee retention in their businesses.

Population and Sampling

The purpose of this study was to explore the strategies some successful HRMs of mining companies within the southeast part of Arizona use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. In this study, I intended to use a purposeful sampling method to select five HRMs from three mining companies located in southeast Arizona, who had the requisite knowledge and have successfully implemented employee retention strategies in their organizations. There are four major mining companies within the geographic location of this study. Therefore, selecting five participants with at least one from each of the companies should suffice. Purposeful sampling is a non-probability sampling technique of selecting participants based on the research objective and the characteristics of the population (Crossman, 2020). Gentles and Vilches (2017) explained that purposeful sampling is one of the ways researchers use to determine if participants have the qualities needed to participate in a study and are legible to provide the right answers to the research question.

Although purposeful sampling is labor-intensive and requires greater flexibility, however, it is a fast way of providing a rational solution to the phenomenon under study (Benoot et al., 2016). Using purposeful sampling help researchers to distinguish and choose participants with an in-depth experience of the phenomenon (Benoot et al., 2016). According to Benoot et al. (2016), researchers use purposeful sampling to focus on qualified participants to gain new perspectives on the study. Although researchers use purposeful sampling to collect rich data that suits the objective of the study within the right geographic location, it is possible for researchers to overlook primary research criteria but have the potential to contribute to the study (Ames et al., 2019). This means that the research can miss some participants whose contribution could have helped in the study findings due to the sampling method. I therefore used the purposeful sampling method to narrow my targeted population to meet the criteria of choosing five participants.

The targeted population for this study was at least five HRMs in the mining industry within the southeast part of Arizona who had successfully implemented strategies to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. Covering a larger portion of the population can yield more information, but because of time constraints, researchers use a limited sample size (Khalid & Nawab, 2018). According to Blaikie (2018), researchers normally justify the sample size of their study by referring to sample sizes from other past studies as proof. In a case study, hospital administrators used five participants to explore the strategies to retain their employees (Kirk, 2017). Benoot et al. (2016) suggested that choosing a sample size between four and fifteen is ideal for case study research. Therefore, I selected five participants as the sample size for this study based on other case studies.

Fusch et al. (2018) posited that sample size is determined when a study has attained saturation, meaning no new data, coding, and themes are needed. Data saturation is a point in a qualitative study where a researcher has obtained thorough information on the topic and there is no need to interview additional participants (Saunders et al., 2018). According to Saunders et al. (2018), new data is considered redundant to the information that is already collected, and when no additional data emerges, then data saturation is reached. Hennink et al. (2019) posited that researchers who design and ask accurate interview questions are likely to attain data saturation faster. I demonstrated data saturation by asking exact questions as outlined in my interview questions to all participants. I used multiple data sources to attain data saturation. Scholars explained that using many sources of data to promote social change to reduce bias and can help researchers to achieve data saturation (Deggs & Hernandez, 2018; Fusch et al., 2018). Further, I demonstrated data saturation by selecting the right participants that qualify for the eligibility criteria of the study and are well-informed of the study phenomenon. I used open-ended questions to engage the participants in the dialogue by strictly following an approved interview protocol without deviating to other topics. When researchers use open-ended questions, it relieves participants from stress, and they are motivated to express their views about the on-going discussion, which may establish confidentiality between the researcher and the participant (Roulston, 2018).

Kim et al. (2018) established that it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure proper alignment between the study participant and the overarching research question, by way of selecting an appropriate research participant for the study. The success and failure of a study are partly dependent on the expertise of the chosen participants (Hudson et al., 2020). As part of the eligibility criteria for this study, target participants should be HRMs who have successfully implemented employee retention strategies in the mining industry and reside in the southeast part of Arizona. To confirm participants' eligibility, I verified if they were HRM’s in their respective organizations. I also inquired from the prospective participants if they have been involved in the company’s recruitment processes and have successfully implemented employee retention strategies in the business. In this study, I explained to the prospective participants about the purpose of the study to understand the essence of participating in the research and what it requires to be eligible. The detailed explanation served as eligibility questionnaire to determine participants who qualified to be part of the study. Nili (2020) suggested that because of doubts and distorting limits in the use of data collected from participants, it is essential to explain in detail about the use of information that will be collected. Nili (2020) posited that a clear understanding of the purpose of the study will influence the attitude of participants to decide and give their consent in providing genuine answers to the research question. As Wessels and Visagie (2017) stated, the eligibility of research participants and sample size will be different from one study to the other. I selected the five HRMs who aligned within the eligibility criteria of this study and conducted a one-on-one semi-structured interview with them by using an approved interview protocol.

The setting for the interview should be convenient and preferable to the participants. Ecker (2017) agreed that the interview location has a great impact on a research study, which can provide an opportunity for an all-inclusive interpretation of the study. There should be no disturbances at the venue for the interview, and that the privacy of the interviewee is secured without any interruptions (Sumiak, 2018). The interview location for the study shall be a decent restaurant close to the participant's office. Prior to the start of the interview, I sought permission from each participant to audio record the entire interview. According to Yin (2018), productive researchers are attentive listeners to their participants. The information provided by participants was vital for this study, therefore I listened to the participants attentively as I made notes at the same time. Researchers should not spend too much time with participants (Yin, 2018). I took about 30 to 45 minutes for every participant to cover all interview questions.

Ethical Research

I provided every participant of this study with a consent form to make them aware of their rights and responsibilities and that they are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time. Instead of using a standard form, researchers must have a well-planned consent processes design to fit their study because they are accountable for any unethical issues (Zhang & Liu, 2018). Researchers must understand and follow a proper process of informed consent to lessen the threat to participants but rather find an opportunity to enhance the benefit of participation (Artal & Rubenfeld, 2017). Kadam (2017) stated that informed consent is the basis of ethics in a research study such as a clinical study. Informed ethical consent is an essential legal and ethical requirement for researchers pursuing clinical research and other studies to receive informed consent from participants engaging in the research (Kadam, 2017). According to Kadam, in as much as the informed consent process is significant, there are still some challenges to its efficiency and validity. Kadam (2017) claimed that some of the concerns that may negatively impact the informed consent process could be competence, understanding, and voluntariness on the part of the participants. I asked participants to sign a consent form to serve as an agreement between myself and the participants. The signed consent form is to assure participants that their voluntary participation in the study was respected. The consent form is to protect both the participant and the researcher as they engaged in a one-on-one interview (Kirilova & Karcher, 2017). Kirilova and Karcher (2017) argued that creating specific guidelines for sharing qualitative data produced by human interaction would support researchers to resolve privacy issues and increase the use of secondary data. Before starting the interview, I asked every participant to read through the letter of consent to understand that they have every right to decline their participation at any stage of the interview, then ask them to sign and return via email. I allowed each participant to ask questions to clear any doubts they may have.

As part of the consent processes, I sent an official invitation letter to all participants, which will be in Appendix C and also listed in the table of content of this study. To establish trust with the participants, I emailed an invitation letter, and introduced myself as the researcher and explain the purpose of the study as well as the eligibility criteria used in the participant selection. I made a follow-up call a few days before the interview date to discuss any additional details of the study and the interview process, including the signing of an informed consent form. I also allowed participants to ask any questions about the study. I emailed a copy of the consent form to each participant. The consent form was to give the participants a fair knowledge of the study, including the potential benefits, risks, nature of the study, participants' privacy. Researchers can obtain an in-depth answer from participants when they use what, how, and why questions in a semi-structured form (Fusch et al., 2017). I used an open-ended strategy and probing questions during the interview process for more data.

In a research study, ethical issues are essential and can take different forms depending on the type of phenomenon under study. According to Rousselet et al. (2020), researchers consider individual study participants and organizational factors of ethical issues to be critical in decision-making. Some of the factors researchers consider in making informed decisions are honesty and trust to uphold integrity and confidentiality by defending participants from any danger (Artal & Rubenfeld, 2017; Rousselet et al., 2020). I was honest by keeping the information shared by participants ‘confidential, used only for the purpose of this study, and will delete after five years as promised.

I ensured that all the study participants were protected by following a proper guiding principle such as what is described in the Belmont report, which guides researchers on ethical issues about human rights. I complied with all the three guiding principles accordingly. According to White (2020), the institutional review boards (IRBs) of every institution is authorized to ensure that a proposed protocol of any research related to human subject falls within the requirements of the ethical guidelines before subjects will be allowed to participate in a study. I submitted an informed consent form to Walden’s IRB for their approval. The approval number from Walden IRB for this study was 07-14-21-0754705. I made sure that all agreement documents are listed in the text of the study. Consent is an ethical issue and as such participants have the right to understand the purpose of the study and the right to withdraw their participation at any stage of the study (Artal & Rubenfeld, 2017). I discussed with participants ahead of time that whenever they do not feel comfortable to continue with the study and want to withdraw, they could officially write or email me directly about their decision to terminate the agreement of participation. Participants may either call to notify the researcher about the intention to withdraw or may decide to stop in the process of the interview. Study participants are not obligated to any penalties when they withdraw from a research study (Schultz & Hendrickse, 2018). I emailed a copy of the informed consent form to all participants and requested to select “I Consent”, sign, and return the form to me through email. I included in the informed consent form that there would be no financial incentives and that participation is purely voluntary. According to Gillan et al. (2018), offering incentives to participants may create biases in participants’ answers to interview questions. Again, I included all documents such as the informed consent form, interview protocol in the appropriate appendices as referenced in the table of content.

The details of the study and the purpose of it was explained to participants including the process of data collection. I made each participant aware that the entire interview would be recorded. I sought their permission before commencing the interview. Paquette and Ross (2018) posited that participants have the right to know what and how the data collected will be used for, and how their ethical rights will be protected. To assure participants of their ethical protection, I shared my contact information and made available contact information of Walden University representative that they could report any unethical concerns. To protect the rights of participants, I will make sure that data collected from participants are kept in a safe place for at least five years, delete all electronic versions and destroy every storage device including hard copies. I also made sure that the names and any identifiable information of individual participants or organizations were not included in the manuscript of the study. Instead, I mixed letters and numbers such as P1, P2, to indicate participants number 1, participant number 2, in that order for all five participants. The file of every participant was labeled with the corresponding code for easy identification. Finally, I plan to share a summary of the study findings with all research participants as a way of expressing my appreciation (Harriss et al., 2017). Harriss et al. (2017) posited that it is inappropriate for researchers to disseminate information in a public domain without the prior knowledge of the study participants. Therefore, I will make the study findings available to all participants before publishing them in any public database.

Data Collection Instruments

As the researcher of this qualitative study, I was the primary data collection instrument. In a qualitative study, the researcher is the primary data collection instrument since the researcher interacts with the participants to gather and interprets data for the study (Naicker & Maharaj, 2020; Yin, 2018). Fusch et al. (2017) posited that it is the responsibility of the researcher to collect, understand, and comprehend the data. After the approval of my interview protocol, I used face-to-face semistructured interviews with an open-ended question as to the secondary data collection instrument. Researchers use face-to-face interviews to perceive participants' nonverbal communications through facial, bodily, gestural movements (Bhardwaj et al., 2017; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). A face-to-face in-depth interview is a conversation between the researcher and the participants whereby the researcher asks questions and the participants provide answers (Korsjens & Moser, 2017). According to (Berri & Donnelly, 2019), semistructured interviews are efficient when doing an in-depth research study. Semistructured interviews are arranged and predetermined open-ended questions with follow-up questions emerging from the dialogue between a researcher and a participant (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) indicated that semistructured interviews provide the researcher with an efficient and feasible method of a research study.

Researchers using semistructured data collection interviews should take a relational approach and identify the interviewing skills to ensure consistency (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Korsjens and Moser (2017) agreed that face-to-face semistructured interviews are one of the most effective ways of collecting data for a qualitative study. Therefore, I used a face-to-face semistructured interview as one of the secondary data collection instruments in this study. Heydon and Powell (2018) stated that participants' confidentiality is essential in a research study, especially when investigating sensitive phenomena such as sexual assaults. Heydon and Powell recommended that researchers should use the interview protocol. It is also a requirement for Walden University's doctoral study to use interview protocol. For consistency and participant confidentiality, I used the interview protocol to ask every participant the same set of questions. As part of the advantages of the interview protocol, it provides the participants with advance information about the study, which also protects the researcher from illegal issues. With an interview protocol, a study participant has the advantage to back off from a study at any time, which is a disadvantage for the researcher. An interview protocol is an outline that lists the main ideas of a study, which researchers use to discover information from participants (Arsel, 2017). Arsel (2017) indicated that an interview protocol should comprise a brief introduction of the study in simple terms, a description of the study, and an explanation of the interview process. I formulated interview questions to align with the research question, problem statement, and purpose statement, which will be inserted in Appendix A of the study. To avoid bias and be consistent, I made sure to firmly focus on the interview protocol without deviating from it, by asking each participant the exact questions.

Aguinis and Solarino (2019) posited that the researcher should be consistent and transparent to all participants in data collection planning and during the interview process. At the start of every interview, I reminded participants that their participation in the study is voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time of the interview and assured them of the confidentiality of any information that would be shared. Although it was stated in it the interview protocol, I again asked for permission from a participant that the entire interview will be recorded and take notes from the discussion. I also made participants aware that I might be asking follow-up questions for further clarification throughout the dialogue. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) explained that follow-up questions augment a flexible interview protocol, which probes participants for additional comments. The approach permits the researcher to gather open-ended data, explore participant’s opinions, feelings, and beliefs about a specific study topic, and dive deeply into personal and often delicate questions (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

To validate the themes and enhance reliability for this study, I utilized member checking and methodological triangulation for multiple data sources. Member checking is a regulatory process that is used to improve the validity and credibility of a study (Livari, 2018). As a researcher, to ensure that data received from participants were correct and interpreted accurately, I emailed back the interpreted transcript to each of the participants after every interview, for their review to confirm the exact intent of the data provided. Getting the endorsement from participants was to prove the validity of the study to grant the needed credibility. Livari posited that member checking may serve as a motivation to a participant for been part of a research process or co-authors with researchers to come out with research findings. Livari (2018) used member checking to examine the level of interactive systems and products in the cultural context of software development companies. Methodological triangulation is the strategy to use multiple sources or techniques for data collection and analysis (Abdalla et al., 2018). Besides using semi-structured interviews, I also utilized the organizations' archived documents and any policies regarding employee retention in individual companies. The notes taken during the interview were, interpreted, and send back to the individual participants for confirmation of accuracy and approval on the data released.

Data Collection Technique

I used semi-structured interviews as the data collection technique for this study. I used my iPhone XR in addition to the zoom audio recorder to record the interviews with each participant to track and safe all data collected. The semi structured interviews are the most used and preferred type of interview by researchers in a qualitative study

(Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). Although researchers prepare an outline of interview questions, just like structured interviews, however, there are some flexibilities in the interview process (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). As part of the preparation before conducting the interviews, I detailed out an interview protocol, which was included in appendix A and reference in the table of content. I began each interview by introducing myself, my institution, the program of study, the topic of my study, and the purpose of the whole study. I expressed my appreciation to participants for their readiness to participate in the study and sought their permission to audio record the interviews.

I emphasized in the interview protocol that participants have the right to withdraw from the interview or stop me from recording the interview whenever they had a change of mind. In the interview protocol, I ensured participants that their responses to the interview questions were confidential and confirmed if they had reviewed the participant consent form and assured them of their right to keep a copy of the form for their records. I then gave participants the chance to ask any questions they had for further clarification. I reiterated in the interview protocol that the participants' participation is strongly (a) voluntary, (b) they have every right to withdraw at any given time, and (c) all documents including the electronic recordings and flash drives will be stored in a safe place for five years and will be destroyed after that period. For the convenience of participants, I asked each study participant to choose their meeting place to avoid or reduce disturbances. To ensure that the face-to-face interview was well captured, I used zoom audio recorder, my iPhone XR as well as writing notes. I used the same approved interview questions that is inserted in Appendix A for each participant to ensure consistency. Researchers use methodological triangulation to gather secondary data from different sources (Ghalwash et al., 2017). Besides the face-to-face semi-structured interviews, I requested from the individual participants for any organizational archived documentation on employee retention strategies or policies that had been implemented. Ghalwash et al. (2017) stated that face-to-face interview provides authenticity, data saturation, and ability to collect secondary data for triangulation.

The data collection technique for this study is a semistructured interview. An advantage of a semistructured interview is that it allows researchers to ask open-ended questions that can pave room for further probing questions (Moonaghi et al., 2015). Adhabi and Anozie (2017) claimed that a semistructured interview in a qualitative study has an advantage over other techniques because it gives researchers ample time to explore the subject matter. Semistructured interviews facilitate dialogical relations between researchers and participants such that decision-making and actions can impact real rapport-building and respectful relationships, which serves as another advantage in the data collection technique (Brown & Danaher, 2019). Qualitative studies with interviews have additional advantages and disadvantages. Adhabi and Anozie (2017) posited that the advantages of interviews in a qualitative study as a data collection technique offsets the disadvantages. According to Adhabi and Anozie (2017), interviews are advantageous to both the researcher and the participants because of the amount of data that can be collected in a sitting. One of the advantages is that participants have the flexibility to give a detailed explanation of a phenomenon based on their lived experience to the best of their understanding and researchers can ask further questions for clarification (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017; Clair et al., 2018). Clair et al. (2018) agreed that researchers have the advantage to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' views as they engage in face-to-face semistructured interviews. Miller (2019) emphasized that face-to-face interviews permit researchers to evaluate the gestures and body language of participants and to address any concerns that interviewees may have. Therefore, I conducted a face-to-face semistructured in-depth interview for this study. Besides the numerous advantages, one disadvantage in face-to-face interviews in qualitative research is the cost involve and the time it requires to travel from one participant to the other, which may delay the completion of the study (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). Another disadvantage of face-to-face interviews is the potential bias that could arise as the researcher can influence the participants (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017; DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

A pilot study is collecting preliminary data with different people who are not the actual study participants to make future or original study more successful and efficient (Morris & Rosenbloom, 2017). Kaur et al. (2017) explained that researchers use pilot studies to understand the practicability of evaluating the competence of the larger study goal, to justify the reasons for choosing a particular data collection technique and sample size that is appropriate for the research findings. I did not conduct a pilot study for this research because of time constraints and I also needed approval for my interview protocol before I could start with my interviews. I contacted participants after I had received the approval of my proposal and have been given an official approval number to assure participants of the legitimacy of the study from an accredited University.

After each interview with a participant, I used a member checking device to confirm the accuracy of the interviewee's responses from participants. Member checking is a procedure in which researchers send back the data collected through interviews to study participants for their approval and validation (Birt et al., 2016). According to Johnson et al. (2020), researchers should ask clear questions to mitigate all forms of biases in their data analysis and interpretations. Another way to avoid biases is the researcher's understanding into their own biases and logical ideas for decision making as the study continues (Johnson et al., 2020). I transcribed the audio recorded information and all hand-written notes from each participant during the semi-structured interviews. Finally, I shared my interpretation of the collected data with every participant to seek their approval and validation. I then scheduled an appointment with each participant to go over the interpreted results for final confirmation and approval.

Data Organization Technique

Data organization technique is an efficient means of storing, retrieving, and transmitting data in a research study (Amiri et al., 2019). I developed a system where I could effectively track the data I collected from each participant. I used a micro stick voice activated audio recorder and my iPhone XR to record the interviews with each participant. In addition to the recordings, I took hand-written notes on everything I observed from the participants during the interview. Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018) recommended that field notes must be taken in a qualitative study as a way of documenting every essential detail, to ensure consistency in the context of data collected. A researcher must sort and label all data collected for easy identification (Annink, 2017).

I uploaded the audio recorded interview from the micro stick voice activated recorder and my iPhone XR that were used to record all the interviews into a software application like VoiceBase to transcribe into word document text. I compared the transcription to the recorded voice as well as the hand-written notes to ensure that the participant's responses were well captured. I then used NVivo to code and organize the data into themes for further analysis. NVivo is application software that is used for collecting, coding, and analyzing data in a qualitative research study (Smith et al., 2019). After the data analysis and approval of the study, I saved an electronic copy of the transcribed word document file on a password-protected personal computer and uploaded another copy on a pen-drive. I stored the pen-drive, the hand-written notes, and all the paper transcription in a locked file cabinet for five years and kept it in my home office that no one else will have access to. In compliance with Walden University policy, I will delete all the electronic copies from both the personal computer and the pen-drive and burn or shred all the paper copies as promised to the participants.

Data Analysis

In a qualitative study, researchers use different research designs for different data analysis processes. Abdalla et al. (2018) identified the four types of triangulation in Denzin’s 1978 seminal work as (a) data triangulation, theoretical triangulation, investigator or researcher triangulation, and (d) methodological triangulation. In this qualitative multiple case study design, I used methodological triangulation as a data analysis process. Methodological triangulation is the use of various approaches to provide more systematic and accurate data about the phenomenon under study (Abdalla et al., 2018; Bocatto & Perez-de-Toledo, 2020). To achieve data triangulation for this study, I used multiple data sources such as semistructured interviews, participants' observations, company policies, and handbooks. Researchers use multiple sources of data in a form of triangulation to attain data saturation, by way of promoting social change and reducing bias (Deggs & Hernandez, 2018; Fusch et al., 2018).

According to Elliot (2018), the data analysis stage and the use of coding are crucial in a qualitative study. The data analysis process should comprise organizing the data, reviewing the data, data coding, and grouping the data into themes (Milford et al., 2017). Thematic analysis is used in academic studies and later classified as qualitative research (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Following the coding process, I grouped and organized all the data collected from the semistructured interviews into themes. I then analyzed the data based on the common themes by using the five steps of data analysis described by Yin (2018). Yin's recommended five steps of data analysis are (a) preparation and organization of the data, (b) grouping the data into themes by way of coding, (c) regrouping the data based on themes in a table form, (d) evaluating and interpreting the data, and (e) drawing conclusions from the data to determine and explain findings (Yin, 2018). Similarly, Castleberry and Nolen (2018) discussed the five steps of data analysis as (a) compiling, (b) disassembling, (c) reassembling, (d) interpreting, and (e) concluding. I applied Yin's systematic approach to organize all the data collected from the participants, which included the interviews and company documents. For data triangulation, I included interview data and any relevant company documents

Researchers use the data analysis process to analyze themes that emerge from the data collected from participants and the study phenomenon to answer the research question (Günther et al., 2017). I utilized member checking to confirm from all participants that the interpreted data was accurate. I used Microsoft Excel to transcribe all the information gathered from individual participants, and then transferred the transcribed data into NVivo software. According to (Milford et al., 2017) NVivo software application supports the qualitative researcher to identify common themes, word frequency, and to divide investigative data into groups for easy analysis. I carefully read the individual transcripts and notes to identify common themes. I then compared the common themes that emerged from the data analysis to correlate the data with literature and conceptual framework, which is job embeddedness theory to identify commonalities and patterns. A study data should be linked to the literature of the study as seen from the pattern of the data analysis (Cook et al., 2016). There are many computer-based data analysis software programs, which support qualitative researchers in their data analysis (Yin, 2018). According to Woods et al. (2016), this computerized software has the capability of theme identification, coding by character, and functionalities in multimedia for easy data management. NVivo, which has the potential to cope with data in different forms like Microsoft excel, word, documents, PDFs, videos, photos, data from social media, and the Internet is time-saving for researchers when dealing with a large amount of time (Dollah et al., 2017). Therefore, I used NVivo and Microsoft Word Excel for my data analysis. Dollah et al. (2017) posited that software like NVivo also can identify themes. I used the NVivo software to identify and grouped the main themes and constructs from my conceptual framework and other theories in my literature review for analysis. I then compared the themes from the conceptual framework of the study to the participants' responses to analyze the data collected.

Reliability and Validity

A qualitative study may be acceptable based on its accuracy and reliability and the strategies used to attain credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Forero et al., 2018). Spiers et al. (2018) posited that the quality of data in a qualitative study will depend on its reliability and validity. That means a study's data will be meaningful if it is valid and practitioners can rely upon the information. Yin (2018) outlined the following eight research strategies (a) persistent observation and extended engagement, (b) data triangulation, (c) peer review, (d) negative case analysis, (e) researchers bias clarification, (f) member checking, (g) thick description, and (h) external audits. Yin recommended that researchers should consider at least two of the strategies to attain reliability and dependability of their study results. In this study, I used member checking, triangulation, and peer review to secure trustworthiness.

Reliability

Reliability is the ability to reproduce, repeat, and be consistent in a study's results (Cypress, 2017). I ensured that the findings of this study are consistent and can be replicated by reducing possible errors as much as possible. There are errors in every study and researchers must find a way to reduce potential errors that may exist in research to make the study dependable (Mohajan, 2017). In a qualitative study, reliability is one of the ways to reduce potential research errors (Dobson et al., 2017). According to

(Cypress, 2018), qualitative researchers should anticipate ethical concerns and design a suitable method to collect, document, and safely store collected data. Keeping records of every stage during the data collection process will minimize errors and warrant the reliability of the study findings (Tajabadi et al., 2020). Another way for researchers to establish trust and confidence in a study to affirm dependability is by remaining consistent in the research method and design used in the entire study (Belotto, 2018). I purposed to be consistent in dealing with all the participants. Cypress (2017) posited that researchers should integrate strategies into the qualitative study to ensure reliability in the process of research, rather than to assess after the study. Cypress (2017) stated that all qualitative researchers should be proactive and accountable for ensuring the accuracy of a research study.

For other researchers to follow the steps of this case study and obtain comparable results, and to ensure reliability, I documented every procedure for the data collection process. I used an interview protocol as a guide to achieving reliability. The vital instrument to attain quality data from an interview is to have a dependable interview protocol (Yeong et al., 2018). Yeong et al. (2018) agreed that constructing a reasonable interview can be a difficult task, however, interview protocols must capture the objectives of the study and should be easy to follow. I ensured that the interview protocol covers all the interview questions and I used it as a guide throughout the interview process. I also made sure to be consistent with each participant by asking the same questions in the same order. Also, besides the interview protocol, I used member checking to augment reliability. Member checking supports the fulfillment of the measures designed for the study in several ways (Livari, 2018; Naidu & Prose, 2018). According to Livari, member checking grants the participants the chance to evaluate the interpretations of the answers that were given and serves as providing feedback to the researcher (Thomas, 2017). Thomas stated that member checking helps to reduce biases or errors and improves the accuracy as well as the credibility of the research findings. I used methodological triangulation to boost the reliability of the study findings. Yin (2018) explained that using multiple data sources can improve the rigor of a qualitative case study. Therefore, the use of methodological triangulation was one of the steps I utilized to enhance the reliability of this study.

Validity

The validity of a study is about the credibility of the research findings, which can be decided by the readers (Kelly, 2017). I developed the credibility of this study with the use of interview protocol, methodological triangulation, and member checking. Researchers use member checking as an appropriate tool to authenticate a study's accuracy, dependent on the participants' support (Madill & Sullivan, 2018). Madill and Sullivan (2018) posited that researchers should work with participants to improve the quality of the research study. To validate the findings of this study, I worked hand in hand with all participants to seek their approval for all my interpretations. Using member checking as a tool enhanced the trustworthiness and credibility of the study as participants are allowed to confirm all the information, they provided during the interview Sections. According to Yin (2018), participants need to verify and confirm the responses to make a study more credible and dependable.

Credibility

Credibility is defined as the assurance of the facts of the research findings (Kyngas et al., 2020). The credibility of a study is an honest explanation of the phenomenon of interest and generation of realistic study claims, which can be encouraged by using a methodical process at every step of the study (Liao & Hitchcock, 2018). In their study, Liao and Hitchcock used credibility techniques to choose higher education evaluation studies that were published in six top evaluation journals. According to Liao and Hitchcock (2018), accuracy and accountability are major attributes that should align with the credibility of a study and therefore suggested that researchers should define the right strategies to enhance the credibility of a research study. Glenna et al. (2019) posited that several qualitative researchers use trustworthiness as an open-ended term to imply credibility, confirmability, dependability, transferability, and authenticity. Some of the strategies use by qualitative researchers to increase credibility in a research finding are member checking, peer review, triangulation, field verification, and structural consistency (Cypress, 2017; McGaha & D'Urso, 2019; Morse, 2015). Besides triangulation, I utilized member checking to determine the credibility of this study. I gave participants the opportunity to confirm that the responses provided to the interview questions and my interpretations were accurate. The member checking strategy motivated participants to give their feedback on the findings of the study and to express their feelings of been part of a doctoral research study

Transferability

Transferability is defined as an individual or group of people in a particular field agreeing to implement a research finding in another sector (Smith, 2018). Daniel (2019) suggested that findings from one study can be applied to other situations or groups of people. The research finding is transferable when an employee retention strategy in the mining industry is identified as applicable in another location or industry and adopted. Transferability is, therefore, the capability to apply the results or findings and suppositions outside the scope of research to people who did not play a role in a particular study by following the guidelines postulated in the original study (Hadi & Closs, 2016). One possible way for researchers to achieve study transferability is to adopt different techniques by giving a detailed description of the study phenomenon to enhance transferability (Hadi & Closs, 2016). In using a comprehensive description, researchers can use participants' real-life situations and their worldviews to achieve transferability to minimize the gap between practitioners and researchers (Ospina et al., 2018). Based on Hadi and Closs's (2016) and Ospina et al. (2018) recommendations, I gave a sound description of the study’s context, provided adequate results, and drew meaningful conclusions to promote the research’s transferability. I utilized member checking, data triangulation, interview protocol, and data saturation to ensure that the study’s outcome is worthwhile for HRM’s in other industries.

Confirmability

Confirmability is one of the quality dimensions in qualitative research, which is considered as the main criterion for a researchers’ account of convictions (Abdalla et al., 2018). Abdalla et al. (2018) posited that the idea of confirmability is to compare the objectivity of the researcher’s concerns. Confirmability is a robust means to assess and ensure the trustworthiness and the rigor of a qualitative study (Forero et al., 2018). According to Wisenthal et al. (2019), researchers may use reflexivity to address confirmability to avoid biases in a research study. Korstjens and Moser (2018) claimed that researchers can improve the confirmability of research by conducting an audit trail on all the documented study process to alleviate the issue of investigator bias. Thomas (2017) recommended that researchers should seek participants’ evaluation and approval of the interpretations of responses provided for the study as anonymity cannot always be guaranteed. Member checking is an approved tool for interviewees to provide their approval of research findings (Thomas, 2017). In this study, I utilized the interview protocol for every participant as a way of adhering to all the research process as documented and approved by IRB. To verify the accuracy of my study findings and suppositions, I used member checking, which also supported the improvement of confirmability by asking the research participants to appraise my transcription and interpretation of the data. I substantiated the confirmability of the study by confirming whether the results and assumptions of my study align with the findings of other researchers’ study. In a qualitative study, trustworthiness is established with the use of credibility, transferability, and dependability to improve the confirmability of the study outcome (Pratt & Yezierski, 2018). Therefore, I followed all the ethics of credibility, transferability, and dependability to achieve the confirmability of this study.

Data Saturation

Saturation is a methodological principle in a qualitative study to demonstrate that data collected is enough for a study and no additional data is necessary (Saunders et al., 2018). According to Nascimento et al. (2018) when no new essential data are discovered in research, data collection is deemed saturated and the inclusion of new information ceases to be relevant, as it does not change the understanding of the phenomenon studied. Data saturation is therefore a criterion that enables the validity of a data set to be defined (Nascimento et al., 2018). Blaikie (2018) explained that the amount of sample size may indicate the level of data saturation in a qualitative study. In a qualitative study ensuring satisfactory data and attaining data, saturation is crucial to answering the research question (Aldiabat & Le Navenec, 2018). To reach data saturation for this study, I will use triangulation by collecting and analyzing data from many sources. I also made sure that each source of data is well explored until there is no need for additional information from that source. As part of the sources, I used member checking, interview protocols, participant observations, archived documents from the participating companies. I ensured that the same interview questions were used for each participant as indicated in the approved interview protocol until data saturation was attained.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I reaffirmed the purpose statement of my study and provided an overview of my role as a researcher, the study participants, and the research method and design. I further discussed the study population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments, data collection techniques, data organization technique, and data analysis. I explained the reliability and validity of the study data. I discussed the credibility, transferability, confirmability of the study, and explained how data saturation can be achieved. In Section 3, I presented the findings of the study, application to professional practice, implications for social change, and recommendations for actions. I finished Section 3 with recommendations for further research and provided reflections of the study before concluding the study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. The data source for this study included five semistructured interviews with HRMs and review of internal company documents from mining companies in the southeast of Arizona. Internal documents included company handbooks, policies, meeting agendas, and company websites that are public information as secondary sources of data.

From the thematic analysis, I identified four main themes: (a) employee engagement, (b) compensation and benefits, (c) effective communication, and (d) recognition and job satisfaction. Each theme ties to the findings of the study, literature review, theory, and conclusion. These four themes support HRMs in the mining industry to improve employee retention and organizational knowledge for a higher productivity and financial performance. After my presentation of the findings, I address professional practice applications, implications for social change, recommendations for action, and recommendations for future research, reflections, and the conclusion.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching question for this study was: What strategies do some human resource managers in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and financial performance? I collected data through semistructured interviews with participants as well as a review of company documents. My goal was to answer the research question and understand the strategies that some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge for a higher productivity and financial performance. I used interviews, company documents, websites, and methodological triangulation to validate the research findings. I ensured participants’ confidentiality by using pseudonyms P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5.

Using Mitchell et al.’s (2001) JE theory as the conceptual framework or foundational theory was essential to discover the findings of this study. I explored the employee retention strategies HRMs in southeast of Arizona use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge for a higher productivity and financial performance in the mining industry through the lens of JE theory. After analysis of the data collected, four themes emerged: (a) employee engagement, (b) compensation and benefits, (c) effective communication, and (d) recognition and job satisfaction.

Theme 1: Employee Engagement

The study participants supported the findings of this study that effective employee engagement and motivation is a vital contributor to employee retention in the mining industry. All five participants agreed that efficiently engaging employees is essential to the growth of the business, which can lead to an increase in productivity and financial improvement. Engagement is the state of the mind that shows an individual's energy levels and how devoted and dependable one can commit to the assigned task (Schaufeli et al., 2002). According to Schaufeli et al. (2002), organizations can achieve their targeted goals if employees are well engaged. P 2 stated, “The Company has embraced a new vision and mission that is employee centered. Employees are collaborating and working with leaders to improve our work processes and environment, thus being actively engaged in change."

Sun and Bunchapattanasakda (2019) defined employee engagement in two ways: (a) as a multi-faceted idea, which relates to the cognition, emotions, and behaviors (b) as a unitary idea, which deals with a positive state of mind, as the act of sincere willingness, contrary to employee burnout. Meaning, if employees are actively engaged, they enjoy their work without being stressed out. In their study on effective employee engagement in the workplace, Osborne and Hammoud (2017) argued that for organizations to maintain or improve on profitability, the leaders of the firm should engage the employees. P2 said:

> I think every company will have different targets. In our specific situation, more employee engagement and listening to their ideas focused on improving the work environment and discussing feasible strategies has been vital. Every idea is being considered, which is critical. It is a fail-fast mentality with the intent of trying and trying all ideas to improve the work environment and strategies.

Osborne and Hammoud (2017) stated that disengaged employees have cost businesses in the United States $350 billion annually. The study participants did not only agree that disengaged employees can cause financial loss to the company but can also lead to a high employee turnover rate and suggested that engaging employees in the mining industry are critical to their respective companies' growth. P4 stated:

> Our employees complete a company-wide employee engagement survey every other year to assess those strategies efficient, which are anonymous so it helps us

> gather information in those areas so we can make adjustments where it makes sense to further enhance retention.

All five participants agreed that employee engagement is critical to the business's growth and helps employees stay with their organizations. P1 gave an example that, “engaged employees work as a team because they understand the big picture of the organization.” P2 indicated, “Building relationship among workers and their leaders is essential for business growth.” According to P3 “Organizational leaders should understand the concerns of their employees and must be ready to provide solutions.” P4 stated, “Employees go extra mile to perform their routine task if they know the leadership cares about them.” Similarly, P5 explained, “Employee engagement may impact an organization in one way or the other, which will in effect influence employee retention.” These findings fit with previous research. For example, Pandita (2017) posited that employee engagement is a critical factor that organizations need to consider as a strategy for employee retention because it has influence on the employees’ work-life balance.

Herzberg (1974) stated that employee engagement is a motivation factor that may result in job satisfaction. The findings of this study supported that notion. All five participants agreed that employee engagement is one of the best retention strategy to maintain talented employees. P2 said, “Employee engagement can impact employee retention positively or negatively to either improve productivity and financial performance or hamper the growth of the business.” P3 supported P2’s assertion and went a little deeper noting that:

> An engaged employee may positively influence other workers, which will affect other workers to go the extra mile to improve production. However, a disengaged employee can negatively influence other colleagues by creating a hostile work environment to obstruct production.

Further addressing the issue of employee retention, P5 stated, “As part of employee retention strategies, management has been motivating employees to come out with laudable production ideas and how to improve work environment.” P1 mentioned “Engagement strategy has empowered the employees to feel a sense of belongingness and has contributed immensely to production.” P2 explained, “Management strategy to retain employees has been employee-centered, bringing collaboration between frontline employees and management.” P4 had a different approach and stated “We have a suggestion box that employees can put in their written ideas for consideration and implementation.” P2 said, “We have departmental whiteboards that employees can make proposals of improvement ideas.” P2 further stated, “Our new business model is a bottom-up business innovation.” Hakanen et al. (2017) revealed that engaged employees are loyal to their organizations and are likely to improve productivity.

Employee Engagement and the JE Construct of Fit

The findings of this study suggest that engaging employees with the organization's activities provided participants’ companies with guidelines on how to retain employees in the mining industry. P1 revealed that “Motivating employees to be engaged helps create a conducive atmosphere for an effective working environment, which may improve productivity and boost the organization's financial performance.”

Sendawula et al. (2018) posited that the contribution of an engaged workforce is enormous in an organization because their performance and behavior help the company achieve its goals. Organizations, therefore, need to ensure that those individual employees whose value to the bottom line of the business is essential would want to stay in the firm to continue discharging their duties to the benefit of the organization (Sendawula et al., 2018). Johnson and Pike's (2018) indicated that focusing on employee engagement could be a more efficient way to improve employee retention, but it is also the best method of increasing productivity. According to Pandita and Ray (2018) engaged workforce help to reduce turnover and improves talent acquisition, building a knowledge base and gaining a competitive advantage. P4 stated, "Effective talent management practices bring about employee engagement, which leads to employee retention." P1 said, "Engaged employees tend to be more committed to the organization and are determined to support the company to achieve its goals and objectives."

P5 stated, "Disengaged employees easily get burned out and turn to look for other opportunities by vacating their current positions." Sun and Bunchapattanasakda (2019) gave three categories that can influence employee engagement: (a) organizational factors, which is the management style of an organization including job rewards, (b) job factors work environment, task characteristics, and (c) individual factors, which relates to physical energies and self-consciousness of the individual employee. Employee engagement tends to correlate with employee performance and organizational commitment and positive behavior of the employee and the organizational performance, subsequently impacting customer satisfaction, leading to improved financial gain (Sun &

Bunchapattanasakda, 2019). To improve productivity, organizational leaders and human resource managers in the mining industry must find a proper way of engaging employees to get the workers to stay at their post.

The findings of this study suggest that the theme of employee engagement and motivation align with the JE construct of fit. The job embeddedness theory supports the construct of fit as employees perceive their fit in the organization, community, and the job they perform. Mitchell et al. (2001) defined fit as the compatibility or well–being of an employee with a company and the environment or culture the employee finds themselves. Mitchell et al. (2001) posited that the aspirations of the worker such as the values, career objectives, and futures plans must fit with that of the organization's philosophy and requirements of the employee's current job capabilities, skills, and technical knowledge. Milliman et al. (2018) agreed that workplace spirituality in hospitality organizations greatly influences an employee's engagement and the decision to stay or leave the job. Employees in such an environment will have to decide if their career goals fit with their job requirements. Milliman et al. (2018) suggested that there should be a strong level of intrinsic work motivation for workers in such an environment.

All five participants agreed that creating a conducive work environment, makes it friendlier for their employees. P1 stated that "We do not entertain abusive language at the workplace." P4 gave an example that, "The non-hostile environment allows our employees to feel comfortable and fit to perform their daily activities." P3 added, "The workers feel fulfilled and a sense of belongingness and would like to stay to be part of the larger family because of this friendly environment." P2 shared, "HR team has learned from the departments with a low turnover rate within the organization that there is a strong bond among the members." The HR team fulfills the construct of fit, that the better the fit, the higher the possibility for an employee to feel personal and professionally tangled or embedded to the company. Employees whose ideological misfits with a firm's belief tend to quit their positions easier than workers whose values and goals fit the organization's vision (Bermiss & McDonald, 2018). P5 emphasized, "Organization and leadership do not play party politics by hoisting or posting a particular party's banners and flyers on company websites or premises because of people's different political ideologies."

In addition to the on-the-job fit, other factors are related to off-the-job fit, which compels employees to stay with their employers. According to Mitchell et al. (2001), an individual will be considered fit in the community in which they work if that person has something in common in the society. The study of Caron et al. (2019) indicated the necessity of agreement for mining companies to create incentives to engage with the indigenous mining workforce. The mining companies with impact and benefit agreements can recruit and retain about 23% indigenous employees compared to less than 1% of organizations without legislation (Caron et al., 2019). Caron et al. (2019) explained that if mining employers who are not residents of the local area do not have any binding agreement, they tend not to create any incentives for the local community.

Mitchell et al. (2001) posited that amenities, weather, and the general culture of the mining location in which employees live play a pivotal role in determining if the employee will stay or not. All five participants agreed that the locations of their companies are contributing factors to their employee retention. P3 stated, “It is challenging for us to retain our employees for a more extended period because the families of some workers do not want to relocate with them.” Two out of the five participants agreed that the business locations helped them in their employee retention. P2 stated, “We used to have a very high turnover rate because our organization is in a remote area, however, the turnover rate has improved significantly because of our highly subsidized housing project and specific amenities like first class fitness and community centers.” P1indicated:

> The issue of location does not impact our employee retention because the location of our company is not far from a major metropolis, so most of our employees prefer to reside in the nearby cities and commute to and from work to enjoy the facilities in the city. We have embarked on many community projects such as supporting minor leagues in the community, back to school supplies projects, supporting the local schools, churches, and other charitable organizations.

All participants expressed interest in funding and facilitating different projects to ensure that their employees fit in the communities to enhance their stay with the companies.

Employee Engagement and Business Practice

Chanana (2017) argued that the success of every organization is primarily dependent upon its talented employees. Employee retention is critical for the growth of a business to gain and maintain a competitive advantage (Hadi & Ahmed, 2018). Van Zyl et al. (2021) postulated that an organization’s performance and creative ability are both functions of employee engagement; therefore, the need to engage the employees is crucial to the firm's development. Khodakarami and Dirani (2020) found that perceived organizational support and employee loyalty are considerably impacted by employee engagement. If the level of organizational support is found to be lowered to some extent, the employees' engagement level is subsequently reduced to about 50% (Khodakarami & Dirani, 2020). P2 said, “It is better to understand why people are leaving the company to create retention strategies.” P2 further stated:

> Specifically, the company has created small teams in departments where there are above average turnover rates. These teams evaluate the culture and operational blueprint to determine what changes might be required to enhance the working experience. Partner directly with the employees and support units such as staffing, recruiting, housing and compensation to generate ideas and strategies that focus on retention. Furthermore, understanding which departments are impacted and what are the relevant trends allow you to know where to focus your attention.

The participant made the above statement to express the level of engagement between the management team and the employees. According to the participants engaging the employee at regular intervals helps management understand the concerns of the workforce and try to resolve them before those issues escalate to a different level. For example, P4 said:

> Our employees complete a company-wide employee engagement survey every other year to assess those strategies, which is anonymous, so it helps us gather information in those areas so we can make adjustments where it makes sense to

> further enhance retention. There are also 1-on-1 leaders meeting with employees from time to time in guiding employees to their desired career outcomes.

The findings of this study are consistent with the study of Bake (2019) on leadership and retention, which posited that the United States economy is only 30% efficient due to a low level of employee engagement. According to Bake (2019), employee engagement can be enhanced through effective leadership by encouraging and motivating personal development in the form of mentoring the workforce to take up future responsibilities. The finding aligns with this study's literature that leaders who manage with a transformational leadership style can establish a good rapport with their followers and promote growth by allowing the employees to attain their maximum potential (Steinmann et al., 2018).

All participants agreed that training is one of the ways to engage employees to get them committed and stay longer with the organization. P1 stated, “We occasionally sponsor our talented employees for short courses to acquire new skills.” According P2, “The mining business is dynamic and it is always undergoing changes with different technology, we need to train our people to be abreast with time, so we organize both in-house and outside training for our people.” Ju and Li (2019) found that training, whether on-the-job or off-the-job and distance training, has a significant impact on employees’ turnover intentions. P5 stated:

> Training your employees to acquire more knowledge is essential. I mean, we invest a lot of money in our employees as far as training goes, you know, so they become more valuable to us. When they leave, they take all that knowledge with

> them; these are incremental knowledge they have acquired over the years. New people might not be up to the level, or we would have to pay somebody more money to replace them.

Summary of Employee Engagement

The previous Sections provided an analysis of the theme of employee engagement and the findings from this study. Additionally, an analysis of the findings from this study relates to the JE construct of fit (Mitchell et al., 2001). HR managers who effectively implement employee engagement policies could improve the productivity and financial performance of the company (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). All the participants agreed that having an efficient employee engagement plan helps to make the employees more committed to the organization, which could help improve firms' employee retention rate. Mitchell et al. (2001) JE theory stated that people stay if they are engaged and satisfied with their work and committed to the firm but leave the company if the opposite is true.

JE is like a trap or net in which an employee can be caught in such a way that the worker who is highly embedded has many connections either in the organization or in the community that he or she would not like to lose (Mitchell et al., 2001). Porter et al. (2019) asserted that organization embeddedness and community embeddedness have an exceptional impact on unofficial job search and intentions of turnover by either strengthening or weakening the affiliation between the two. All participants agreed that engaged employees are loyal to their organizations and suggested that business leaders create an environment that will motivate workers to be engaged. For example, P1 stated:

> The leaders together with the HR team have managed to create a hostile free work environment and encouraged all our employees to see each other as a family member. We have an all-inclusive culture that helps our people to see themselves as part of whatever goes on in the company. The friendly environment has helped to reduce the turnover rate in the company.

The study's findings align with the literature, in that transformational leaders have an ideal influence on their people who become motivated and inspired through the instructions of the leader to positively engage with their colleagues and with the company (Suifan & Al-Janini, 2017). In addition, the finding is consistent with the literature because employees who are engaged see themselves fit with the organization and their fellow employees and are willing to stay (Mitchell et al., 2001). This relates to the purpose statement of this study as the strategies some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. Therefore, developing and implementing employee engagement as part of employee retention strategy will help mining companies to retain their talented employees.

Theme 2: Compensation and Benefits

The findings from participants suggested that appropriate compensation and benefits could contribute to a higher employee retention rate in the mining industry. All five participants agreed that many employees leave from one job to another for better compensation and other benefits that they could not get in their previous companies. Chiekezie et al. (2017) found in their study that for management of organizations to retain their talented employees, there should be a proper way to articulate, manage, and implement good compensation policies, to avoid the workers to search for better opportunities elsewhere. There should be a new and attractive compensation structure with comprehensive benefits besides the salary that will motivate the skilled employees to stay (Chiekezie et al., 2017). Kamalaveni et al. (2019) stated a correlation between compensation and retention, so organizational leaders should provide appropriate incentives to their gifted employees to retain them for high performance. P3 stated "good compensation package motivates to attract, train, and retain competent employees". P4 said, "We see improvement in efficiency whenever our pay structure is revised to increase the salary of employees." P2 indicated, "There is a strong correlation between our production numbers and pay increase, especially at the beginning of our financial year when we pay annual bonuses and adjust the wages and salaries of the employees". According to P1, "Compensation is considered to be an investment and has a huge payback if managed properly."

Setiawan et al. (2021) discovered that several large corporations throughout the globe use monetary incentives as a form of motivation to entice their thriving–qualified workers to stay. Bonuses can be in different forms and capacities and may not always be in a monetary sense (Setiawan et al., 2021). Candra et al. (2018) found that financial and non-financial compensations significantly impact employees' turnover intentions. The researchers discussed the differences between the types of compensations. There are two types of financial compensation direct and indirect.

Direct financial compensation comprises payments like salaries, wages, commissions, and bonuses made to the employee. Indirect financial compensation is payments made to employees who are not part of the worker's direct compensation, including retirement plans, 401k, and leave of absence. The non-financial compensation comes in the form of rewards such as promotions, leadership opportunities, and recognitions praises, parting on the shoulder, as a form of motivation to enhance job performance and reduce intention to leave (Candra et al., 2018).

Four out of the five participants indicated that financial and non-financial compensations are essential and need to be appropriately managed to retain their efficient employees. The finding of this study is consistent with the study of Ghafoor et al. (2017) which postulated that both financial and nonfinancial compensation have a substantial negative impact on an employee's turnover intention. P1 said:

> We actually created tuition reimbursement for our people to take the opportunity because we were losing so many of our skilled salary staff, supervisors, and engineers. P1 explained that though the company tuition reimbursement was there, many employees were not taking advantage of it until the HR and management created the awareness to realign the employees to understand that tuition reimbursement is part of their benefits.

P3 stated, "The referral bonus as an incentive amongst employees has been very effective as both rewarding and helping us to hire new employees and retaining the current workers under the recent market" P3 further stated, "The current mining market is “flooded” with many job opportunities due to the recent high commodity prices”. According to P4,

> There are several employment opportunities for fewer qualified candidates, qualified and skillful individuals in the mining industry, therefore, best compensation and other benefits is the way to keep our existing employees and possibly attract more talented professionals. We research to find out what our competitors are doing in terms of compensation and try to do better for our employees.

Participants agreed that HR managers and organizational leaders would have to come out with the best compensation and benefits package that, when implemented, will not only retain the existing employees but would help to attract more talented employees to their companies.

Compensation and Benefits and the JE Construct of Employee Sacrifice

Dhanpat et al. (2018) argued that retaining employees has been a critical issue for many organizations in the global business. All the participants expressed the essence of having a reasonable compensation and benefits package for employees as a motivation to convince them to stay. Mitchell et al. (2001) suggested that the JE theory construct of sacrifice focuses on the perceived cost of benefits, whether material or psychological, that an employee would not want to forfeit if he or she left the current job. According to Fuchs (2021), there are internal factors such as prestige, payments, benefits, and other external factors like change of schools, hobbies, churches, and community clubs that the employee can lose for switching jobs. Lyu and Zhu (2019) posited that the employee’s work environment and perceived factors might determine how the worker may be embedded and remain in a company. P1 said:

> Yeah, it is pretty clear that they usually leave for better pay or more advancement opportunities, so we increased our pay rate and improved upon the progression program, and then we saw a decrease in our turnover rate. The numbers were there clearly to show management about the significant retention improvement after the changes.

P2 noted that:

> These small teams then partner with management to clear the path and begin deploying different concepts such as sign-on bonuses, referral bonuses, expanded housing options, overall compensation benefits, work schedule, and work environment. Salary increases, location, and a lack of housing are the primary factors individuals leave the organization for other opportunities. P2 explained that besides the salary increase and other benefit packages, the highly subsidized company housing and the beautiful community recreational center had been some of the significant incentives that employees would not want to sacrifice and leave to other organizations.

Choi (2020) argued that companies with flexible work schedules like teleworking from home for the past several decades had reduced their voluntary turnover and improved employee retention. Participants agreed that arranging flexible work schedules help to retain the workforce for an extended period. Three out of the five participants shared that most mining companies are in remote places, so granting employees good days off to spend quality time with their families in big cities is a morale booster to retain their workers. P5 said:

> The nature of mining work is different and requires different times; it is not a one coat fits all. So, we have adapted several work schedules to suit the conditions of our employees in specific departments based on the nature of the work assignments–for example, some of the workers prefer to work long days and take off long days. A typical example is 7 days on and 7 days off.

P3 stated,” I think the company has been more receptive to change specifically from the inside out as far as improving the work environment and then considering other variables from housing to compensation.” P2 indicated:

> The leadership of the organization has been working with the employees in several areas by listening to their needs in order to satisfy them to stay. One of the areas the participant cited was employees' work schedules. P2 gave an example that the majority of their professionals wanted three days long weekends, and for that matter, the company adopted the four by ten (4X10) schedule, whereby employees work four 10-hour shifts and take 3 days off to spend more time with their families.

P1 shared, “We tried the 4X10 schedule, but it did not work for us. Production was negatively impacted and we had to stop.” The findings of this study revealed that HRMs and leaders in the mining industry should constantly evaluate the interest of their workers and what would make them happy to stay. The thematic finding is consistent with the conceptual framework of the study in that it is much difficult for an employee to voluntarily terminate his or her job with a firm if the employee has more to give or forfeit (Mitchell et al., 2001; Shaw et al., 1998).

Compensation and Benefits and Business Practice

Khalid and Nawab (2018) argued that organizations should define a formidable retention strategy that will make their employees dedicated and stay longer as they cannot restrict their employees from searching for more rewarding opportunities. Gupta (2014) suggested that for companies to retain their best workers, the leaders must implement effective compensation policies that could change the perceptions and individual welfare to enhance high productivity and high financial performance. According to Khalid and Nawab (2018), HRMs should utilize employee participation and cost-effective compensation to promote employee retention. Bibi et al. (2017) found that compensation and promotional opportunities play a major role in employee retention besides work environment. P1 stated:

> The progression program was implemented because we were losing many of our frontline employees. We were losing people. Thus, that laid out an obvious road or pathway to moving up. We have always had an as a benefit to our salaried employees but was not the case for the hourly workers. Furthermore, it is not something that many companies offer. Okay. So, it is a benefit for them now.

The study of Alhmoud and Rjoub (2019) revealed that intrinsic reward–internal rewards are given to employees after successful completion of assignment or project, extrinsic rewards–financial rewards such as raises, bonuses, perks that are given to employees, and social rewards like praises, smiling faces, and gestures as motivation to enhance employees' performance are all critical for employee retention. P4 stated:

> The company has worked on various bonus and incentive packages, but the market is currently flooded with a lot of competitive opportunities. To improve upon our incentive package, we have resumed our quarterly bonuses and removed certain restrictions that denied the workforce from meeting the bonus conditions. The company is 100% employee-owned, and we are leading the market in employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) with a 14% match.

P3 said:

> Wage dissatisfaction within this current job market during the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been many opportunities with higher sign-on bonuses and retention bonuses, making it difficult to retain the workforce. Increased referral bonuses and a positive wage adjustment have become a successful incentive for both the employees and the company.

Pieper et al. (2018) posited that employee referrals have positive consequences for firms and job searchers. Referral bonus motivates employees to refer friends and family members, who end up becoming committed and stay with the organization because of the relationships they have with their referrals (Pieper et al., 2018). P3 stated, "As part of company recruitment process, we encourage and give monetary incentives to employees who refer other people for employment opportunities." The findings of this study revealed that effective implementation of compensation and different types of benefits policies could improve employee retention. Aman-Ullah et al. (2020) argued that human resource practices, motivation, and compensation are the most critical factors for employee retention. Therefore, employee retention strategies require HRMs and organizational leaders to institute good compensation and benefits package to their employees.

Summary of Compensation and Benefits

The preceding Sections provided an analysis of the theme of compensation and benefits and the findings of this study. Also, in the previous Section, I analyzed the results related to Mitchell et al. (2001) job embeddedness theory construct of sacrifice. I establish from the findings of this study that compensation and benefits are critical to employee retention, which is essential for achieving a competitive edge for high organizational and financial performance. P5 stated, “Compensation and benefits of an organization are motivational factors to determine whether an employee will stay or leave for a more lucrative opportunity.” HRMs are supposed to develop and implement compensation and benefits policies that will be attractive to the existing workforce and employees from other competing firms (Khalid & Nawab, 2018). This becomes a high expectation on the HR managers and other organizational leaders to properly manage the company's human capital since it is believed to be the firm's most valuable asset. P2 said:

> As HR managers we research to understand what is going on in the industry, hence the mining industry, to have an idea of what other companies in the industry are doing in terms of compensation and benefits to determine how we can compete and gain a competitive advantage in retaining our employees, and the possibility of attracting new qualified and skillful professional.

The findings suggest that many organizations in the mining industry are using tuition reimbursement, referral, and sign-on bonuses as part of the incentive packages to retain their talented employees. As part of compensation and benefits, some firms have improved their annual bonuses, offered pay raises and other intrinsic, extrinsic, and social rewards to motivate their staff. P5 stated, “Compensation and benefits packages in aid of employee retention is not a coat of one size fit all; instead, every company will be different, depending on the company’s specific situation like location and interest.” However, while some companies base on community development and cheaper housing programs, others focus on career development, promotional paths, pay increases, and many others.

The theme of compensation and benefits aligns with the JE construct of sacrifice, which proposes that although similar salaries and benefits can be easily created in a low unemployment environment, the leaving costs such as pension plans and health care are actual and pertinent. However, other benefits like stocks go with necessary sacrifices (Mitchell et al., 2001). For instance, the number of paid times off of an employee’s existing job may not be the same as the new job; however, leaving the current place will mean that the employee would have to sacrifice the number of accrued vacation time to start all over again with the new company.

In addition, the findings from this study showed that some employees would not like to sacrifice the flexible work schedule they are currently enjoying for a strict work schedule (Choi, 2020). It was discovered in this study, that some employees would not like to forfeit the decent work environment and the decent people they are privileged to work with for any other benefits (Lyu & Zhu, 2019). Therefore, HRMs in the mining industry would have to understand the needs of the employees in the organization to design befitting compensation and benefits to suit these needs to be able to retain their highly skilled workforce. The links to the purpose statement of this study as the strategies some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

Theme 3: Effective Communication

According to the participants, open-door communication is essential and should be a policy in every organization that wants to gain a competitive edge. All participants agreed that effective communication had been an effective strategy, which contributed to their employee retention rate. Effective communication and motivation improve employee satisfaction, which subsequently enhances employee retention (Tian et al., 2020). Nwata et al. (2016) stated that communication is critical to delivering products and services to customers, measuring organizational success, and motivating employees to enhance the performance of the workforce. P2 stated, “Communication should be frequent but not once in a while.” According to P3, “Communication is essential to the success of the business so management does not hide anything from the employees.” P4 and P5 indicated that as a means of effective employee retention, communication should be a positive sign of commitment and motivation. P4 stated, “Communication is a two-way traffic that motivates both the employee and management to interact freely.” P5 said, “Our people are committed to what they do because they have a clear understanding of management plans.”

The responses from P4 and P5 align with the declaration of Marchalina and Ahmad (2017) that successful communication between employees and leaders improves employees' commitment, which leads to a significant increase in the workers' performance and production. The study of Tian et al. (2020) pointed out that there is a relationship between communication and job satisfaction and should also function as a mediator between job satisfaction and absenteeism. P1 stated, "Unsatisfied employees are not committed to their duties, the organization, and the likelihood of finding another job." P4 shared, "Effective communication has contributed to the success of our employee retention program. The open-door policy permits employees to go directly to any leader in the organization to voice out their concerns." P2 indicated that

> We have a laid-down communication plan and employees are always encouraged to make good use of the plan. P2 further elaborated that employees have the option to either follow the chain of leadership command or can go directly to any level of leadership if they have any issues. According to P2, if employees do not feel comfortable to show their faces to lodge a complaint, they can use the anonymous line to report all grievances.

P1said, "Communication should not be an annual, quarterly, or weekly program but should be an ongoing day-to-day business plan."

The finding is consistent with the literature of this study that transformational leaders who operate with open-door communication can impact their employees. Bass (1985) posited that leaders must effectively communicate the vision and mission of the organization to the workforce. P5 said, "It is the leaders' duty to communicate the vision and mission of the firm to the employees, by regularly updating the people on the organization's performance." P4 stated that "it is essential for management to involve the frontline employees in their communication program." P2 cited as an example that:

> Employees have a tail gate meeting at the beginning of every shift, and that is the time for the foremen of the groups to share any updated information from management to the employees. The tail-gate meetings are done in addition to the weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual updates.

P1 said, "We have installed televisions at the company's various locations, including employees' breakrooms, where information is displayed." P3 stated, "Employees have access to the company intranet where they can go to retrieve any information besides the daily communication.

Effective Communication and JE Construct of Employee Link

The findings of this study suggest that the theme of effective communication aligns with the JE construct of employee link. The compelling communication theme relates to Mitchell et al. (2001) job embeddedness theory construct of link. Shah et al. (2020) argued that the JE theory construct of link signifies an employee's connections within the organization and the community that may inspire the employee's decision-making process. Shah et al. (2020) posited that employees would stay if they have a good working relationship with their co-workers, other group members, and management team. A clear understanding of the importance of internal communication and their effective application will allow firms to attain global market success and become leaders in the industry (Roszak, 2019). P1 stated, "Conflicts among employees and dissatisfaction could be addressed through effective communication." According to P3 "A disintegrated workforce could hamper production and business performance." The finding supports the study of Osman et al. (2016) that communication is one of the significant keys to lowering employee turnover and improving employee retention. P5 stated, "Employees pay attention to details and listen to management when they know that the leaders are honest and care about their concerns." P1 said, "Employees feel comfortable and encouraged when they know there is an open line of communication." Mitchell et al. (2001) suggested in the JE theory that link construct is several components that connect an employee and their family in a social, psychological, and economic network, which includes organizational and non-organizational friends, groups, the community, and the actual community in which he or she resides. Therefore, the number of links of the employee and the associated network, the more the employee will be compelled to stay in the job and the respective company (Mitchell et al., 2001). P4 stated, "We do our best to make sure there are no blocks between our employees and the leadership." P2 shared that "communication is a medium of interaction between management and the employees; therefore, the need to have frequent effective communication to help link the workforce to the management team to allow the workers to stay. Osman et al. (2016) posited that communication is the key to improving employee retention and reducing turnover, which aligns with the thematic finding of this study. HRMs and leaders in the mining industry seeking to improve employee retention may have to include effective communication in their business plan.

Effective Communication and Business Practice

Kelepa (2017) discovered that effective communication could contribute to 24% of employee engagement, and an increased engagement can benefit several mining companies. Singh (2019) posited that effective communication improves the employee’s identity, but it also creates trust and openness in the employee's work environment. According to Cloutier et al. (2015), effective communication aids a company in retaining its employees. Cloutier et al. (2015) suggested in their study that the leaders of organizations should learn how to manage their businesses through interpersonal, group, organizational effectiveness, and intercultural communication if they desire to maintain a healthy work culture to retain employees. P5 stated, “Employees would not fear revenge to share their views if there is frequent communication between the management team and the employees.” The response of P5 aligns with the finding from Singh’s (2019) study that efficient communication performs a considerable role in creating a friendly environment at the workplace among colleagues, seniors, and supervision. P3 said, “Lack of communication or ineffective communication could become a stumbling block during the company’s retention strategies.” P2 stated, “Continual communication and reporting of data through Power BI allow departments to monitor and track business improvement.” Effective communication should be encouraged by firms that would like to retain their talented employees (Cloutier et al., 2015).

Summary of Effective Communication

In the previous Sections, I discussed the analysis of the theme of effective communication and the findings of this study. I analyzed the findings related to Mitchell et al.'s (2001) JE theory construct of link and examined the findings concerning the business practice of efficient communication and employee retention (Cloutier et al., 2015; Singh, 2019). Based on the data presented in the previous Sections, all five participants agreed that effective communication supports driving their business and that without efficient communication, most of the organizations' strategies cannot be implemented. The findings of this study revealed that effective communication is the key to lowering employee turnover and improving employee retention rate in every developing organization (Osman et al., 2016). It was evident from the study findings that internal open communication helps employees understand any unexpected changes that occur at the workplace (Marchalina & Ahmad, 2017). In addition, it was confirmed from the study findings that conflicts among employees and dissatisfaction with management can only be resolved through effective communication. Again, it was justified through the findings of this study that transformational leadership with the use of effective communication can help in the retention of employees in the mining companies as it plays the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior (Tian et al., 2020).

Mitchell et al. (2001) JE theory construct of link aligns with the theme of effective communication as to how an employee is connected to their fellow workers and the management team. Through effective communication, the workforce is expected to have a good working relationship among themselves and supervision. Shah et al. (2020) argued that employees with good relations are likely to be committed and consequently stay with the current employer. In business practice, effective communication can contribute at least 24% of employee engagement, which enhances many benefits for many mining companies (Kelepa, 2017). Trust and openness are essential in every workplace, and they are signs for employees to develop their identity with organizations they work for, and they can be aided by effective communication Singh (2019). HRMs who use effective communication strategies are likely to improve employee retention and reduce employee turnover rates in their firms (Cloutier et al., 2015; Osman et al., 2016).

The findings of this study are consistent with the literature based on the JE theory construct of link, which relates to the connection’s employees have within the organization, and in the community, they reside (Mitchell et al., 2001). The findings also show that HRMs can efficiently resolve conflicts through efficient communication to bring dissatisfied employees to good terms with peers and management, motivating the workers to stay. Effective communication strategy allows the management of organizations, including mining companies, to align their vision and mission statement and continually update the workers. The findings outlined link to the purpose statement of the study, the strategies some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

Theme 4: Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction

The findings of this study support employee recognition and job satisfaction as a strategy to retain talented employees. Participants of this study agreed that it is worthwhile for organizational leaders to recognize their employees as a sign of appreciation and how much they value them as the business's greatest asset. Harrop (2017) stated that many firms had agreed on human capital as the most significant asset and primary source of competitive advantage. Boon et al. (2018) argued that organizational leaders should understand that their human capital is a valuable resource for the business's success. HRMs should be strategic in managing employees in the firms and pay attention to investing in the people to increase the performance of the companies (Boon et al., 2018). Four out of five participants agreed that as part of effective management of employees is to recognize their performance and show appreciation for the excellent work done. Rombaut and Guerry (2020) found that compensation and recognition positively influence employee retention, which aligns with P2 and P3 responses that employee recognition is an effective retention strategy. The research of Langove and Isha (2017) confirmed that rewards and recognition may serve as a motivational tool and could enhance employee retention and reduce turnover rates in many industries. P3 stated, “To retain employees in an organization, they must be treated well to feel unique as the most essential asset of the company.”

P2 said, “Employees become self-motivated and react to change positively when acknowledged and well recognized.” P3 said, “Sometimes, employees just want to see if the organization's leadership recognizes their importance to the business.” El Masri and Suliman (2019) discovered in their study that talent management and employee recognition have a strong correlation, impacting employees’ performance. El Masri and Suliman's (2019) study findings align with the responses from P2 and P3 that recognition is an accomplishment for both the employee and the firm. P2 said, “An employee who is recognized sees themselves as self-fulfilled and they are encouraged to do more for the company to improve their performance, which may lead to promotion as an additional recognition.” P5 stated, “The backbone of the business is the employees and we do our best to show our appreciation. It is beneficial to the organization because an appreciated employee becomes a high achiever for productivity and financial performance.” El Masri and Suliman (2019) agreed and stated that talent management and employee performance serve as a tactical instrument for implementing organizational goals to improve the performances of both the employee and the organization. The findings of this study support the literature of the study in that recognized and appreciated employees experience job satisfaction. According to Herzberg (1974), employee recognition is one of the main incentives for job satisfaction. Managers' leadership style impacts job satisfaction of employee turnover plans (Long & Thean, 2011). Chin (2018) described job satisfaction as a gratifying or positive emotional state beginning from the employee’s work or working experiences. In their study, De Sousa Sabbagha et al. (2018) estimated that 66% of employee retention is due to job satisfaction, consistent with the participants' response that employees who are satisfied with their jobs are likely to stay.

Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction and JE Construct of Sacrifice

The findings of this study suggest that the theme of employee recognition and job satisfaction align with the JE construct of sacrifice. Mitchell et al. (2001) job embeddedness theory construct of sacrifice is related to making employees happy and satisfied and would not like to leave their current organization. Mitchell et al. (2001) JE theory posit that the supposed cost of physical or psychological benefits that may be forgone by an employee for leaving the present job is not worth sacrificing for another employment. The researchers explained that leaving an organization goes with losses like losing friends, essential projects of interest, satisfying incentives, and some social or community benefits. Shaw et al. (1998) postulated that the more an employee must give up or sacrifice, the more difficult it is to separate from the company. Therefore, organizations should find a particular way of recognizing their employees to make them satisfied and more challenging to leave.

The participants agreed that employee recognition can come in different forms and does not necessarily have to be always something big and stated that it could even be words of appreciation. P1 stated, “Words of appreciation could boost the morale of the employees.” P4 stated, “Boosting up employees' morale gives them a sense of satisfaction, which motivates them to do more for the organization.” The response of P4 aligns with Sangeetha and Sundharavadivel (2018) finding that morale is essential for the success of an organization. P2 said, “High morale employees are loyal to their companies and committed to the job, which leads to employee satisfaction and, for that matter, stays with the firm for an extended period.” P5 stated, “Satisfied and committed employees receive more recognition in terms of rewards and promotions. When the question of what motivates your employees to stay was asked? P3 responded, “I believe because they are satisfied with the kind of recognition management gives them, and would not want to exchange for something different that they are not sure about in another company.” When employees feel well recognized, they would not like to sacrifice all the privileges they are enjoying with their current employer to go to another place to start all over again (Mitchell et al., 2001; Sangeetha & Sundharavadivel, 2018). P4 stated, “Because we take good care of our people and recognize them for their good work, they approach their task with a positive attitude.” The findings of this study are consistent with the theme of employee recognition and job satisfaction.

Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction and Business Practice

Organizations can achieve their corporate business goals and success based on the numerous HR management practices (Jawaad et al., 2019). As part of the HRM practices, Jawaad et al. (2019) postulated that HR could influence the behaviors of the employees to support the organization to attain its objectives. HR practices are rewards and recognitions, organizational commitment, employees’ appraisals and evaluations, employee performance feedback, effective communication, employee training, and others (Aktar & Pangil, 2018). For organizations to avoid losing high-performing employees, HRMs should find a way to improve job satisfaction and motivation for employees to stay longer (Varma, 2017). Varma argued that motivated and satisfied employees would find a unique method toward the achievement of company objectives. P5 stated “In as much as the motivated and satisfied employee wants to help achieve company goals; management should understand that the individuals also have the career goals they want to accomplish.” This conforms to Varma’s suggestion that HRMs should also find a better approach to align the firm's objectives to that of the employee’s personal goals.

Yousuf and Siddiqui (2019) found that performance appraisal plays a vital role in the employee retention rate of workers in the IT and banking industries. Yousuf and Siddiqui (2019), then suggested that HR managers should make a better evaluation as part of their retention strategies. According to Covella et al. (2017), leader member exchange (LMX) is described as a form of discussion between the leader and the follower in exchange for required work behavior and the possible outcome or benefit to both the employee and the employer. Covella et al. (2017) found that LMX promoting a good working relationship between the leadership and the employees aligns with the response. P2 that, “Providing feedback to employees about their performance develops trust, but there should be a balance in the leaders’ feedback by explicitly mentioning all the good qualities of the employee and raising the areas of concern that the employee needs improvement.” P1 expressed, “Overpraising an employee without pointing out their weaknesses to them may result in complacency.” P4 stated, “Leaders sometimes become very busy with other organizational obligations and do not provide feedback or evaluation to their employees Lechermeier and Fassnacht (2018) posited that feedback is crucial to employee retention, but it is more effective if it is executed in its rightful perspectives like the source and timeframe, and it is made to be more effective interaction with the recipients’.

Summary of Employee Recognition and Job Satisfaction

In the previous Sections, I provided an analysis of the theme of employee recognition and job satisfaction and the findings from this study. In addition, I gave an analysis of the findings as it relates to Mitchell et al. (2001) JE construct of sacrifice and analysis of the findings from this study as it relates to the business practice of employee retention (Harrop, 2017; Boon et al., 2018; Rombaut & Guerry, 2020; Langove & Isha, 2017; Azeez, 2017; El Masri & Suliman, 2019; Jawaad et al., 2019; Lechermeier & Fassnacht, 2018; Varma, 2017). Participants shared their collaborative acknowledgment that employees who are well recognized and satisfied are motivated and committed to helping achieve the organization's objectives.

The study's findings revealed that improved job satisfaction enhances employee retention, which is in line with De Sousa Sabbagha et al. (2018) study, which estimated that 46 % of employee retention is due to staff motivation and job satisfaction. The study of Tirta and Enrika (2020) found that reward and recognition, employee work-life balance, and job satisfaction significantly influence employee retention. The study findings align with the literature on the JE construct of sacrifice, which explains that recognized and satisfied employees would not like to lose the privileges they have in their current organization but would prefer to stay in their current position (Mitchell et al., 2001).

The participants agreed that employees need to know how they are performing, whether they need to improve in an area or are doing well, and calls for appraisal. Four out of the participants indicated that employees must express themselves without fear of being reprimanded by management. Finally, participants suggested evaluations should be done regularly, and leaders should not wait until the year ends before giving employees feedback. All five-participant agreed that when deserved employees are recognized and rewarded to their satisfaction, there is potential to reduce turnover rate and improve retention. The analysis in this Section links the purpose statement as the strategy some HRMs in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and financial performance.

Applications to Professional Practice

The specific business problem of this study was that some HRMs in the mining industry lack strategies to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. According to Alias et al. (2018), the cost of replacing talented employees may be reduced, and productivity and financial performance of a firm will increase if the employee retention rate of the company can be improved. Alias et al. (2018) postulated that for an organization to gain a competitive edge, its leaders must acknowledge the importance of human capital as their most significant resource. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some human resource managers in the mining industry use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

The findings of this study may apply to professional business practices in the mining companies as they may serve as reinforcement for HRMs in the mining field in their formation and implementation of employee retention strategies. Using semistructured interviews, I identified four main themes that, if implemented efficiently, can enhance HR managers in the mining industry to retain their employees. From the participants of my study, I deduced the following themes: (a) employee engagement, (b) compensation and benefits, (c) effective communication, and (d) recognition and job satisfaction. Borisova et al. (2017) posited that because of globalization, different forms of human resources in organizations had become essential aspects that require critical attention and proper management. Skillful employees play a critical role in the development, quality, and integrity of every organization, and since it takes a more extended period for employees to acquire such special knowledge, HRMs and leaders must find a way of retaining these talented employees (Borisova et al., 2017; Taib et al., 2019).

The study participants agreed that developing and implementing a formidable talented employee retention strategy, which should involve employee engagement, compensation and benefits, effective communication, and recognition and job satisfaction, can improve employee retention and reduce turnover rate. The study of Baiquni and Lizar (2020) showed that HR practices and job characteristics have a significant influence in enhancing employee engagement and organizational commitment, which can lead to employee retention. HRMs and organizational leaders should find a unique way of engaging with their employees by ensuring that the compensation and benefits given to employees meet or exceed that of the global market. Participant 4 stated explicitly that: “our compensation, health benefits, retirement plan, and paid time off (PTO) meet and exceed the market.” This means that if organizations in the mining industry can retain their skillful employees, then the companies should engage their employees and that good compensations and benefits are provided to the workers (Singh, 2019).

In addition, the participants in this study postulated that ensuring effective communication between management and employees and good communication among employees is a potential retention strategy that mining firms should cultivate and practice efficiently. Four out of five participants agreed that there should be an open-door policy in the mining companies whereby employees can express their concerns to management without the fear of retaliation or being victimized. Cloutier et al. (2015) posited that effective communication supports a company in retaining its employees. Organizational leaders who manage effectively with group, interpersonal, intercultural, and organizational communication can maintain a decent work culture and environment that promotes trust for high employee retention (Singh, 2019).

Lastly, the study participants agreed that giving a good recognition serves as a motivation for job satisfaction and suggested that employees who are satisfied with their jobs or the organization are likely to stay for a long period or complete an assigned project. Three of the participants stated that management should try to find out why employees leave to design a strategy to satisfy and retain the talented but unsatisfied employees. Participants 2 and 4 stated that they had developed a sound exit interview system to capture all the grievances of the exiting workers and processed to understand what could be done differently. This is consistent with Boštjančič and Slana's (2018) finding that organizational leaders should evaluate and analyze the information of their existing employees during the interview process. HRMs and leaders in the mining companies can succeed in retaining their highly skilled employees if the findings of my study can be implemented and critically observed. According to Prince et al. (2017), the success of employee retention is not contingent on only one factor. Based on the findings of my study: employee engagement, compensation benefits, effective communication and recognition, and job satisfaction are potential strategies that HRMs in the mining industry can use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance.

Implications for Social Change

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies some human resource managers of mining companies use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. The findings of this study may contribute to positive social change through the potential to improve employee retention strategies of HRMs in the mining industry, which could provide continuing support to the people living in the mining communities (Parmenter & Barnes, 2021). According to Parmenter and Barnes (2021), the Australian mining industry has improved its number of local employees in the mining industry. The researchers then argued that mining companies should focus on hiring indigenous employees and enhance the culture of a safe work environment by increasing the labor pool of the local community. The findings of this study support the point of view of Parmenter and Barnes (2021) that improving the hiring rate in the local mining community will reduce the unemployment rate, which will enhance economic growth through taxes.

The functions of mining organizations may impact the societies they operate in as they depend on the community for many resources (Conde & Le Billon, 2017). According to Hongal and Kinange (2020), it is the responsibility of HRMs in the mining industry to acquire the necessary support to manage the talents in the organizations to retain their highly skilled employees. HRMs recognition for implementing the needed strategies to retain employees could lead to long-term support for local communities (Chen & Weng, 2017; Stankeviciute & Savaneviciene, 2018). The results of this study could potentially benefit mining companies in southeast Arizona by providing information that may reduce turnover and enhance employee retention. HRMs and other organizational leaders in other mining companies could effectively implement the retention strategies from the findings of this study to potentially increase profitability and improve financial performance. The following Section is recommendations for action.

Recommendations for Action

HR managers in the mining industry must have the ability to develop employee retention strategies that could help retain organizational knowledge and improve productivity and financial performance when effectively implemented. Chakraborty and Biswas (2020) posited that human resource planning activities like retention strategy, professional training and development, succession planning, job analysis, and design inspire the organization's performance. According to the researchers, employee retention strategies to retain organizational knowledge can enhance the leader to determine the future of the company on how to remain or gain a competitive edge over other competitors (Chakraborty & Biswas, 2020). The findings of this study could impact those in mining business and other related industries like oil and gas who want to improve upon the retention strategies of their employees and businesses that want to engage and expand the impression of their corporate social responsibility. The framework of this study focused on mining companies and the strategies used to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge for high productivity and high financial performance.

According to the report of the national mining association (NMA), U.S. mining has contributed both directly and indirectly to the economy of the country in the following areas; (a) employment–1,531,327 million Americans, (b) labor income - $95.1 billion, (c) contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) - $217.1 billion, and (d) taxes paid - $42.0 billion (National Mining Association Report, 2018). Discovering and retaining talented employees is likely a challenge for mining companies to the extent that some organizations may have to initiate process improvements and new artificial intelligence (AI) solutions (Brandon, 2012). If HR managers, organizational leaders, and other practitioners in the mining industry can implement the strategies found in this study, they may improve employee retention, which may enhance the benefits offered to the local communities.

Based on the findings of this study and the themes that emerged, I would like to make the following recommendations as an action for all HRMs and organizational leaders in the mining industry who are seeking to improve their employee retention to retain organizational knowledge for high productivity and high financial performance.

Recommendation 1

Formation of employee retention team. Many organizations from different teams continuously improve their processes and production, but they fail to form a team that will oversee the core and the most important asset of their business, human resources (Ekhsan, 2019). Nwaeke and Obiekwe (2017) posited that a firm's success is greatly dependent on the quality of the employees in the company to achieve its objectives. There should be a team of HR, management, frontline supervisors, and some frontline employees to serve as the liaison between employees and upper management from the corporate level for all employee retention issues.

Recommendation 2

A well-communicated employee progression path. The study results revealed that many mining companies do not have a consistent progression path that is well communicated to employees to follow. Mooney et al. (2017) indicated in their study that the board of directors and other organizational leaders go for interim or temporary fill for vacant positions because there are no succession plans due to lack of progression path. Some employees feel rejected and do not see themselves having a future with their current employers, when they are turned down on every internal opportunity and search for other alternatives (Dlugos & Keller, 2021). According to Dlugos and Keller (2021), promoting internal candidates to another position is an incentive and a sign to other employees that they also have a bright future in the organization and would not look outside for their next career move. HRMs and organizational leaders should therefore have a strong progression path for their employees to follow.

Recommendation 3

Employee development program. Employees' development is a process where the employer supports the employee through diverse training programs to enrich their skills and acquire new knowledge and experience (Noe et al., 2020). Kenny (2019) postulated that employee development is a joint effort between the employee and the employer to upgrade the knowledge and skills of the worker, to improve the competency of the employee through training. According to Kenny (2019), employees who are well trained and developed and have been given a clear line of progression see themselves fit and aligned with the company's vision and would therefore like to stay. From the findings of this study, a well-developed employee would not like to sacrifice the prospects they have with their current employer. I, therefore, recommend that all mining organizations should have a well-defined employee development program.

I will prepare a summary of the findings of this study and share it with the individual participants. I will ensure that this study is available on the ProQuest database to educate all HR managers in the mining industry and other related industries seeking employee retention strategies to retain organizational knowledge to improve productivity and financial performance. I will further consult, organize seminars, training, and conferences for global mining companies and their affiliated bodies like the Society of Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration (SME) to share my findings on how HRMs can improve employee retention strategies to retain organizational knowledge for high productivity and high financial performance. The following Section is recommendations for further research.

Recommendations for Further Research

As I reviewed the literature of this study, I noticed an unexplored area of employee retention strategies in the mining industry to retain organizational knowledge for high productivity and high financial performance. The purpose of this study was to explore strategies HR managers in the mining companies use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance. HR managers in mining organizations usually lack the strategies needed for employee retention to support high productivity and high financial performance. This multiple case study sample included five HRMs in the southeast of Arizona who have successfully implemented employee retention strategies in their respective companies. My first recommendation for future research is to increase the sample size to cover more geographic locations and other participants for broader results.

The geographical locations could include other cities and regions in Arizona and other states in North America. In addition, while it was good to use HRMs as participants for this study, I will recommend that other operational managers, frontline supervisors, and frontline employees be at the forefront of the mining business to understand additional causes of employee turnover in the industry. Another understudied area of employee retention in the mining industry is the cultural impact on retention in the industry. Madueke and Emerole (2-17) stated that the mindset of individual workers has changed in the same way the competitive business environment has changed. The researchers then posited that employees are ready to switch jobs whenever they are not satisfied with the company's culture (Madueke & Emerole, 2017). I, therefore, recommend that scholars will research the cultural impact of employee retention in the mining industry. The next Section is personal reflections of this study.

Reflections

The decision to research into the strategies some human resource managers use to improve employee retention to retain organizational knowledge to support high productivity and high financial performance in the mining industry came from my professional experience as a Metallurgical Engineer for over twenty-five years. As a professional in the mining industry, I have seen many people lose their jobs due to companies downsizing because of a drop-in commodity prices or employees voluntarily quitting from one organization to the other for different reasons. My experiences of observing employees moving from company to company and the tacit knowledge lost with the negative impacts it creates on the business motivated me to conduct this to learn how employee retention in the mining industry could improve and the significant effect it can have both on the organizations' productivity as well as the financial performance, and the communities in which the companies are located.

My role as the researcher required me to mitigate the bias associated with data collection and analysis by avoiding viewing the data from a personal perspective due to my previous experience working in the mining industry. This obligation was necessary for me as a researcher to increase the study's reliability and ethical standards of the research findings. The doctoral journey was hectic and labor-intensive for me as a husband, father, and a full-time worker as I went through the process of reviewing the existing literature, designing the research, recruiting study participants, going through the interview process with an outlined interview protocol, collecting the data, analyzing and summarizing the gathered data.

However, this doctoral journey has helped me increase my knowledge and understanding of implementing employee retention strategies to retain organizational knowledge and improve productivity and financial performance in the mining industry, particularly in businesses. In addition to the knowledge and understanding gained, the findings of this research emerged at the time of a global pandemic of the Coronavirus disease, popularly known as COVID-19. The global pandemic of COVID-19 came as unplanned, which affected many people, business routines, business best practices, communications, and philosophies. HRMs and other organizational leaders who will read the findings of this study, especially at this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, may have the chance to ascertain necessary information and examples of strategies for improving employee retention with the opportunity of improving business productivity and financial performance.

Conclusion

Human resource managers of mining companies need to develop and implement employee retention strategies in their organizations. The strategies give a better understanding of how successful HRMs of mining companies in the southeast of Arizona improve employee retention to preserve organizational knowledge and improve high productivity and financial performance. HRMs and business leaders in the mining companies should create job opportunities for residents in mining communities to enhance their employee retention skills and provide a better life for people living in the locality. This action will boost economic growth and promote cordial relationships among the mining companies in the southeast region of Arizona and the people living in the communities. Economic growth is a source of individual quality of life, motivating people to stay in a particular city or community and stay with their organizations (Appio et al., 2019; Wanga et al., 2018). According to Appio et al. (2019), cities worldwide are devising innovative ideas to gain the competitive edge to give a quality life to their citizens. If cities and towns provide qualitatively and promote economic growth, organizations would like to establish businesses in such places, where people would also like to stay. The job embeddedness theory of Mitchell et al. (2001) was the conceptual framework of my study. In this theory, Mitchell et al. explained and outlined some constructs of why people stay in their various organizations for an extended period. The theory constructs correlate with employee retention strategies and provide guidelines of how HRM’s in the mining industries can improve their employee retention strategies for high productivity and financial performance. The target population for the study consisted of five HRMs of mining companies within the southeast of Arizona who have successfully implemented employee retention strategies to retain organizational knowledge for high productivity and high financial performance.

I conducted semistructured interviews by following an outlined interview protocol for consistency with each of the participants. I transcribed the responses of each of the interviews and used mythological triangulation to compare the data collected with the information from the companies to improve the study findings’ validity and reliability. To validate the responses of all participants, I used member checking to confirm the accuracy of my transcription to the answers of the interviewees. In the course of the interviews, I asked follow-up questions if a response was not clear and needed additional clarifications to ensure data saturation. By using an analytical method, I came out with four main themes from both the primary and secondary data provided by participants. The following were the four themes deduced from my data analysis: (a) employee engagement, (b) compensation and benefits, (c) effective communication, and (d) recognition and job satisfaction.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

Interview Questions:

1. What retention strategies have you implemented to retain qualified and experienced employees in your organization?
2. How have you assessed the effectiveness of the strategies you have implemented to help increase employee retention in your company?
3. In your experience, what are some frequent factors leading to mining professionals to leaving the organization?
4. What are some of the challenges in the implementation of your employee retention strategies?
5. How do employees’ knowledge retention affect your business in terms of production and financial performance?
6. What motivational factors (on-the-job embeddedness) do you have in place to support your employees to stay in their position?
7. What other external benefits (off-the-job embeddedness) do your workers have that may influence them to leave their positions?
8. What else would you like to add regarding retention strategies for mining industry as it relates to knowledge retention for high productivity and financial performance?