

2022

## Strategies Mental Health Managers Use to Reduce Direct Care Employee Turnover

Theresa Foster  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Theresa Foster

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Walden University  
2022

Abstract

Strategies Mental Health Managers Use to Reduce Direct Care Employee Turnover

by

Theresa Foster

MBA, Kaplan University, 2011

BS, Kaplan University, 2009

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

November 2022

## Abstract

Direct care professionals assist people with intellectual and developmental disabilities with health care services in the consumer's home, community based residential setting, hospitals, and vocational settings. The high turnover rate of direct care professionals working in mental health organizations may jeopardize many services, including administrative, medical, and provisions for the individuals they serve. Retaining direct care professionals is vital due to the expected demand for direct care jobs in the future. Grounded in Herzberg's two-factor theory, this qualitative multiple case study explored leadership strategies managers from mental health organizations use to retain direct care professionals. Participants were eleven managers from three mental health organizations located in the southeastern United States that have effectively implemented strategies to retain direct care professionals. Data were collected using semistructured interviews, employee handbooks, and employee turnover reports. Four themes emerged from the analyses, (a) communication, (b) training, (c) advancement opportunities, and (d) employee incentives. A key recommendation for managers at mental health organizations is to design a recruitment and retention program that promotes hiring qualified direct care professionals. The implication for positive social change includes increasing managers' awareness of leadership strategies used to retain direct care professionals, favorably impacting community and social services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by expanding access to housing, rehabilitative services, transportation, and social participation.

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## Dedication

This doctoral study is dedicated to my family. To my grandchildren, Donte Walker, Haven Shaw, Aniyah Johnson, Lillian Walker, Safiyya Stockling, Devin Walker, Ayala Walker, Tyler Walker, and Brandy Walker, always remember that you are my legacy and one of my many blessings. With God, all things are possible. To my mother, Judy Murphy, thank you for teaching me the ethics of hard work and perseverance. To my sister, Dr. Margaret Wood, your words of inspiration throughout this journey and your willingness to be a vessel of God who straightens my paths have helped me to achieve my academic goals. To my sons Mark Walker Jr, Dartangion Walker, and Brandon Walker, you are my most outstanding achievement in my life. I am so proud of all your accomplishments. To my second set of parents, Joyce and Clint Walker, thank you for your supporting me over the years. To Mrs. Vanessa Ervin, thank you for teaching me that my blessings are in my obedience. To Mr. Author Stewart and Kathy Owens, thank you for taking me under your wing as a child and helping me grow into my potential by being such a great role model.

## Acknowledgments

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## Table of Contents

Section 1: Foundation of the Study.....	1
Background of the Problem .....	1
Problem and Purpose .....	1
Population and Sampling .....	2
Nature of the Study .....	3
Research Question .....	5
Interview Questions .....	5
Conceptual Framework.....	5
Operational Definitions.....	6
Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations.....	7
Assumptions.....	7
Limitations .....	7
Delimitations.....	8
Significance of the Study .....	8
Contribution to Business Practice.....	8
Implications for Social Change.....	9
A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature.....	9
Transition .....	54
Section 2: The Project.....	55
Purpose Statement.....	55
Role of the Researcher .....	56



Participants.....	58
Research Method and Design .....	59
Research Method .....	59
Research Design.....	60
Population and Sampling .....	61
Ethical Research.....	62
Data Collection Instruments .....	63
Data Collection Technique .....	65
Data Organization Technique .....	66
Data Analysis .....	67
Reliability and Validity.....	71
Reliability.....	72
Validity .....	74
Transition and Summary.....	75
Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change .....	76
Introduction.....	76
Presentation of the Findings.....	76
Applications to Professional Practice .....	80
Implications for Social Change.....	81
Recommendations for Action .....	82
Recommendations for Further Research.....	84
Reflections .....	86

Conclusion .....	86
References.....	88
Appendix A: Interview Protocol.....	131

## Section 1: Foundation of the Study

For mental health providers, direct care professionals' service turnover rates are costly. Fuku et al. (2019) reported that supervisory support could mitigate some turnover intentions by decreasing emotional fatigue and increasing job satisfaction. Direct care professional continuity is fundamental to people's quality of life, including human protection, community, associations, preferences, and goals (Friedman, 2018). Supervisory support could alleviate some turnover intentions by decreasing emotional exhaustion and increasing job satisfaction (Fuku et al., 2019). Retaining employees is one of the manager's most formidable challenges (Sing, 2019).

### **Background of the Problem**

Friedman (2019) noted that the average organization that serves people with disabilities would see an annual turnover rate of 33% to 70%. "Direct care turnover in the United States costs \$784 million a year and costs up to \$5,000 to refill each direct care professional position because of recruiting and training" (Friedman, 2018, p. 236).

### **Problem and Purpose**

Organizations that provide quality care and responsive services to people with disabilities and older adults are in crisis, improving the retention of direct care professionals' (Friedman, 2019). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), "over 6.3 million employees left their jobs since 2019 because of involuntary turnover, layoffs, and terminations" (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020, p. 2). The general business problem is that direct care employee retention at mental health organizations

impacts business performance. The specific business problem is that some managers of mental health organizations lack strategies to retain direct care professionals.

The goal of this qualitative multiple case study was to investigate the methods employed by administrators of mental health organizations to retain direct care professionals. The targeted population included six managers from three mental health organizations located in the southeastern United States that have successfully implemented strategies to retain direct care professionals. The implications for positive social change include increasing direct care professionals retention that may improve the quality of services for persons with intellectual development disabilities seeking programs and services.

### **Population and Sampling**

The population for this study consisted of managers who worked for a minimum of 3 years in mental health organizations in the United States southeastern region. Purposive sampling was appropriate for this study because of its extensive development history and opinions of its easy strategy of matching the sample to the research aims and objectives (Campbell et al.,2020). The goal of purposive sampling is to collect as much data as possible so that it is redundant and provides a wealth of information. All participants endorsed training as an effective means for retaining direct care professionals (Dyar, 2021). Using purposeful sampling will allow researchers to select participants who are most likely to understand and know the phenomenon under study (Dyar, 2021). The sample size for this study consisted of six managers from three mental health organizations located in the southeastern United States that have successfully

implemented strategies to retain direct care professionals. Semistructured interviews were used to examine the real-world experiences for addressing the retention of direct care professionals.

### **Nature of the Study**

I considered three research methods for this proposed study: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. The goal of using a qualitative research method was to explore in depth human behavior, processes, or phenomenon in pursuance of developing a theory that rationalizes or describes it (Aspers & Corte, 2019). Quantitative research is a methodological approach used to explore human behavior or phenomenon in a real-world setting to better understand lived experiences (Arseven et., 2018). A qualitative approach was the best method for this study because it explores individuals or phenomena in a real-world setting to better understand the meaning of their lived experiences. Casarrubea et al. (2019) noted that quantitative research prepares numerical measures regarding the object. Quantitative research examines the accepted truth of various phenomena, describes human behavior, and characterizes variables or the connections among variables through hypothesis testing (Yue & Xu, 2019). The purpose of this study was not to make inferences about variables. Therefore, a quantitative methodology is inappropriate for this study. Mixed method research requires combining qualitative and quantitative methods into a single analysis (Mcchesney & Aldridge, 2019). A mixed method approach is not suitable because of the quantitative element; this study did not involve hypothesis testing to examine the characteristics or the correlations of variances among variables.

The principal qualitative research designs considered for this study included: case study, ethnographic, and phenomenological. A single case study design is a social science inquiry used to explore a real world phenomenon (Yin, 2018). A multiple case study research design systematically explores and compares various in-depth, real life phenomena within a setting (Ridder, 2017). A multiple case study was the best choice for this study because I explored the real life phenomenon of employee retention of direct care professionals from various organizations. An ethnographic design is not appropriate because this study's focus is not to explore individual's lives and cultures, but the strategies managers use to retain direct care professionals. A phenomenological design approach includes exploring the personal attitudes and beliefs of participants lived experiences from experiencing a phenomenon (Zahavi, 2019). A phenomenological method is not appropriate for this study because I did not explore the personal meaning of participants lived experiences in developing and deploying strategies for retaining direct care professionals.

### **Research Question**

What strategies do managers from mental health organizations use to retain direct care professionals?

### **Interview Questions**

1. What strategies do you use to retain direct care professionals in your organizations?
2. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies to retain direct care professionals?
3. What key barriers, if any, did you encounter implementing the strategies for retaining direct care professionals?
4. How did you address the key barriers to implementing the strategies for retaining direct care professionals?
5. What role did management have in implementing strategies to retain direct care professionals?
6. What additional information would you like to share about your organization's strategies to retain direct care professionals?

### **Conceptual Framework**

I selected Herzberg's two factor theory, also known as the motivation hygiene theory, or dual factor theory as the conceptual framework for this study. Frederick Herzberg, Bernard Mauser, and Barbara Snyderman introduced the two factory theory in 1959, suggesting that employee job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by hygiene and motivation factors (O'Connor, 2018). According to Herzberg et al. (1959),

the two factor theory consists of hygiene and motivator factors. Hygiene factors are different from motivators and reside separately from motivator factors. Aspects of hygiene factors include salary, benefits, work policy, growth, and work conditions, and when these factors are not managed effectively, employees can become dissatisfied with their job. Meaningful work assignments, positive acknowledgment of performance, motivating responsibility, and opportunities for advancement are all hygiene aspects. When hygiene factors are adequate, employees will be satisfied (Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020). Motivation factors are related to the intrinsic nature of work, leading to self-actualization (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Motivation factors help improve and enhance job satisfaction by motivating employees to give their very best performance by offering advancement and career growth opportunities. Herzberg's two factor theory was expected to be a suitable lens for this study because understanding what motivates and demotivates employees can improve employee job satisfaction and retention.

### **Operational Definitions**

*Direct care professionals:* Direct care professionals perform diverse functions such as medication administration, assistance with daily living skills, and social activities (Barken & Armstrong, 2017).

*Employee turnover:* Employee turnover is an individual's resignation from their position to actively pursue other job opportunities (Haque et al., 2019).

*Job satisfaction:* Job satisfaction is the level of gratification or pleasure an employee experiences when completing a task and the overall feeling of accomplishment about their job (Chinyio et al., 2018).



## **Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

Assumptions, limitations, and delimitations are essential components of any study. Yin (2018) stated that assumptions for qualitative studies often relate to research methods. MacDermid (2017) asserted that each element is essential for the research, providing legitimacy and opportunities for a new or expanded field of study.

### **Assumptions**

Weisman et al. (2020) indicated that an assumption is implied or thought to be accurate or is expected to happen without being verified; therefore, assumptions should be challenged and not passed off as established knowledge. The first presumption is that subset of research participants will respond to the interview questions honestly and without preconceptions and without bias. The second assumption is that this study's findings would add value to the retention of direct care professionals. A final assumption is that six participants would be enough to reach data saturation.

### **Limitations**

Limitations refer to factors outside the scope of the researcher's control that could impact the research outcome (Lunsford, 2019). This study's first limitation is limited access to participants because of their work schedules. Another limitation is participant bias. Third, the results may not be generalizable because this study is limited to direct care professionals that work in mental health settings; the findings may not be applicable to other direct care staff who do similar health care duties. The final limitation of this research is the participant's willingness to disclose what they might have considered confidential or sensitive proprietary information about their organization.

**Delimitations**

Delimitations are purposely set boundaries researchers set (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). Delimitations involve the researcher's intentional narrowing of the study focus (Ross et al., 2019). There were intended boundaries for this study. The first delimitation of this study was geographical; only participants located in the southeastern region of the United States were asked to participate. The second delimitation bounded by my research is that participants in managerial roles have a least three years of experience with staff retention strategies. The small sample size is another delimitation of this study. The sample size for this study consisted of six managers from three mental health organizations.

**Significance of the Study**

Direct care professionals are responsible for performing diverse functions such as medication administration, assistance with daily living skills, and social activities (Barken & Armstrong, 2017). Retaining direct care professionals are challenging for organizations (Kelly et al., 2020). Understanding leadership strategies that increase employee job satisfaction and organizational loyalty and improve employee retention could cultivate steady income and increase employee spending in their community.

**Contribution to Business Practice**

Effective leadership strategies may help improve the retention of skilled employees from leaving their organization. Leaders who understand what motivates employees may increase job satisfaction and improve employee retention creating a more stable workforce. To maintain a stable workforce and catalyze job satisfaction, leaders

must strengthen extrinsic motivators. When leaders implement strategies to reduce employee turnover, they can enhance team building, strengthen competitiveness in the industry, and increase profitability by reducing employee turnover. This study's findings could help leaders measure the effectiveness of the current strategies that organizations use to retain direct care professionals.

### **Implications for Social Change**

The goal of this study was to explore leadership strategies managers at mental health organizations used to retain direct care professionals. The significance of this qualitative multiple case study may contribute to social change by increasing leaders' awareness of retaining direct care professionals, positively impacting patient care, and reducing voluntary turnover. Retaining employees could cultivate steady incomes and increase employee spending and tax revenues, benefiting their communities. When employees are engaged, they are more likely to stay with the organization and not look for a new job, which takes away from family quality time (Martins & Nienaber, 2018).

### **A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature**

The goal of this study was to explore strategies managers from mental health organizations use to retain direct care professionals. The literature review begins with Herzberg's two factor theory and is the conceptual framework for this study. Next, a discussion of the application of Herzberg's two factor in employee retention is discussed. The literature review continues with a discussion of critics of Herzberg's two factor theory. Following this discussion, alternative theories to Herzberg's two factor theory are examined. Next, a review of employee turnover and the impact it has on organizations is

reviewed. The review ends with a discussion on leadership styles and their implication for maximizing employee retention.

The literature review includes searching electronic databases from Walden University Library for peer-reviewed journal articles, government publications, reports, and scholarly books. I accessed electronic databases such as Google Scholar, Scholarly Works, Semantic Scholar, Academic Search Complete, ProQuest, ABI/INFORM Collection, Research Complete, Education Source, ERIC, SpringerLink, PsychInfo, SAGE Journals, Business Source Complete, EBSCO, Emerald Insights, ScienceDirect, and Taylor and Francis Online. I used other relevant sources, including information from state and local government websites such as the Bureau of Labor & Statistics and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Service. The keywords used to research for articles on my research topic included: *employee retention, turnover intention, retention strategies, turnover, voluntary turnover, involuntary turnover, Herzberg two factor theory, two factor theory, hygiene motivation theory, motivator, hygiene theory, job embeddedness theory, job embeddedness, job satisfaction, job dissatisfaction, motivation, motivation hygiene theory, dual factor theory, the hierarchy of need theory, expectancy theory, organizational commitment, leadership on turnover intention, employee compensation, organization culture, work environment, job content, job stress, work engagement, job performance, employee rewards, employee recognition, employee engagement, employee benefits, employee turnover costs, employee commitment, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and authentic leadership*. The literature review included 100 peer reviewed sources, with 85% being

published within five years of the anticipated graduation date, and 85% are peer reviewed sources.

### **Herzberg's Two Factor Theory**

Herzberg's two factor theory provided the conceptual framework for this study. Herzberg, Mauser, and Synderman's two factor theory are among the most widely studied and argued theories of motivation at the workplace and are thus known to be comprehensively applicable in various industries (Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020). Herzberg's research gained traction for developing a range of new views, such as workplace motivation, kick in the ass (KITA), and job advancement (Ashraf, 2019). Herzberg found that workers are not motivated by being kicked or offered increased pay or benefits, a pleasant work environment, or reduced work hours. Instead, Herzberg argued that employee motivation and work productivity could increase as they experience feelings such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility compared to better working conditions, namely high pay and job security (Hur, 2018). Herzberg's theory could be used to determine which component impacts long-term satisfaction and intrinsic motivation for members of the organization (Holmberg et al., 2018). To understand employee attitudes and motivation Herzberg conducted a study in nine different firms with a total of 200 respondents, including accountants and engineers (Sobaih & Hasanein, 2020). A systematic interview was conducted with the participants. The goal was to better understand the many aspects that influence goal achievement, as well as the factors that did not decrease motivation levels. At the end of the study, Herzberg determined that there are two categories of requirements that are independent of one another. Kotni and

Venkateswarlu (2018) indicated that Herzberg identified two types of motivating factors; satisfiers (motivator factors), which are the primary drivers of job satisfaction and include accomplishments, recognition, and responsibility as well as opportunities for advancement; and dissatisfiers (hygiene factors), which are the primary drivers of job satisfaction. Chiat & Panatik (2019) argued that money could motivate employees, but not for an extended period. Herzberg posited that factors influencing employee satisfaction or motivators differed from factors causing dissatisfaction or hygiene factors (Ogbo et al., 2017). Herzberg stated that both motivators and hygiene factors are necessary to achieve job satisfaction at work (Alrawahi et al., 2020).

### **Motivator Factors**

Herzberg and his colleagues developed the motivation theory based on two main factors (motivation and hygiene) in the late 1950s (Mehrad, 2020). Herzberg proposed motivator factors are intrinsic and help increase employee job satisfaction, morale, and the overall performance and sustainability of organizations. When employees feel appreciated and supported by their managers, they are more likely to stay with the organization (Johnson et al., 2021). For that reason, the highest quality managerial support is expected to positively influence direct care professional commitment.

Herzberg identified five motivator factors linked to a person's job satisfaction and consist of achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement (Thant & Chang, 2020).

**Achievement.** Achieving a particular success, such as completing a challenging assignment on time, resolving a work related problem, or seeing positive results in one's

work, is an example of positive achievement (Alshmemri et al., 2017). In contrast, negative achievement means failing to make progress at work or making bad decisions on the job. Motivators factors are the guiding force used by organizations to inspire employees to excel (Yousaf, 2020). Therefore, keeping employees motivated is extremely important for organizations to retain workers (Pham & Nguyen, 2020). Moreover, Herzberg noted that providing employees opportunities for informal and formal professional development, acknowledging staff contributions, developing fulfilling work by matching their talents and abilities, and fostering accountability for each staff member strengthens employee retention (Irabor & Okolie, 2019). Herzberg concluded that the employee's intention to remain with their current employer would decrease if any motivating factors for achievement are insufficient in an organization (Holston & Okae & Mushi, 2018).

**Recognition.** Alshmemri et al. (2017) asserted that employees gain positive recognition when receiving credit or awards for reaching specific goals or producing high quality work. Murray (2020) reported that workers cited gaining praise for their efforts as a significant factor in encouraging them to perform well at work. Additionally, employees are more likely to regard their importance and significance within an organization when their work is recognized (Rahman et al., 2017).

**The work itself.** The type of work or job that employees perform is known as the work itself (Thant & Chang, 2020). Hooi and Zahari stated that the work environment and job design could influence job satisfaction and organizational engagement. Employee happiness or frustration on the job may affect whether the task is simple, complicated,

interesting, or boring (Thant & Chang, 2020). Furthermore, when employees are motivated by their work, it can positively impact morale, absenteeism, and working relations with peers and subordinates (Herzberg et al., 1959).

**Responsibilities.** Responsibility involves job related commitment and the employee's ability to make decisions about their work (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). Mainly, responsibilities include providing employees with challenging work assignments and increasing work responsibilities (Murray, 2020). Murray emphasized that it is vital to examine employee motivation on a regular basis, including the changing nature of human demands and the environmental circumstances in which individuals find themselves. According to Herzberg, increasing employees' responsibilities through meaningful work is the best way to improve job satisfaction (Murray, 2020). Herzberg found that factors such as accountability positively influence employee performance (Assarroudi et al., 2019).

**Advancement.** Advancement is an employee's upward and positive status or role in the workplace (Alshmemri et., 2017). Furthermore, advancement possibilities establish opportunities for employees to acquire new skills, receive training in new job competencies, and develop new job knowledge.

### **Hygiene Factors**

Hygiene factors are maintenance or extrinsic factors connected to the job context and are not associated with the work itself, but they affect employees' dissatisfaction (Ozsoy, 2019). Herzberg used the term hygiene because they are considered maintenance factors required to avoid dissatisfaction but do not motivate employees in the workplace.



There are ten hygiene factors necessary to maintain a reasonable level of satisfaction in the workplace. These factors include organization policy, pay, benefits, working conditions, work environment, and interpersonal relationships (Hur, 2018). If one of these variables is not considered or handled adequately by the employer, employee motivation suffers and jeopardizes retention (Rehman et al., 2020).

### **Herzberg Applied in Employee Retention**

Employees who are happy and committed to the job are less likely to quit (Irbor & Okolie, 2019). Job satisfaction can improve the retention of employees by managers acknowledging employee contributions to the organization through job development opportunities that enhance their talents and abilities, providing job advancement options. Moreover, managers can enrich subordinates' jobs through recognition and rewards and by offering performance feedback (Badubi, 2017). Herzberg hypothesized that satisfiers influenced job satisfaction and increased employee retention. Herzberg's motivating factors were the first category, which links the desire for development or self-actualization.

Herzberg's two factor theory could be used to predict employee job satisfaction, discontent, and intention to leave a job (Ann & Blum, 2020). Herzberg's theory of employee motivation is essential in interpreting employees' work behaviors within an organization (Yousaf, 2020). Enhancing employee job satisfaction or morale was critical for minimizing absenteeism, lowering attrition, and ultimately increasing productivity (Dhamija et al., 2019). According to Holmberg et al. (2018), even though the two factor theory of motivation was developed in 1959, the theory is still relevant today. Herzberg's

work in the field of positive psychology is consistent with the theory's fundamental assumptions. Herzberg's theory introduced a basic model that provides a practical means to get extensive knowledge of employee attitudes toward their job and reasons for staying or leaving their job (Zámečník & Kožíšek, 2021). Herzberg's two factor theory describes how job satisfaction, work engagement, and turnover intention are related (Park & Johnson, 2019).

The two factor theory can have an impact on long term satisfaction and intrinsic motivation among members of an organization based on the theory's guidance (Holmberg et al., 2018). Given the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivational elements, Herzberg's theory is an effective conceptual paradigm for organizing a systemic presentation of mental health nurses' job satisfaction. In contrast, employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs and who are emotionally fatigued are more likely to consider leaving due to company policies and administration, technical supervision, working conditions, and relationships with leadership (Zhang et al., 2020). Herzberg asserted that individuals are not motivated solely by lower level needs since hygiene factors do not encourage them but eliminate dissatisfaction for improved performance (Shaikh et al., 2019). Hygiene factors can help meet the basic requirements of a person, including those for physical security (protection, shelter, and stability) and social inclusion (belonging and inclusion) needs (Viotti et al., 2020). While dissatisfaction decreases when an employee's job satisfaction needs are high, it decreases job performance.

Hygiene factors satisfy the individual's need to circumvent unpleasantness and can prevent employees from becoming unhappy but would not achieve the most beneficial outcome of ensuring that they are fulfilled or inspired in their job (Henkel et al., 2019). However, hygiene elements are essential to prevent harmful feelings and performance in the workplace (Mehrad, 2020). The opposite occurs with low job satisfaction (Rajamohan et al., 2019). Dissatisfaction with one's job is linked with increased absenteeism and turnover rates. When people are unsatisfied with their jobs, they are more likely to be unmotivated and to show little concern for their work. Areas of stress for staff include the institutional, unit, and resident level work demands, individual requirements, and resources that may impact the individual's connection with the work environment. While Herzberg's contribution to the knowledge of management and motivational theory is highly respected, there has been controversy surrounding the application of the two factor theory.

### **Critics of Herzberg Two Factor Theory**

One criticism of Herzberg's theory is that more research is needed to test the theory empirically. According to Ozsoy (2019), previous studies to test Herzberg's motivation theory yielded results that were not entirely consistent with one another. Ozsoy stated that motivation and hygiene factors comprise Herzberg's two factor theory to a specific degree. According to Ozsoy (2019), Herzberg's hypothesis validation came about in a research study of seasonal workers in the hospitality and tourism industry. However, Herzberg's motivation and hygiene variables are not compatible with the assumptions made in other studies. Ozsoy (2019) purported that Herzberg's hypothesis

should be tested further in different cultures and samples, such as variations in personality, income, industry, region, and occupation. Motivation is a multifaceted phenomenon and can influence various factors; thus, multiple factors should be thoroughly investigated. When it comes to individual differences, it is essential to remember that attitudes among people in the same or similar conditions of employment could differ considerably. Personal experiences significantly shape attitudes and behaviors, making it arduous to describe the variations in people's attitudes entering the labor market (Ozsoy, 2019). Personality traits are crucial to recognizing the individual's behaviors and motivations.

Another criticism of Herzberg's thesis is that it applies least to those with primarily unskilled occupations or those whose work is engaging, repetitive, tedious, and limited in scope (Abba, 2018). Herzberg's methodology was also criticized for assuming a connection between contentment and production, which emphasized satisfaction while overlooking productivity. Herzberg's research showed that employee satisfaction does not always correlate with efficiency. Satisfaction can be regarded as a passive trait, while preemptive measures like motivational levels are more closely related to behavioral changes and performance.

The two factor theory has come under fire because it fails to differentiate between physical and psychological components, define motivators explicitly, and explain how they differ from hygienic considerations. It also fails to articulate satisfaction and dissatisfaction as benefits rather than using numbers (Badubi, 2017). Job satisfaction is only present in the employee's mind and cannot be measured directly, unlike efficiency,

absenteeism, and turnover (Sanjeeva and Herath, 2018). Another criticism leveled against Herzberg's theory is that it assumes that every individual will react in the same way in a similar situation (Badubi, 2017). Organizations examine employee motivation to stimulate their employees and achieve a high level of productivity (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). There are a variety of theories that explain why employees are motivated, including Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation.

### **Alternative Theories**

Vroom postulated the expectancy theory in 1964 during the golden age of motivation theories (Lee, 2007). Vroom described motivation as internal energy derived from a person's wants that propels an individual to accomplish their goal (Hyun & Oh, 2011). Vroom identified a disconnect between the research conducted by industrial psychologists and the practical models of workplace motivation that managers might use to motivate their employees. As a result, the expectancy theory of motivation has become known as the expectancy hypothesis.

Expectancy theory differs from other seminal motivation works in that it focuses on the cognitive antecedents that lead to or distract from personal motivation (Carnes & Knotts, 2018). According to this hypothesis, people's motivation is determined by the level to which they desire something specific and the extent to which they believe they will have it. Vroom's expectancy theory focuses on the relationship between internal needs and the resulting effort expended to fulfill them. The expectancy theory differentiates effort, performance, and outcomes that receive the highest reward. Vroom

indicated a disconnect between an industrial psychologist and functional models of workplace motivation that managers could use.

Vroom postulated motivation force as a product of anticipation, instrumentality, and valence in his book *Work and Motivation*. Valence is the degree to which an employee cares about a reward and how much they want one (Akgunduz et al., 2019). Expectancy is the worker's belief that efforts on their part will contribute to a set performance (Manzoor et al., 2019). Finally, instrumentality refers to the idea that a specific consequence of their behavior would result in them receiving an anticipated reward and is known as an outcome association. Vroom's scale runs from 0, where there is no expectation of obtaining the desired outcome, to 1, when there is a reasonable possibility of receiving the desired effect and receiving the desired rewards (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Vroom's theory has been analyzed, argued, and empirically tested by academicians and scholars worldwide.

Some theorists argued that when respondents were asked to attribute the sources of their dissatisfaction in their jobs to personal achievement and capability, they also would invoke ego defenses (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Whereas, when they are asked to attribute the origins of their satisfaction in their jobs to personal achievement and power, they also would invoke ego defenses. Also, Sobaih & Hasanein (2020) asserted that Herzberg's assumption that money was more likely to operate as a dissatisfier (hygiene factor) than any other factor in human behavior. They concluded that insufficient evidence supports the notion that money plays a different role in causing job satisfaction or discontent in different situations.

According to his opponents, the outcomes of Herzberg's experiments were method bound (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). Although they could explain the alternative effects obtained through other approaches, they could not explain how Herzberg could generate the results with such regularity. Herzberg responded to critics in 1968 by asking the question, "How do you encourage employees? The piece generated more than 1.2 million reprint sales, the highest level of offprint sales ever recorded by the Harvard Business Review magazine.

Herzberg made a fundamental distinction between motivation and movement. Although the need to meet basic biological wants, the movement is fueled by animal instinct, such as the built in urge to avoid discomfort from the environment and all the learning needs that become conditioned to fulfill basic biological needs (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). To illustrate his point, Herzberg stated that he could kick his dog or give it candy to get it to come when he called him. In contrast, the motive for movement comes from him and not the dogs, and what we perceive is a movement rather than motivation on their part. Additionally, managers frequently claim that the employees are motivated when assigning tasks to employees in exchange for an incentive. Managers are encouraged by promoting employee mobility and not the employees themselves (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd 2005). Herzberg stated that motivation is like an internal self recharging battery. For an employee to become motivated, the drive to move must originate within him or her.

Ogbeide (2019) stated that Vroom's theory noted the importance of matching rewards directly to the employees' performance and ensuring benefits are satisfactory for

their recipients' performance. If the benefits fulfill an individual's desire for security, self esteem, autonomy, and self actualization, the rewards are considered valuable (Masinde et al., 2020). People are more likely to accredit their sources of job satisfaction to their personal goals and achievements (Evelyne, 2018). Vroom proposed that employees are more likely to show a particular behavior when the perceived likelihood of gaining the desired outcome is high (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Vroom's theory differs from Herzberg's two factor theory. Herzberg's theory focuses on the content of motivation and the factors that must be fulfilled. Content, process, and reinforcement theory are three fundamental motivation theories. They are also known as cognitive theories of motivation and are demonstrated in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In content theories, individual wants are based on psychological (mental) or physiological (physical) demands and impact individuals by forces within a company's organizational structure that can direct, sustain, and stimulate one's behavior (Cote, 2019). Assigning an employee new job duties is an example of the content theory. Vroom's expectancy theory is a process theory that focuses on the motivational processes that explain behavior (Afota & Robinson, 2020). Herzberg's theory propounds on behavioral antecedents that add to or detract from personal motivation (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Vroom reviews motivation as an internal force, dependent on an individual's needs, which help them achieve.

The increase in job duties can lead to increased responsibility, achievement, and progress, all of which can lead to greater job fulfillment and drive. In contrast, Herzberg's two factor theory reflects on the relationship between internal needs, the subsequent action to satisfy them, and the threat of sanction. According to McGinley et



al. (2019), Vroom argued that an individual's decision about turnover is contingent on how desirable their outcome is to the individual and other perceived features of the result.

Reinforcement is the process of using multiple types of stimuli to elicit desirable actions at different times and on varied schedules (Abekah Nkrumah & Nkrumah, 2021). It emphasizes the influence of environmental elements on behavior and is divided into three continuous sections: stimulus, reaction, and outcome. Four strategies by which behavior can be influenced are positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, extinction, and punishment (Abekah Nkrumah & Nkrumah, 2021). Positive reinforcement is the most common method. The stimulus causes a change in behavior and the work performed in the workplace, which produces results.

### **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory**

Maslow introduced the hierarchy of needs theory in 1943. Shih et al. (2018) stated that Maslow specified five fundamental needs or aspirations that humans strive to achieve motivation. Udrescu and Gheorghe (2017) indicated that hierarchy requirements are articulated in a pyramid that symbolizes five fundamental human needs in a progressive order. Maslow's hierarchy of needs consists of physiological, safety, love, and belongingness. Alajmi and Alasousi (2019) asserted that physiological conditions include fresh air, sufficient workspace, well designed workstations, comfortable lighting, acceptable temperature, accessible food facilities, and water. Staempfli & Lamarche (2020) stated that the compensation paid to employees meets the employee's physiological needs. According to Allen et al. (2019), Maslow's hierarchy assumes humans are motivated by fulfilling the basic need that is most pertinent to them. When a

condition is met, the individual moves up the order before the following requirement is met. Higher up needs cannot be satisfied before lower needs are fulfilled (Staempfli & Lamarche, 2020).

Similarly, higher level needs cannot be satisfied before lower needs are met. Alajmi and Alasousi (2019) indicated that when a worker's physiological needs are met reasonably, a new set of conditions arises, loosely categorized as safety needs. These requirements can be met by providing people with a secure workplace, consistent wages and salaries, job security, health insurance, and retirement benefits. Hale et al. (2019) reported that employees' self esteem needs could be met with a supportive management relationship that builds employee trust and supports their work. Self actualization can be achieved when an employee is promoted and receives increased job responsibilities.

Staempfli & Lamarche (2020) stated that Maslow's theory unifies compensation, benefits, corporate culture, and management practices. The employee's physiological needs are fulfilled by the salary he or she earns. Safety needs are centered on job production and clearly defined job roles. Love needs can be fulfilled with a supportive work culture that allows workers to develop rapport. Love needs can be fulfilled with a supportive work culture that allows workers to develop rapport. Esteem needs include an excellent management relationship with employees that makes them feel trusted and capable of employment (Hale et al., (2019). Self actualization needs are more challenging to fulfill and require managers to continually motivate workers to achieve their potential.

Hur (2018) reputed that another similarity between the two theorist models of motivation is that Maslow's lower order needs parallel Herzberg's hygiene factors.

Herzberg et al. (1959) theory differs from those claiming a single continuum of job satisfaction influencing factors. Herzberg purported that the increasing satisfiers (motivators) lower dissatisfaction (Rehman et al., 2020). Maslow proposed that human beings are stimulated by unmet needs, which are in an order that prevents those unmet needs from being met until all lower level needs are met (Velmurugan & Sankar, 2017). Another similarity between the two theorist models of motivation is that Maslow's lower needs parallel with Herzberg's hygiene factors (Hur, 2018). People are stimulated by unmet needs, which structure prevents those unmet needs from being met until lower level requirements are achieved (Velmurugan & Sankar, 2017). Maslow and Herzberg's theories addressed the conditions that must be satisfied before a person can perform a higher order task (Afota & Robinson, 2020). Staempfli and Lamarche (2020) concurred with Maslow's assertion that higher level needs could not be met unless lower level needs were met first. Based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, humans are motivated by satisfying their most urgent needs. Afota and Robinson (2020) noted that when people's needs are met, a person advances up the scale.

### **Job Embeddedness Theory**

Terrence R. Mitchell, Brooks C. Holtom, Thomas W. Lee, Chris J. Sablinski, and Miriam Erez developed job embeddedness theory (Burrows et al., 2021). Job embeddedness theory is defined as the degree to which workers feel connected to their job (Yam et al., 2018). While job embeddedness emerged as a new paradigm, many companies explored ways to make their workers feel rooted in their position (Greene et al., 2018). The surrounding atmosphere and perceptual variables play a significant role in

determining how attracted or embedded a person is to a job (Lyu & Zhu, 2019).

Therefore, job embeddedness could analyze employee turnover intentions and behaviors.

Job embeddedness is a stronger predictor of turnover than either job satisfaction or organizational commitment (Zhang & McGuire 2021).

The job embeddedness hypothesis is an employee retention theory that takes a broader perspective of the employee organization relationship than previous theories (Park et al., 2021). This view encompasses many factors, both on and off the job, that influence employee retention. Rahimnia et al. (2021) concluded that supervisory effectiveness influences the link between supervisory practices and work outcomes. Extending the job embeddedness antecedents to include employee empowerment, authority, and job freedom might result in them engaging in extra role responsibilities, ultimately leading to increased customer happiness and retention. Job embeddedness can be classified into organizational and community embeddedness.

**Organizational Embeddedness.** Aspects of on the job embeddedness include links, fit, and sacrifice (Ampofo & Karatepe, (2021). Links are official or informal on or off the job relationships that an individual has with other individuals or groups (Gibbs & Duke, 2021). A person's connections to their employment and community might be thought of as strands that form a web that connects them. The greater the number of strands involved, the more tightly woven this web will appear. Factors that determine if an employee remains with the organization are centered on the individual's commitment to the team. An employee's staying in their job is influenced by their connection to the local community (Gibbs & Duke, 2018). Personal relationships with close friends and

family will further affect their decision. Steindórsdóttir et al. (2020) defined fit as an employee's perception of compatibility or comfort with the company. The greater the perceived match between an employee's values, future aspirations, job needs, and organizational culture, the more likely he or she will stay with the company. According to Shah et al. (2020), in the workplace, sacrifice refers to the amount of opportunity cost that a person incurs because of quitting a job.

**Community Embeddedness.** The organization and the community in which the employee resides have significant predictors of their intention to remain in their job (Skelton et al., 2018). However, employees can only control the organizational details of a worker's job embeddedness. Skelton et al. (2018) stated that leaders' focus should increase staff development opportunities. Amoah et al. 2021 indicated that employees' communities and personal life are dominated by entities or resources that keep them spatially tied. Ampofo (2018) stated that employees who are deeply rooted in the areas they live in are more likely to be motivated to keep their jobs in their current locations and make strategic decisions to become more rooted on the job. If employees are deeply rooted in their communities, they may discover ways to strengthen their organization's embeddedness to remain in their current position, reducing employee turnover.

### **Employee Turnover**

Since the early 1990s, academicians and scholars have been concerned with the retention of workers (Lee, 2018). The ratio achieved by dividing the number of employees who left the organization over a certain period by the number of employees in that organization during that period is known as employee turnover (Magaisa &

Musundire, 2022.) Involuntary termination is a forced resignation or firing for other causes (Lee & Liu, 2021). On the other hand, voluntary turnover differs from involuntary turnover in terms of its core characteristics, as well as its antecedents (Alterman et al., 2021). Employee turnover refers to workers who have worked in a particular position in the organization for a while and are considering leaving the organization (Lee & Liu, 2021). Employee turnover is vital since a significant portion of it is associated with adverse effects for the organization, the manager, and coworkers (Lyons & Bandura, 2020). When it comes to turnover, it can be either voluntary or involuntary. Employees who voluntarily leave their job is a concern for organizations. When an organization's outflow of employee talent surpasses the talent levels of their replacements, turnover causes the company to become dysfunctional (Lyons & Bandura, 2020). Employees resign from organizations for personal desires, compensation, lack of advancement opportunities, job satisfaction, and poor employee manager relationships. It is a critical problem for every business enterprise (Abdullah Al Mamun & Nazmul Hassan, 2017). With high employee turnover, small and medium sized organizations are laden with uncertainty on how to manage this phenomenon (Tian et al., 2020).

The traditional assumption in the private and public sectors is that employee turnover produces monetary costs for hiring and training new hires and nonmonetary cost because of poor employee morale and organizational efficiency (Lee, 2018). Employee turnover could be brutal for managers to control in the future. Lee et al. (2018) reported that in 2017, the U.S. staff were more willing to leave their employer, with 51% of the U.S. employees actively searching for a new career or waiting for job opportunities. Lee

(2018) asserted that employees' general desire to leave might foreshadow their actual departure. There are many reasons why an employee voluntarily leaves their job.

### ***Contributing Factors***

**Job Satisfaction.** Živković et al. (2021) stated that job satisfaction is an employee's favorable and cognitive reactions to his or her job. Lin and Huang (2020) indicated that job satisfaction is the mental, physical, and environmental enjoyment employees obtain from their jobs. Employees who are happy with the services provided by their organization and leadership will go above and beyond the job requirements to enhance their job performance. Sainju et al. (2021) asserted that job satisfaction improves operational efficiency, performance, and bottom line. According to Vimolwan and Pooja (2020), job satisfaction is a measure used to assess individual overall feelings and attitudes toward his or her job. Job satisfaction strongly predicts employees' intention to stay with a business (Kasdorf & Kayaalp, 2021).

Job satisfaction is regarded as the most representative antecedent variable to predict the turnover intention of workers (Deng et al., 2021). Discipline, job morale, and low employee turnover can gauge job satisfaction. If these factors are high, employees will be dissatisfied with their jobs (Ramlawati et al., 2021). Employees' attitudes toward their employment determine how satisfied they are. According to Ramlawati et al. (2021), discipline, job morale, and low employee turnover can gauge job satisfaction indicators. If these factors are all high, employees are dissatisfied with their jobs. Ramlawati et al. asserted that an employee's attitude toward his or her employment determines how satisfied he or she is. Garcia et al. (2018) noted that factors that make a

job satisfactory or unsatisfactory depend on the nature of the job and the expectations an employee has about what the job offers. Vimolwan and Pooja (2020) indicated that employees who are satisfied with their job are less likely to leave voluntarily, whereas dissatisfied employees are more likely to consider other job opportunities. Lyons and Bandura (2019) stated various reasons an employee resigns from a company. Employee turnover is heavily influenced by work satisfaction at the organizational level. Still, there is growing evidence that organizational commitment, advancement opportunities, poor working conditions, increased job workload, abusive treatment from managers, and job stress might have an even more significant impact on turnover intention.

**Organizational Commitment.** Adequate wages, a pleasant work environment, and profit sharing programs are standard practices in many thriving organizations (Maaitah, 2018). Organizational commitment demonstrates an employee's interest in the organization's services. Effective organizations encourage employees to work hard and support the company's goals, mission, and vision. Maaitah (2018) indicated that employees are likely to continue their service with the organizations with a strong sense of organizational commitment. Practical organizational commitment captures employee loyalty, strong work ethics, integrity, and sharing ideas and strategies to help the company grow (Wang et al., 2020). Organizational commitment is strongly linked to lower turnover absenteeism, and better job performance than other types of organizational commitment (Rodrigo, 2019). Employees enjoy being part of a team, which increases their desire to remain a part of the organization. Employees who are psychologically attached to their organization and internalize their goals have a high level



of organizational commitment (Wang et al., 2020). They are motivated to put forth a significant effort to achieve higher performance levels and thus make a more meaningful contribution. Rodrigo et al. (2019) purport that affective organizational commitment is strongly correlated to lower turnover, absenteeism, and better job performance than the other types of organizational commitment. While perceived administrative support has a positive mood at work, it negatively correlates with various feelings of obligation to the organization. However, perceived corporate support also serves a broader socio-emotional function by meeting employee needs (Kasdorf & Kayaalp, 2021).

The organizational commitment may be broken down into three distinct categories, affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuous commitment (Ogambidez & Almeida, 2019). One of the most fundamental implications of job engagement is the development of affective organizational commitment. Ogambidez and Almeida (2019) asserted that work engagement is described as a rewarding, job related state of mind marked by vitality, devotion, and immersion. Vigor refers to maintaining high energy level disputes hurdles and problems when working. Dedication refers to professional participation, motivation, and pride in individual job performance (Ogambidez & Almeida, 2019). Absorption is defined as a high level of attention to one's job responsibilities. According to Liu et al. (2018), normative commitment is an attitude of responsibility to remain with an organization and contribute to achieving its goals. Employees internalized normative pressure according to their corporate interests and acknowledged their moral responsibility in organizational relationships. According to van Assen (2020), employees' participation in improvement activities is just as meaningful as

developments in job related knowledge in continuous improvement. Continued improvement is the organization's ability to pursue incremental improvements that ensure alignment and more innovative renewal of its processes, products, and services.

**Advancement Opportunities.** The advancement of competence status in a position in the workplace is referred to as a promotion (Vuong et al., 2020). Promotion opportunities encourage employees to put forth the extra effort to retain their promotion ambitions. Employees are more committed to the organization if it has a clear path to training and advancement opportunities. Employee security is jeopardized by the uncertainty of progression chances, which causes employees to fear that their recognized abilities and job duties may be made useless or obsolete, pushing them toward abandoning their position.

**Poor working conditions.** Employee turnover is linked to environmental conditions and risks in the workplace (Chen, 2020). Employee job performance is negatively impacted both directly and indirectly by unpleasant working circumstances. Chen (2020) noted that temperature, humidity, noise, smell, light, and dust are just a few environmental elements that can range from standard to excessive. Dissatisfaction with the work environment lowers employee morale, resulting in high turnover. Employee turnover is linked to environmental conditions and risks in the workplace (Wang et al., 2020). Employee job performance is negatively impacted both directly and indirectly by unpleasant working circumstances. Abolade (2018) asserted that when the work atmosphere is pleasant and welcoming, employees are more likely to remain in the organization longer.

**Increase workload.** Challenging job conditions and responsibilities face by employees in long term care centers are challenging (Fisher et al., 2021). Direct care professionals provide a diverse and complex range of services, including assistance with health and safety, relationships, networking, communication skills, personal care, transportation, advocacy, community living, crisis prevention, household chores, education on self care skills, promoting self determination and managing finances (Friedman, 2018). These services are not only time consuming but require a delicate balance of abilities. Bakker and de Vries (2020) stated that with continuous exposure to high job demands, individuals become chronically fatigued and mentally separate themselves from their jobs. Health care workers are responsible for transferring patients between beds and wheelchairs, providing dementia care, and assisting patients with their hygiene. The heavy workload is attributed to employee dissatisfaction and burnout and has been linked to increased rates of employee turnover and lower quality of care for patients.

**Abusive treatment from managers.** When a leader does unethical behavior, such as defrauding the firm or mistreating an employee, employee assessments of the leader suffer (Fehr et al., (2019). Employees lose faith in the leader and become less devoted to the firm. Employees are more inclined to depart entirely. Any action that deviates from a commonly recognized moral standard is considered unethical. Leaders who insult and abuse their subordinates devalue their position as valued and respected members undermining employees' respect for the leader (Rice et al., 2020). As a result of feeling unwelcome, mistreated employees tend to become disgruntled organizational

citizens and become potential quitters (Rice et al., 2020). When a leader's behavior negatively impacts an employee's job behavior and performance, it lowers job satisfaction and loyalty to the company and harms organizational citizenship behavior (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Coercive leaders are dictators, autocrats, bullies, and police officers and should not be referred to as leaders (Joullié et al., 2021).

**Job Stress.** Job stress relates to the uncomfortable feeling associated with diminished personal accomplishment, emotional tiredness, and depersonalization because of the employee's profession (Liu et al., 2021). Burnout is a typical result of job stress, and it affects caregivers at some point during their careers. Bianchini and Copeland (2021) purported that stress is the primary source of health and safety problems in the workplace. Consequently, workplace stress can lead an employee to search for a job outside the organization and reduce job satisfaction (Li et al., 2021). According to Fasbender et al. (2019), job stress is generally characterized as awareness or experience of dysfunction because of the condition occurring in the workplace. Nurse job resignations could be a coping technique to deal with job stress. Healthcare workers who work in high turnover regions are more likely to report experiencing more significant levels of job stress.

Job stress is a significant factor in predicting intent to leave and turnover (Bamonti et al., 2019). People with developmental disabilities who live in the community and residential facilities rely on direct care professionals for their care (Pingo et al., 2019). Direct care professionals who care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities have low wages, insufficient training, and work long hours

(Ryan et al., 2019). Different factors can cause employees to be stressed at work, such as control over their work and the quantity of work (Pingo et al., 2019). In addition, frequent changes in funding and government policies place direct care professionals in the community health service industry in a vulnerable state (Heckenberg et al., 2018). As a result, direct care workers and individuals in managerial roles experience work related stress. Heckenberg et al. (2018) stated that direct care professionals are frustrated since they must accommodate job expectations with the requirements of their clients. Direct care professionals have become stressed and burnt out because they must balance the client's needs, standards of leadership, and the needs of the organization.

### **Mental Health Industry**

Mental health concerns in society have traditionally been addressed through the provision of clinical services to individuals rather than through the creation of settings that support positive mental health and the primary prevention of mental illness. Community mental health services contain a mix of both mental health and social health services (Stamboglis & Jacobs, 2019). Namely, treatment, crisis intervention, and prevention are all included in community mental health services. Individuals with serious mental illnesses benefit from community integration by improving their social interactions, life satisfaction, and overall quality of life, while simultaneously lowering social isolation, mental health symptomatology, and stigma (Pahwa et al., 2020). The goal was to provide a comprehensive spectrum of competent mental health treatment to a specified population devoted to treating and assisting those suffering from mental

illnesses in proportion to their suffering or distress in partnership with other local organizations (Bouras et al., 2018).

### **Direct Care Professionals**

One of the fastest growing occupations in the United States is that of direct support professionals for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. According to Castagnino & Blaskowitz (2022), the demand for direct care is expected to expand by 33 percent between the years 2016 and 2026. This profession is experiencing increased demand as the population of people with disabilities continues to grow and live longer lives, as are their families and caregivers. The expansion of home and community based services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities is contributing to the growth of this profession (Castagnino & Blaskowitz, 2022).

Direct care professionals assist people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in their daily lives, at home, at employment, at vocational job sites, community based settings, and in other settings (Houseworth et al., 2020). They provide a wide range of tailored services to enable individuals to have similar interactions and life experiences as those who do not have intellectual and developmental disabilities. Direct care professionals assist individuals with personal duties such as cooking, eating, bathing, and toileting (Almeida et al., 2020). They also assist with tasks such as shopping and transporting individuals to the doctor's office. They are frequently part of the individual's care team that directs care, and they are typically able to monitor the smallest changes in an individual's health, which are vital to direct care providers managing chronic diseases (Almeida et al., 2020).

Direct care employees have an average of more than two decades of work experience, numerous qualifications, and licenses, and many have some college education to help them complete the myriad of activities required to appropriately care for the members they serve (Almeida et al., 2020). To work as a direct care professional, the federal government simply requires a driver's license, a high school diploma or equivalent, and the ability to pass a background investigation (Friedman, 2019). Even though each state may have its own criteria, a few states give training guidelines, resulting in a lack of uniformity and training that is typically left to the discretion of providers. They frequently earn poor earnings, have minimal benefits, and have few financial means to fall back on if they become ill and are unable to work (Almeida et al., 2020). Most direct care professionals are parents with children in the home, with nearly a quarter being single parents. If they become ill and can't work, they and their families risk personal and financial trouble. Nonetheless, their health and financial security are in jeopardy.

Employees who provide direct care in residential settings have been shown to be particularly susceptible to work related stress (Reeve et al., 2018). Among the factors that contribute to direct care professionals work related stress include a lack of qualified caregivers, work overload, and conflicting roles (Yeatts et al., 2018). At its most serious, this is thought to have negative consequences for the well being of individual employees, the overall health of organizations, and the quality of client care delivery. The high rate of turnover among community mental health caregivers is a serious concern, and

managers may be able to make a significant difference in reducing turnover (Fukui et al., 2019).

### **Mental Health Managers**

The resources of mental health managers have been shown to be a crucial component in the training, development, and retention of mental health professionals. In mental health organizations, supervision has been strongly associated with improved staff and service outcomes (Choy Brown & Stanhope, 2018). The individual, group, and peer supervision modalities are frequently utilized in the hierarchical casework model of supervision that has been found to be most effective in mental health organizations. This model has been found to be sensitive to organizational contextual variables (Choy Brown & Stanhope, 2018).

Direct care professionals who care for people with disabilities could benefit from workplace managerial support (Layne et al., 2019). Increased social support from managers is associated with improved psychological well-being. Managerial support could positively influence direct care professionals' job stress and employee turnover (Ryan et al., 2019). Direct support professionals are happier with their occupation and are less likely to leave their careers early (Fleury et al., 2018). Improving job satisfaction and supervisory support may be an essential aspect in maintaining stable management in mental health organizations and increasing the level of commitment among professionals towards their teams.

Direct care professionals may experience less burnout on the job if they receive effective management support and training (Purdy & Antle, 2022). Policies established



by managers could contribute to the emotions of burnout experienced by employees. Among these policies are the sort of incentive system that has been implemented, the amount of training that is accessible, and the availability of resources employees require to perform their job effectively.

### **Leadership**

Taking a key position in a group's decision-making is a standard role in leadership (Pietraszewski, 2019). Leadership is a phenomenon in which an individual climbs a ladder to organize a group in performing a specific task and, through interaction between group members, helps solve a particular task (Gradinarova, 2021). According to Van Vugt and von Rueden (2020), leadership has played a significant role in human social development, both biological and cultural. Gameda and Lee (2020) indicated that leadership and human resources help give organizations a competitive advantage. While there is significant agreement on some of the positive characteristics of great leaders, there is limited agreement on what defines an effective leader (McCrae, 2020).

An effective leader can encourage team cohesion and employee performance to achieve financial success (Holston Okae & Mushi, 2018). Effective leadership is mainly concerned with persuading others in one's company to work toward a common objective (Saiti, 2021). However, while there is considerable agreement on some of the positive characteristics of great leaders, there is limited agreement on precisely what makes a leader effective (McCrae, 2020). The complexity of the surroundings in which leaders work contributes to this phenomenon.

Effective leadership is critical to organizational success through boosting agility, change management, competence, employee engagement, trust, and work satisfaction, as well as followers' desire to put in additional effort and engage in an innovative activity (Hickman & Akdere, 2018). Identifying successful leaders' main attributes and traits is vital for employee retention. Leadership is a talent that can be learned. One must process the knowledge to positively affect others regularly and have the courage to move outside of one's comfort zone and expose one's vulnerability in the process (Jackson, 2020). An organization's ability to operate effectively depends on its leadership (Gemedo & Lee, 2020).

Effective leadership is a significant factor in employee retention (Ntenga & Awuor, 2018). Kara asserted that leaders could improve employee job satisfaction, loyalty, and efficiency by employing management strategies that inspire workers to take control of tasks and make decisions that benefit the team and the organization. According to Asgari et al. (2020), perceived organizational support boosts efficiency and aids coworkers and corporate growth, dedication, and citizenship behaviors. Ohunakin et al. (2019) stated that leadership is critical for the organization's competitiveness and performance and for achieving favorable employee attitudes and behavior in the workplace. Tian et al. (2020) added that leadership strategies are critical to retaining employees and improving organizational citizenship.

Various researchers have suggested leadership retention strategies such as job enrichment, financial rewards, employee benefits, staff development opportunities, a pleasant work atmosphere, and work life balance (Kundu & Lata, 2017). Kundu and Lata

noted that career growth, employee engagement, and learning attitudes are among the retention techniques suggested by other researchers. Employee retention could increase if managers motivate workers by promoting a positive work environment (Holston Okae & Mushi, 2018). Employees are more comfortable with their jobs if they clearly understand their manager's leadership style and respect their decisions. To be an effective leader, one must adopt the right leadership style and conduct (Saiti, 2021).

Leadership styles have similar characteristics, but they vary significantly in the way they encourage followers (Rabiul & Yean, 2021). Leaders motivate their followers by instilling in them the significance of the organization's purpose and objectives, allowing them to think creatively and perform beyond expectations (Alblooshi et al., 2020). In the same vein, leaders must improve workers' motivation to persuade followers and harness members of the organization's job responsibilities since employee engagement is vital for the company to accomplish its purpose (Gemeda & Lee, 2020). According to Wong et al. (2020), leadership styles were associated with positive outcomes such as increased job satisfaction and a decreased likelihood of leaving.

### **Leadership Styles**

Leadership styles that promote employee loyalty are critical to the success of an organization's business strategy, goals, and competitive advantage (Mwesigwa et al., 2020). In most workplaces, leadership styles have improved employee performance and happiness (Masood et al., 2020). There are two broad categories of leadership styles, those that emphasize interpersonal interactions and those that focus on. Job performance (Cummings et al., 2018). Leadership styles and behaviors are characterized by the ability

to inspire and motivate individuals to achieve organizational goals and objectives by establishing regulations (Fries et al., 2020). Therefore, it is essential to determine which leadership style encourages and supports followers to be more innovative at work (Alheet et al., 2021). Several prominent leadership styles include transformational, transactional, and authentic leadership styles (Puni et al., 2020). These leadership styles have been shown by academicians to be associated with positive work related outcomes such as employee retention.

**Transformational Leadership.** The concept of transformational leadership was coined by Burns in 1978 and advanced by Bass in 1985 (Eliyana & Muzakki, 2019).

Transformational leadership is centered on a leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and charm employees. Eliyana and Muzakki (2019) stated that employees and organizations both benefit from the leadership style of transformational leaders. Furthermore, Lei et al. (2020) indicated that transformational leaders could enhance their followers' morale, motivation, and morals. For this reason, transformation leadership has been viewed as an essential component in an organization's success, as evidenced by its enormous impact and effectiveness on followers' performance (Saira et al., 2020).

Businesses benefit from the acts of transformational leaders because they help drive employee performance during tumultuous and uncertain times (Mahdikhani & Yazdani, 2020). Transformational leadership is instrumental in giving organizations strategic competitiveness and achieving higher yields in both the short and long term. Mahdikhani and Yazdani (2020) noted that without transformational leadership, an organization's chances of improving its performance in the face of economic uncertainty

would be reduced. Transformational leadership was deemed the superior leadership style in business (Kwan, 2020). Transformational leadership is effective in various organizational contexts and employee groups (McCrae, 2020). Transformational leaders bring significance to employees' jobs and challenge followers' work by motivating and inspiring people around them (Hetland et al., 2018).

Transformational leadership is characterized by a proactive leader that serves as a change agent and enhances followers' consciousness by transcending their shared interests and assisting them in achieving extraordinary results (Islam et al., 2020). Transformational leadership is a driver of individual team and organizational performances. Compared to organizations that follow a more traditional management approach, those who use a transformational leadership style have better team coordination (McClellan et al., 2021). A company with transformational leadership styles has a long term and visionary outlook on the present and future. According to Lei et al. (2021), idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration as sub dimensions of transformational leadership.

**Idealized Influence.** Idealized influence refers to the ability to inspire people by serving as a role model and going beyond their expectations (Poturak et al., 2020). Idealized influence includes the emotional connection the leader has with his or her employees and the fact that leaders attract people through their organization's visionary and ethical conduct. Inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personalized regard are four common characteristics of transformational leaders (Hetland et al., 2018). According to Eliyana and Muzakki (2019), idealized influence, often known as charisma,

refers to leaders who exhibit high moral and ethical standards. Khan et al. (2020) asserted that employees idealize and become inspired by transformational leaders who demonstrate integrity, more values, and courteous behavior in their interactions with them. Buil et al. (2019) reported that individualized consideration entails attending to the requirements of followers for accomplishment and progress, as well as through coaching and mentoring.

Employees are not only inspired and motivated by the expectations set by transformational leaders, but they have also high efficacy beliefs resulting from these expectations (Khan et al., 2020). Leaders are self assured, hold themselves in high respect, and serve as great role models for their subordinates. Eliyana and Muzakki (2019) asserted that transformational leaders energize employees by projecting a motivating and exciting vision by inspiring employees to be the best version of themselves. Poturak et al. (2020) indicated that transformational leaders inspire followers to support, respect, and trust their managers to put their needs ahead of their own.

**Intellectual stimulation.** Intellectual stimulation is a catalyst for people to reexamine their core ideas and values and to become more aware of issues and potential solutions (Mahdikhani & Yazdani 2020). When making organizational changes, persuasion or intellectual stimulation is critical. Jackson (2020) asserted that transformational leadership encourages subordinates to address problems and take on new responsibilities with intellectual stimulation. Bayraktar and Jiménez (2020) stated that a person's self efficacy grows because of being pushed by a transformational leader to fulfill their potential and take on activities, which results in the individual experiencing

a sense of accomplishment. Hannah et al. (2020) asserted that corporate events could be interpreted and framed to enhance followers' knowledge of how their work and efforts support and contribute to the organization. Leaders can serve as sense givers.

**Inspirational motivation.** Transformational leaders followers identify with and trust their leadership, increasing their likelihood of success (Gui et al., 2020). Emotional stimulation encourages followers to absorb the values and views compatible with their leader, which boosts their readiness to follow. Jensen et al. (2020) stated that the ability to affect corporate performance through inspiring motivation is required of executives who provide meaning to their followers, challenge expectations, and demonstrate a solid commitment to the organization's objectives. The ability to affect corporate performance through inspiring motivation is required of executives who provide meaning to their followers, challenge expectations, and demonstrate a solid commitment to the organization's objectives (Park & Pierce, 2020).

**Individualized Consideration.** Individual consideration refers to how a leader can empathize with and support each follower's needs (Akdere & Egan, 2020). To ensure that followers have practical and usable methods to realize their professional, career, and personal goals, tangible resources are extended based on the individual consideration of followers (Ehrnrooth et al., 2020). Individualized consideration and charismatic appeal help transformational leaders stimulate employee retention and build a solid customized exchange connection with their employees. Kao et al. (2020) asserted that in the role of a mentor, the transformational leader listens to the problems and requirements of the follower. According to Lei et al. (2021), transformational leaders pay close attention to

their employees' needs, emotions, and feelings to provide timely assistance and direction. Minai et al. (2020) stated that although academicians and the business industry accepted the transformational leadership model, many people expressed concerns about how the characteristics of Bass's transformational leadership model were defined.

Scholars suggest that the lack of theoretical distinctiveness of Bass dimensional conceptualization is of concern. Minai et al. (2020) asserted that idealized influence doesn't stand out enough from charisma and showed that individual attention and contingent reward dimensions are too broad. According to Siangchokyoo et al. (2020), another criticism of transformational leaders is the ambiguity surrounding the linkages between follower responses and performance outcomes and the causal relationship between the leaders' behaviors. Another critique against transformational leadership is operationalization, which conflates leader behaviors and outcomes. According to Siangchokyoo et al. (2020), transformational leaders' dimensional structures cannot be easily replicated. According to Jensen et al. (2020), different sub dimensions are likely to vary in other outcomes depending on the boundary conditions and the mediating mechanism used. Despite the criticism, transformational leadership is an essential leadership style and transactional leadership.

### **Transactional Leadership**

Leader member exchange theory is a critical component of transactional leadership (Asgari et al., 2020). Transactional leadership is a process of negotiation between



leaders and followers (Young et al., 2020). The concept of transformational leadership refers to a style of leadership that encourages followers to surpass their own self-interest by influencing the followers' morale, ideals, interest, and values to inspire them to achieve higher levels of performance than was initially anticipated (Berkovich & Eyal, 2021). Executives rely on incentives and sanctions to motivate their workforces. As a result of this approach, leaders establish a contractual connection or trademark with their subordinates so that employees earn concrete benefits for their better performance and increased productivity (Young et al., 2020). Transactional leaders use a variety of strategies to encourage their employees to excel in their job (Adriansyah et al., (2020).

Transactional leadership has two behavioral components: contingent rewards and perception management (Berkovich & Eyal, 2021). Contingent rewards can be linked to monetary incentives, verbal rewards, or sanctions (Jacobsen et al., 2021). Transactional leaders utilize these contingency rewards and punishments to encourage individual workers to follow their self-interest while achieving corporate goals. According to Puni et al. (2020), transactional leaders provide job descriptions to their subordinates. The subordinates are rewarded with material and psychological incentives for meeting the contractual obligations and commitments. Frangieh and Rusu (2021) asserted that management by perception occurs when transactional leaders actively monitor the behavior of their followers, anticipating problems before they occur, and taking corrective measures. Employees who achieve peak performance are rewarded with expressions of gratitude and praise for their efforts for their optimal performance

(Adriansyah et al., 2020). On the other hand, a transactional leader will not hesitate to discipline an employee deemed to be underperforming or not meeting expectations.

Transformative and transactional leadership is a dependable predictor of an employee's loyalty to an organization (Sobaih et al., 2020). Employees are encouraged to surpass expectations and put their own personal interests aside for the good of the organization by transformational leaders who inspire and motivate them (Oh & Chhinzer, 2021). As a result of the support transformational leaders provide to their subordinates, they can give them the assistance they need, which minimizes employees' intent to leave their organization. Employees who have developed close bonds with their boss feel more a part of the team and are more likely to share their vision and core values (Oh & Chhinzer, 2021).

When transactional leadership is implemented, it can serve as a foundation for structuring developmental expectations in employees, such as career progression tied to improved clinical skills, experience in delegation and people management, and taking on additional responsibilities or projects (Richards, 2020). Transactional leadership could build trust over time because of a regular adherence to contracts. Richards (2020) stated that this could result in a more consistent and failed approach to employee development, which is particularly advantageous because it has been established that fairness is a highly appreciated quality of effective leadership. Transactional leadership recognizes and rewards exceptional service, which has the potential to encourage and incentivize excellence in healthcare delivery and administration (Richards, 2020). Several organizations have introduced incentive programs, such as staff member of the month,

with celebratory events to recognize those who display excellence and excellent performance.

One criticism of the transactional leadership style is its task focused characteristics, resulting in a nonholistic approach to patient care and poorer employee empowerment, health, and wellbeing (Richards, 2020). The literature has highlighted several transactional leadership limits. Task focused leadership is insufficient to produce optimal workforce results, and transactional leadership can lower employee empowerment, health, and wellbeing (Richards, 2020). The literature has highlighted several transactional leadership limits. Task focused leadership is insufficient to produce optimal workforce results, and transactional leadership can lower employee empowerment, health, and wellbeing. In the patient care setting, certain features of transactional leadership may be required to guarantee that the task is accomplished to a consistent level set by leaders and organizations. Richards (2020) asserted that outlining rewards and consequences, considering competency, and ensuring policies, protocols, and suitable processes are all examples of these aspects.

### **Authentic Leadership**

Authentic leadership first surfaced in leadership studies in the 1960s (Williams et al., 2021). There have been different definitions of authentic leadership, each with its own set of implications. Kim et al. (2021) claimed that authentic leadership is a process that builds on positive psychological capacities and advanced organizational context. This process could increase self awareness, internalized regulation, a positive moral perspective, and openness about how leaders and members of their groups can improve

their own lives. Batra (2020) described authentic leadership as a sign of ethical and mindful professional actions. Authentic leaders are conscious of their strengths and flaws, and thus they try to improve their insufficiencies. Oh & Chhinezer (2021) asserted that being a role model for employees and leading with sincerity and integrity are critical to the authentic leadership style. Authenticity is described as the degree to which we remain true to ourselves despite facing external pressures and forces in the materialistic world we live in that are different from our own beliefs and values. Authentic leadership is defined as following one's genuine self and expressing oneself in ways compatible with one's inner ideas and feelings (Aboramaden et., 2021). Leaders are deemed authentic if they know who they are and constantly demonstrate their values and views (Steffens et al., 2021).

Authentic leaders are truthful, straightforward, and devoted to their interests and goals (Liu et al., 2021). The preference of authentic leaders is to encourage individual action in accordance with their moral standards and religious beliefs and to provide constructive direction to subordinates. Authentic leadership is seen as the bedrock upon which all other forms of constructive leadership are built (Liu et al., 2021). It has a positive impact on individuals, groups, and organizations in various ways. Authentic leaders are those that hold firm to their principles and convictions while gaining the respect and trust of their employees (Iqbal et al., 2020). Authentic leaders act according to their regulations and ideals regarding leaders in the organization. Authentic leadership is founded on an ethical perspective, proven beneficial advancement in organizations. Authentic leaders are self assured, optimistic, cheerful, and highly moral. According to

Iqbal et al. (2020), authentic leaders' subordinates have more psychological capital and creativity.

The four characteristics of authentic leadership include self awareness, inspirational moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency (Zhang et al., 2020). Self awareness (known as 'know yourself') refers to a greater understanding of one's strengths and shortcomings and how the leader influences others (Yamak & Eyupoglu, 2021). This concept implies that leaders help subordinates develop authentically by demonstrating these characteristics and encouraging open and honest relationships. Zhang et al. (2020) asserted that authenticity is believed to impact followers in the workplace through behavior modeling, personal identification, emotional spread, support for self determination, and social interactions through this mechanism. Developing additional aspects of authentic leadership necessitates the development of self-awareness. According to Steffens et al. (2021), these leaders are capable of galvanizing groups of individuals and inspire a variety of positive effects on the organization as a whole. Oh & Chhinzer (2021) stated that to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced information processing, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with subordinates, as well to foster positive self development, authentic leadership has been defined as a pattern of leader behavior that According to Yamin (2020), generating and implementing balanced processing in management is beneficial to the organization (Yamin, 2020). It includes positive management behaviors such as listening, avoiding favoritism, considering other people's thoughts, and avoiding bias during the decision making phase.

Authentic leadership contributes to the achievement of human resources outcomes such as employee well being, building trust, and increasing job productivity (Zeb et al., 2020). Genuine leadership extends beyond the bottom line performance and positively impacts stakeholders beyond the organization, such as consumers and the community (Luu, 2019). An organization may assist in establishing an environment that supports employee engagement by encouraging positive leadership conduct, such as authentic leadership (Meskelis & Whittington, 2020).

Authentic leadership has been identified as a critical component in employee retention (Oh & Oh, 2017). Authentic leadership leads to employee retention by lowering employees' emotional tiredness during workdays. As a result, their degrees of job happiness and work engagement are growing, and their levels of passionate commitment are becoming more enriched. Zeb et al. (2020) asserted that authentic leadership's high quality and genuine leadership conduct reduces job fatigue and turnover while simultaneously improving job performance. Luu (2019) stated that individuals and teams benefit from authentic leadership because it provides them with a wide range of critical resources, such as clarity, self transcendentness, and ideals. These essential resources allow authentic leadership to act as individual level social support and resources for employees.

Commitment to the organization is a critical outcome of authentic leadership. According to Kalay et al.(2020), real leaders respect transparency; followers gradually learn what the leader truly values and seeks. Thus, leaders who can speak openly about their weaknesses, blind spots, and vulnerabilities enable others to do the same, fostering a

culture of trust and commitment among their followers. By acting under their own words and transparent motivation and interacting in an open manner, leaders assist their followers in developing trust in them, even when certain preconditions or expectations are violated (Kalay, 2020). This trusting relationship between leaders and followers enables them to identify with their leaders, significantly impacting their organizational commitment. When employees feel a strong emotional tie to an organization, they identify with it and participate in it (Kalay et al., 2020). True leaders understand the importance of openness. Employees gradually understand the leader's values and seek to share their shortcomings, blind spots, and deficiencies, which fosters a high level of dedication to the organization. Leaders who share their shortcomings, blind spots, and employee deficiencies help cycle a high level of dedication among employees (Kalay et al., 2020). Leaders develop trust and commitment with their employees through nondefensive communication. This trusting connection between leaders and employees significantly influences employee commitment (Kalay et al., 2020).

Authentic leadership has been frequently criticized and disputed since its beginnings. According to Crawford et al. (2020), the lack of conceptual clarity and theoretical rigor criticism of authentic leadership. Construct clarity is attained when a construct is converted into a logical and concise explanation with few distinctions between what is and what is not. Crawford (2020) purported that one ambiguity surrounding authentic leadership is its characterization through nomological networks, such as positive psychological capability and a positive ethical climate, rather than a standalone concept. Another criticism of authentic leadership is that there are no precise

definitions. These include detailed descriptions with sparse categorical distinctions, defining the scope conditions and contextual circumstances in which the construct will or will not apply, presenting semantic relationships with related constructs, and demonstrating coherence and logical consistency (Crawford, 2020).

### **Transition**

Section 1 begins with a summary of the impact that high turnover rates have had on direct care workers in mental health organizations and how supervisory assistance might help mitigate some turnover intentions by minimizing emotional exhaustion and enhancing job satisfaction. In addition, an overview of the problem's background and purpose statement is provided, as well as information on the nature of the study, research question and hypotheses, the conceptual framework, the operational definition, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and the significance of the study is reviewed. Next, a review of Herzberg's two factor theory, Vroom's expectancy theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, and job embeddedness is provided. The literature includes a section on critics of Herzberg's two factory theory. The literature review concludes with a discussion on employee turnover, leadership, and leadership styles.



## Section 2: The Project

In Section 2, I reaffirmed the study's purpose. Following the purpose statement, the role of the researcher is introduced. Next, the study participants, research method, and design are discussed. Section 2 continues with the population, sampling, and ethical research. Lastly, instruments for collecting data, techniques for organizing data, and methods for analyzing data are all covered in this section.

### **Purpose Statement**

Organizations that provide quality care and responsive services to people with disabilities and older adults are in crisis, improving the retention of direct care professionals (Friedman, 2019). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), over 5.6 million employees left their jobs in 2019 because of involuntary turnover, layoffs, and terminations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020, p.2). The general business problem is that direct care employee retention at mental health organizations impacts business performance. The specific business problem is that some managers of mental health organizations lack strategies to retain direct care professionals.

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore strategies that managers from mental health organizations use to retain direct care professionals. The targeted population consists of six managers from three mental health organizations located in the southeastern United States that have successfully implemented strategies to retain direct care professionals. The implications for positive social change include increasing direct care professional retention and may improve the quality of services for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities who seek programs and services.

### **Role of the Researcher**

During the data collection process, my role as a researcher included semistructured interviews with twelve participants from three mental health organizations using Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) mediated technologies and face to face interviews. By following the guidelines of the Belmont Report's ethical principles, the researcher's assumptions will not negatively impact the study. The Belmont Report's principal goal is to safeguard the rights of all research subjects or participants (Adashi et al., 2018). Additionally, the Belmont Report acts as an ethical guide for research. There are three fundamental components: (1) human dignity, (2) goodwill, and (3) justice. Throughout the research process, ethical decisions making must be guided by the principles of respect for others, human dignity, beneficence, and justice (Farrugia, 2019). Respecting study participants entails considering problems such as informed permission, anonymity, and confidentiality, as well as the researcher's impact on the participant and the research context during the research study and dissemination. The second principle of beneficence requires the researcher to prioritize the safety of participants (Farrugia, 2019). Finally, justice entails ensuring that encumbrances and rewards of research are distributed fairly, without discrimination or manipulation. These principles provide a flexible framework for the researcher to consider ethical issues as they occur during the research process (Farrugia, 2019).

The researcher's role is to collect data ethically and reputable to establish trust and credibility with their readers (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). The data collection technique should be consistent with the study's objectives, and acquiring results that

correlate with previously published data will boost validity. Qualitative researchers acknowledge that they cannot divorce themselves from the research by adding their own experiences, values, and viewpoints (Fusch et al., 2018). Instead, qualitative researchers bring their own bias to the study, communicate it to the reader, and moderate their tendency to interpret the other participant accurately.

Any research involving human or animal participants must be approved ethically by the appropriate institution (Chowdhury & Shil, 2021). The guidelines for ethical behavior are founded on the philosophical principles of beneficence, which means to do good; nonmaleficence, which means to harm; autonomy or self determination; and equity, which means to treat others fairly (Reid et al., 2018). These principles are designed to assist researchers' thinking when submitting applications for ethical approval by encouraging them to foresee ethical difficulties and dilemmas throughout the study. Furthermore, the researcher participant relationship and ethical concerns regarding the completion and dissemination of findings are essential (Reid et al., 2018).

A trustworthy interview protocol is critical for obtaining high quality data from interviews. Careful attention is required when constructing qualitative interview questions to avoid bias (Young et al., 2018). Semistructured interviews frequently demand the participant give sensitive and personal information directly to the interviewer therefore, the power imbalance between the researchers and the participant must be considered (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). The interviewer or researcher may be a patient's healthcare team member or interact with the healthcare team in a healthcare setting. The interviewer should be assured that their participation and answers will have

no impact on the care they receive or their connection with the providers (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Other problems to consider include minimizing the risk of injury, safeguarding interviewee information, sufficiently alerting interviewees about the study's objective and structure, and minimizing the danger of exploitation.

### **Participants**

The eligibility criteria for the study's participants consisted of (1) managers that have successfully implemented strategies to retain direct care professionals, (2) participants willing to participate in the study, and (3) participants consenting to tape recorded interviews. Strategies for gaining access to participants included using the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) to assist in finding accredited providers who have managers with three years of experience in retaining direct care professionals.

To establish a working relationship with participants, I built a rapport with participants in the study by establishing comfortable interactions before and during the interview. Building a rapport is critical throughout the discussion since it enables the participants to provide an in depth account of their prior experiences of the study (McGrath et al., 2018). Before conducting interviews with participants, their culture and power aspects were assessed. Individuals are cultural creatures with varying expectations of the interview environment (McGrath et al., 2018). Knowledge gained through qualitative research is always a collaborative effort between the researcher and the participant (Riese, 2018).

Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants for this study and ascertain that participants' characteristics align with the overarching research questions. Qualitative research may involve a relatively small and purposefully selected sample to increase the depth of insight (Campbell et al., 2020). For this reason, purposive sampling provides a better fit between the sample and the goals and objectives of the study. Furthermore, the interview questions focused on understanding participants' subjective experiences of direct care professionals' employee turnover and strategies used to retain them. A qualitative sampling strategy specifies the number of observations, interviews, focus groups, or cases necessary to guarantee that the findings are rich in data (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Testing the stated hypotheses or investigating research questions requires sufficient recruitment of participants; insufficient recruitment jeopardizes the study's validity (Daly et al., 2019).

## **Research Method and Design**

### **Research Method**

Research studies can be categorized as quantitative, qualitative, or mixed method research (Rutberg & Bouikidis, 2018). Quantitative research is a method for answering questions about or explaining phenomena of interest by gathering and analyzing objective numerical data instead of subjective narrative material provided in a qualitative study (Astroth & Chung, 2018). In qualitative research, the researcher often explores meanings and insights in each circumstance. Data collecting and analysis techniques are used in purposive sampling and semistructured, open ended interviews (Mohajan, 2018). Qualitative research is well suited for elucidating the meanings and implications of a

phenomenon. Finally, mixed methodology research combines the views, procedures, data types, and quantitative and qualitative research to generate a complex and comprehensive understanding (Plano Clark, 2019).

A qualitative methodology is appropriate for this study because it allowed me to evaluate participants' experiences related to the real world phenomenon under investigation. However, because the study's goal was not to measure the amount and frequency of variables, examine correlations and differences across groups and time, or test theories, a quantitative methodology would not be appropriate (Plano Clark, 2019).

### **Research Design**

A research design serves as a road map for the research process, outlining how a study will progress from the research purpose and questions through the conclusions. It is a systematic planning process involving collecting and analyzing data to expand one's understanding of a subject. The research method is divided into three states (a) offering a question for study, (b) gathering data to answer the question, and (c) delivering a response to the question (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018). I adopted a design that included multiple case studies so I could guide my investigation. A case study was chosen as the research strategy for this study because it focuses on the views of a single homogenous group toward a particular phenomenon occurring in a specific setting (Rashid et al., 2019). Relative to single case studies, multiple case studies examine several cases and then develop a single set of cross case findings (Yin, 2018). The goal of this study necessitated the examination of perspectives of a comparable group of mental health managers concerning the phenomena of direct care professionals' retention. Yin (2018)

contends that case study research is an empirical approach that entails an in depth examination of a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in its real world environment, mainly when the borders between phenomenon and context are unclear.

An ethnographic and phenomenological research design was considered for the study. However, these research approaches were omitted since the study's objective is to perform an in depth, multi faceted examination of managers' retention strategies for direct care professionals. Ethnographic research is concerned with a community's collective experiences, whereas phenomenology is concerned with an individual's experiences (Medina et al., 2020). A case study method is well suited for examining phenomena in their natural setting (Alam, 2020). The case study method is used to investigate and portray the research issue in various ways by gathering data within the subject matter context. This different approach to data collecting enables a broader understanding of the challenges and a more descriptive examination of the data (Alam, 2020). I did not select an ethnography design for this study because the objective was not to explore interpersonal connections. Case study research is an appropriate method to use for this topic and for this study.

### **Population and Sampling**

The population for this study included twelve mental health managers from three mental health organizations in the southeastern United States that have successfully implemented strategies to retain direct care professionals. Purposive sampling helps identify people most likely to have witnessed the occurrences based on their comprehension and knowledge of the population. Purposive sampling is appropriate for

this study due to the extensive development history and opinion of its uncomplicated and straightforward strategy of matching the sample to the research's aims and objectives (Campbell et al., 2020).

The sample sizes for qualitative research should be large enough to allow for the unfolding of new and richly textured knowledge of the phenomenon being studied but small enough to allow for in depth, case based analysis of qualitative data. In addition, the small size is beneficial when conducting in depth interviews (Vasileiou et al., 2018).

### **Ethical Research**

Conducting ethical research entails safeguarding the welfare, dignity, and rights of people participating in the study. Moreover, one of the critical tenets of ethics is a researcher's sense of obligation and duty of care toward his or her research participants (Lillie & Ayling, 2020). Therefore, the first ethical consideration consisted of adhering to the Research Ethics Review Process by Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is responsible for verifying that all Walden University research adheres to the university's standards and applicable federal regulations in the United States of America.

The study participants were invited to participate in the study by email. The email included an informed consent form describing the researcher's and participants' roles and responsibilities during the research process. Consent can be defined as having four essential components: disclosure (the researcher's information is adequate); comprehension (the extent to which the participant comprehends this information); and voluntariness (the absence of inducement of coercion). These factors must be present for



informed consent to have intended moral power. Permission is morally justified based on the concept of autonomy because the consent procedure can be viewed as a means of safeguarding and promoting the study participant's autonomous decision making (Sim & Waterfield, 2019). Additionally, it is backed by the linked principle of respect for persons, which prohibits using a person solely to accomplish a goal. Also, the consent form includes the purpose of the study, the procedures involved in completing the survey, including interview questions, the nature of the study, the risks and benefits of participants participating in the study, and the researcher's role in privacy protection (Sim & Waterfield, 2019).

### **Data Collection Instruments**

I was the primary instrument for data collection for this study. Data from several sources contributed to the development of theory based on the perceptions and behaviors of study participants in their daily lives (Maher et al., 2018). The primary data source for this study included semistructured interviews. Semistructured interviews are frequently utilized in qualitative research. This approach entails a conversation between the researcher and the subject, led by a customizable interview methodology and augmented with follow up questions, probes, and comments. The system enables the researcher to obtain open ended data, probe extensively into participant ideas, feelings, and opinions about a particular subject, and delve deeply into personal and sensitive matters (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

I developed and followed an interview protocol for the semistructured interviews (Appendix A). The interview protocol guaranteed that the research questions posed

during the interview were relevant to the study's topic. To enhance the reliability of the study, I used a case study protocol proposed by Yin (2018). A case study protocol includes (a) a synopsis of the case study, (b) procedures for data collecting, (c) protocol questions (d) a provisional framework for the case study report. The research questions must be specific, concentrated, and backed by a solid conceptual framework, all of which contribute to the section of acceptable research methodologies that increase trustworthiness and reduce researcher bias (Johnson et al., 2020). Qualitative interviews enable researchers to delve deeply into issues unique to the respondents' perspectives, eliciting insights into how various phenomena of interest are experienced and interpreted (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). To ensure methodological triangulation, a secondary data source included a complete examination of human resources policies, employee handbooks, and employee turnover reports. Interviews have historically been associated with qualitative research and the naturalistic paradigm due to the interaction between participants and researchers and the emphasis on examining human phenomena.

The semistructured, open ended interview questions were used to develop a framework for addressing strategies to retain direct care professionals. With the participants' permission, I recorded and took detailed notes of the responses to the open ended interview questions during the study. Throughout the interview process, the researcher's knowledge of the subject frequently evolves (Johnson et al., 2020). As a result, expanding and improving a central research question focused on both the phenomena being studied and the context in which they occur is critical for the rigor and quality of the research. In addition, participants were given the opportunity to clarify

specific questions or answers. I transcribed all interview notes and maintained data quality, reliability, and authenticity.

### **Data Collection Technique**

After receiving IRB approval (06-29-22-0626539), the participants of the study were emailed an informed consent, which doubled as an invitation to participate in the study. The consent form doubled as an invitation to participate in the study. I followed up with participants by email to answer any questions they had. The participants who agreed to participate in the study communicated their approval by email with the words “I consent.” Semistructured interviews were used to collect data from participants. The overall objective of conducting semistructured interviews is to elicit information from participants who have personal experiences, attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs about the research topic (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Semistructured interviews are an advantage because they allow the researcher to explore new emergent questions throughout the conversation (Mahat Shamir et al., 2019). A disadvantage of the semistructured interview is that it might last between 30 to 90 minutes. It requires transcription and translation. After transcription, the narrative which can be complex, and contradicting, must be translated (Caduff et al., 2019).

Pilot studies are conducted in preparation for a larger experiment, initiative, or development. Moreover, a pilot study aids by serving as a small scale experiment or series of observations conducted to determine how to initiate a full scale project (Fraser et al., 2018). The usefulness of pilot studies is readily accepted in quantitative research

(Williams-McBean, 2019). Because I did not plan to conduct a large scale study or a quantitative study, a pilot study was not required.

The process of obtaining input from participants or stakeholders concerning one's data or interpretations is known as member checking (Motulsky, 2021). Member checking is integral to creating trustworthiness in qualitative research (Candela, 2019). Participants could be presented with a summary of their transcripts and asked whether they believe it is a comprehensive representation of their views or would like to clarify or elaborate on their responses (Busetto et al., 2020). This process involves letting participants verify, extend, edit, and remark on raw data or research results (Brear, 2019). Member checking is a potentially helpful and robust method or set of tactics, but it must be integrated thoughtfully and carefully within the aims of the research endeavor. Member checking is used for very transactional authenticity (Brear, 2019). Validating data or conclusions with participants may disclose previously undiscovered researcher biases and point out inaccuracies. In addition, it helps the researcher determine whether their results resonate with and are deemed reasonable by the study participants and pursue emergent themes or interpretations (Brear, 2019).

### **Data Organization Technique**

The qualitative researcher is granted access to the participants' natural environment and is the primary research instrument used to gather and interpret data from the participants' experiences (Clark & Veale, 2018). Coding in qualitative research refers to the methods that allow collected data to be processed, classified, and thematically sorted, giving an orderly platform to the development of meaning (Williams & Moser,

2019). While qualitative research orientations range in theory and practice, a coding system is used to organize it (Alam, 2020). In addition, coding aids in ensuring the rigor and authenticity of participants' interviews (Cypress, 2019).

Each participant's identity was protected by replacing names with pseudonyms (Surmiak, 2018). Aliases can be used to protect participants' identities and research data (Yin, 2016). I labeled each participant as Participant 1 through 11 for coding and data analysis. Raw data from the study were stored on a password protected flash drive and will be locked in a safe for five years. After a period of five years, I will delete all participant information from the flash drive and discard any paper records that are still in existence.

### **Data Analysis**

Researchers gather information from various sources to provide evidence to support their study initiatives (Yin, 2018). The research question: *What strategies do managers from mental health organizations use to retain direct care professionals* were used to develop the interview questions. I conducted semistructured interviews with participants and gathered data from corporate papers. I gained access to the corporate papers. A continuous review of the quality of data collected adds rigor to the study's findings. Qualitative data is necessary to gain extensive and insightful information from the data. Rich and insightful interactions with the data are required for qualitative data interpretation. The researcher must use imaginative insight to understand the facts and the theory (Maher et al., 2018).

Qualitative data analysis methods include phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive (Yin, 2018). By understanding various techniques for qualitative data analysis, the interpretative researcher may be able to analyze a particular set of data (Sechelski & Onwuegbuzie, 2019). To analyze qualitative data, one must (a) compile the data, (b) disassemble the data, (c) reassemble the data, (d) interpret the data, and (e) draw conclusions from the analysis (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

### **Compiling Data**

The first step in discovering relevant answers to the research questions is to organize the data into a format that can be used (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Compiling data includes transcribing the data so the researcher can readily examine it. Using a multiple case study design, I employed methodological triangulation by interviewing twelve managers and collecting data from corporate papers to increase the validity of the data inference. Triangulation is a technique used by researchers to boost the credibility and validity of their findings (Noble & Heale, 2019). Triangulation strengthens research by providing a range of datasets to explain various elements of interest to the topic. It also aids in reframing situations in which one dataset invalidates an assumption made by another. My approach was to capture relevant management strategies related to the retention of direct care professionals from the interview questions. I used NVivo 12 software to compile and organize raw data. NVivo 12 software was designed to assist qualitative researchers in analyzing vast amounts of text by enabling more in depth analysis and giving enhanced data visualization capabilities (Alam, 2020).



**Disassembling Data**

After the data has been compiled, it must be separated (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Disassembling data entails separating it and forming meaningful categories; this is frequently accomplished through coding. Coding is when raw data are gradually turned into useable data by identifying themes, concepts, or ideas that are related in some way (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). NVivo 12 software was used to assist me in developing code, themes, and categories to better grasp the research question.

**Reassembling Data**

The next step is reassembling and ordering the data, which entails restructuring codes or devising higher level regulations to sort the data (Reyes et al., 2012). The principles to which the hypothesis is assigned are then grouped to form themes (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). A theme represents a structured response or meaning within the data collection and captures something essential about the data related to the research question (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). I transferred raw data saved from interviews in Microsoft Word to NVivo 12 software. The raw data was mapped into meaningful codes to create themes and uncover similarities, differences, and relationships to understand the essential themes.

**Interpreting Data**

When data is reassembled through coding, the researcher extracts excerpts from the data. The data will be viewed in conjunction with one another; this allows for researchers to interpret the occurrence across diverse experiences, beliefs, and histories identified as thematic patterns across diverse experiences, beliefs, and histories identified



thematic patterns across the data set (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). There is no checklist for what constitutes good interpretation, but five qualities should be the goal of all qualitative interpretations (Yin, 2016). First, the interpretation should be complete. Readers should see the beginning, middle, and end of how the interpretations were created (Yin, 2016). Second, the interpretations should be fair in the sense that other researchers should arrive at the same conclusion if given the same data. Third the interpretations must be accurate and representative of the raw data (Yin, 2016). Fourth, when considered in the context of current literature, high quality studies will add to the understanding of the subject. Fifth, data collection methods and subsequent interpretations should be credible and garner respect from colleagues.

### **Concluding Data**

Conclusions provide an answer to the research questions or serve as a summary of the study's findings (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). The beginning of any research project should be a reasonable research question. The conclusion of any analysis should always answer the question changed slightly throughout the data analysis process.

### **Reliability and Validity**

In qualitative research, reliability is rooted in the concept of data adequacy, which allows researchers to demonstrate consistent support for their findings across participants (Spiers et al., 2018). While reliability describes the degree to which a measure yields the same result, validity describes how a measure yields the correct result (McDonald et al., 2019). The researcher must demonstrate the data analysis's rigor, validity, and reliability (Roberts et al., 2019).

**Reliability**

Member checking is used to confirm and review the results with participants or other members of the community (McDonald et al., 2019). During member checking the participant is asked to check the completeness and accuracy of an interview transcript to ensure it accurately reflects the meaning and intent of the participant's contribution (Johnson et al., 2020). For the purpose of ensuring the validity of the findings, I employed data triangulation to cross check secondary data sources such as interviews and field notes with the findings from the research. Finally, transparency in the study process and sharing of the researchers' positions are approaches to community reliability (McDonald et al., 2019). The reliability of the results can be evaluated by assessing the reliability and validity of qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

**Credibility**

Credibility is the researcher's capacity to demonstrate the study's findings are credible and the number of ways to improve credibility (Raskind et al., 2019). In addition, credibility determines if the research findings represent believable information gathered from the original data of the participants and are a correct interpretation of the participant's actual opinions (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). As the researcher, I used NVivo 12 software to undergo methodological triangulation to test the validity of the interview notes and corporate papers. I used member checking to ensure the trustworthiness of the results.

**Transferability**

Transferability is achieved when the researcher provides detailed contextual information so that readers can determine whether the results apply to their own or other situations (Johnson et al., 2020). Transferability is partly expressed by explaining sample parameters such as the geographical location of the study, the number and characteristics of participants, and the duration for data collection and analysis. Such factors also add to the credibility of the results and the ability of readers to determine whether the results may be transferred to their own and other situations (Johnson et al., 2020). To enhance transferability, I ensured that the study's background and assumptions crucial to the research are preserved. Mainly, I used member checking triangulation and data saturation.

**Dependability**

Dependability is attained when the researcher outlines the study method in sufficient detail so that the work can be repeated after the completion of the study (Johnson et al., 2020). In addition, participant evaluation of the study's findings, interpretation, and recommendations is required to ensure that all the results, performance, and recommendations are supported by the data collected from the study's participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Concisely, dependability refers to whether the process of gathering qualitative data was sound.

**Confirmability**

The researcher guarantees and communicates to the reader that the results are based on and reflective of the information obtained from participants rather than the

researcher's interpretations or biases (Johnson et al., 2020). By adopting and meeting norms of rigor such as member verification, triangulation, and peer review, the confirmability of the results is improved.

### **Validity**

Validity refers to qualitative research that is believable, credible, trustworthy and satisfies the study's stated objectives (Astroth & Chung, 2018). In qualitative research, the findings or description of a phenomenon should accurately represent the natural occurrence. To ensure credibility, there are several methods that can be used to improve the credibility of the research, such as persistent participant transcript review, member checking of data interpretation, triangulation, and data saturation.

The participants' feedback on the researcher's interpretation of data can help guarantee that there is no internal conflict or inconsistency (Johnson et al., 2020). In this process, researchers involve participants' methods of correcting and reorienting researchers and the developed qualitative data to produce more representative analyses of social phenomena (Rose & Johnson, 2020). I used member checking to validate my interpretation of data and to obtain any necessary clarification. The use of member checking strengthens the validity and trustworthiness of research by repeating and changing data collection and analyses in collaboration with the participant. Member checking can be used as a process of catalytic validity to draw attention to the active roles of participants in contributing to research. The data collected from these many sources require some type of text analysis (Renz et al., 2018).

### **Transition and Summary**

In section 2, I reaffirmed the methodology and design for the study based on strategies managers use to retain direct care professionals. I employed a qualitative multiple case study to explore managers' retention strategies to retain direct care professionals. In Section 2, I discussed the role of the researcher, the participants who took part in the study, the research technique and design, and how the research was conducted. Next, I shared the data collection instruments, methods for analyzing the data, the target population, and the guidelines for conducting ethical research. Next, I shared the implications for social change, the roles in business processes, and employee retention benefits. Finally, I completed a review of the academic literature on the essential topics of leadership, leadership strategies, transformational leadership, and its role in employee retention.

I presented the findings of the study, as well as their applicability to professional practice and their implications for social change, in Section 3 of the study. Also, Section 3 contains recommendations for action, recommendations for further research, my reflections on the research process, and a concluding statement to finalize the study.

### Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore strategies that managers from mental health organizations use to retain direct care professionals. Using the two factor theory of Herzberg et al. (1959) as the conceptual framework for this study, I investigated the strategies mental health managers use to retain direct care professionals. The following themes emerged from the examination of participant responses and company papers: (a) communication, (b) training, (c) advancement opportunities, and (d) employee incentives.

#### **Presentation of the Findings**

The overarching research question for this qualitative multiple case study is “what strategies do managers from mental health organizations use to retain direct care professionals?” To gain a better understanding of the research question and to achieve data triangulation, I gathered data by conducting semistructured interviews with 12 managers from three mental health organizations located in the southeastern United States and reviewed corporate papers. I used NVivo 12 software to categorize, identify, analyze and aggregate themes from semistructured interviews and corporate papers.

#### **Theme 1: Communication**

The first theme to emerge from the analysis of the data was communication. Kalay et al. (2020) posited that through nondefensive communication, leaders foster loyalty and trust among the workforce. Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, Participant 6, Participant 8, and Participant 10 mentioned that communication is a key

component in the retention of direct care professionals. Participant 1 indicated that “our management team is dedicated to keeping the lines of communication open and clear; we go to the front line to ensure employees can hear our voice.” In addition, Participant 1 stated that the organization uses S-Comm technology to ensure employees receive information at the same time. Participant 3 stated that “effective communication is what matters the most when managing direct care professionals because each employee requires different levels of support to increase motivation and employee retention.

The findings from the data analysis support Herzberg’s two factor theory. According to Herzberg’s two factor theory, management actions contribute to increased employee retention (Hassan et al., 2022). Furthermore, the review of the employee handbook aligned with the participant's responses on the importance of communication in employee retention.

## **Theme 2: Training**

Training appeared as the second theme in the data analysis of all participant's responses. An organization that offers its workers a transparent path to opportunities for professional development inspires loyalty from its workforce (Vuong et al., 2020). All participants endorsed training as an effective means for retaining direct care professionals. In addition, the training theme was derived from the employee handbook and training manual of the organization. Participants elucidated that training programs for direct care professionals help improve recruitment and retention. Participant 2 emphasized the need for ongoing training after the direct care professional begins working on the floor and that it increases employee retention. Caredo et al. (2022) purported that training is vital before

an employee begins work and that employees require additional training after joining the organization to improve their ability to perform their job well.

Participant 3 indicated that “I think for them to know that the training they are getting can help them succeed in other realms as well for them to grow individually, and professionally is important.” Participant 7 stated, “a lot of times employees become bored with doing the same routine over and over, so training helps them develop new skills; employees feel empowered when presented with the opportunity to participate in training.” Participant 8 indicated that “training opportunities give employees a sense of satisfaction when pursuing career objectives; offering direct care professionals training opportunities provides them with resources to increase job performance and the longevity of the job.” Asif & Nisar (2020) affirmed that investing in employee training is one of the most essential components of effective employee retention. These findings provide support for the conceptual framework that was developed for this study. According to Herzberg et al. (1959), a significant factor in employee retention is the provision of opportunities for both informal and formal forms of professional development (Irabor & Okolie, 2019).



**Theme 3: Advancement Opportunities**

The opportunity for advancement was the third theme discovered during the data analysis process. Participants 7, Participant 9, Participant 10, and Participant 11 noted that employees feel appreciated when offered advancement opportunities. Participant 7, Participant 5, Participant 9, Participant 10, and Participant 11 asserted that the creation of career paths for direct support professionals is just as important as higher pay scales. Participant 2 stated, “it is not totally money that keeps an employee from leaving; it is the mindset of the staff and the company.” Participant 9 stated that “state money did not make employees want to remain at the company.”

The themes that emerged from the data analysis validate the importance of advancement opportunities for direct care professionals. Organizations that provide a defined route to professional growth and progress are more likely to generate employee loyalty (Vuong et al., 2020). In a study on leadership and staff perceptions of long-term care staffing, the findings indicated that promotion opportunities have a positive effect on employee retention (Creapeau et al., 2022).

**Theme 4: Employee Incentives**

Employee incentives were the fourth theme in the data analysis. Employee incentives are a vital factor in employee retention and a significant mediator (Hassan, 2022). Participants 1, Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 8, Participant 9, and Participant 10 agreed that employees appreciate monetary and nonmonetary rewards. Participant 1 noted that incentives increase employees' commitment to work extra shifts, and it has a significant impact on the number of employees who choose to remain with

the organization. Participant 3 stated that employees receive reward credits in appreciation for outstanding job performance. Participant 3 stated that the reward credits could be used to take paid time off from work.

The themes from the data analysis support Herzberg two factor theory which holds that if employees' needs are not met, it could lead to workplace dissatisfaction (Bianchini et al., 2022). Additionally, the themes support Herzberg's motivating factors; which are the primary drivers of job satisfaction and include accomplishments, recognition, and responsibility as well as opportunities for advancement; and dissatisfiers (hygiene factors), which are the primary drivers of job satisfaction (Kotni & Venkateswarlu, 2018). There are many different ways that organizations provide paid time off for direct care professionals, including pooled paid time off that is neither specifically linked to nor administratively tracked as paid vacation time or paid sick leave (Pettingell et al., 2022).

### **Applications to Professional Practice**

Turnover is costly and disruptive to an organization (Jian et al., 2022). It is anticipated that staffing difficulties will become more challenging to manage as the population of the United States continue to age (Creapeau et al., 2022). Furthermore, it is well established that leadership has a significant influence on the outcomes that employees achieve in any organization (Hattab et al., 2022). Managers of direct care professionals seek retention strategies that are effective (Layne et al., 2022). I conducted semistructured interviews with 12 managers from three mental health organizations in the

Southeast region of the United States who successfully implemented strategies to retain direct care professionals.

There is a plethora of research evidence that supports the themes identified through semistructured interviews and corporate papers. The findings indicated the importance of communication, training, advancement, and incentives to increase the retention of direct care professionals. According to Scales (2022), training has the potential to increase job quality, job satisfaction, patient care as well as retention of direct care professionals. Mental health organizations would benefit from the leadership strategies managers use because it creates a workplace where employees stay with the organization.

### **Implications for Social Change**

In the United States, there are thought to be 4.6 million direct care professionals (Scales, 2020). For people receiving long term care and support services, direct care professionals offer a wide range of services. The high turnover rate among direct care professionals had a deleterious effect on the quality of services provided to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In addition, the high rate of employee turnover within an organization reduces both work satisfaction and performance, as well as the financial burden it places on the organization.

The implications for positive social change include the potential to retain skilled direct care professionals, allowing mental health organizations to continue providing quality services that enhance the lives of clients in the community, and supplying data to help human services agencies, political leadership, and mental health organizations that

serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to address the retention of direct care professionals.

### **Recommendations for Action**

The findings of this study can be used by managers that provide mental health services prior to the adoption of any policies, procedures, or training plans intended to promote the retention of direct care professionals. In addition, the presented findings could be used as a tool to assess current leadership strategies practiced for retaining direct care professionals. These recommendations may be helpful for other mental health organization managers, including (a) promoting empowerment and inclusion, (b) increasing compassion fatigue training, and (c) hiring qualified employees.

#### **Recommendation 1: Promoting Empowerment and Inclusion**

Federal regulations now require direct care workers' inclusion in interdisciplinary care planning (Scales, 2022). Consequently, staff members have a difficult time understanding the expectations placed on them and the purpose for which their services are provided. Clifford et al. (2018) also state that it is a common misconception that direct support professionals are not interested in or able to benefit from additional training.

Direct support professionals' training programs have shown to be beneficial in increasing the quality of services provided to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Bredewold et al. (2020) stated that direct care professionals who provide community-based services and use a person centered support approach improved the quality of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by increasing

engagement and active choice, improving the creation and implementation of personalized daily routines, and providing more individualized accommodations. It is possible for direct support professionals to improve the overall quality of the services they provide to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities if they receive supplementary training in person centered support.

### **Recommendation 2: Compassion Fatigue Training**

Compassion fatigue in mental health workers is a separate factor connected with employee turnover that was not taken into account in this study. Carla Johnson (1992) first used the term compassion fatigue to describe a particular type of exhaustion that affects people working in the healthcare profession (Gustafsson & Hemberg, 2022). Compassion fatigue can have consequences for the profession and increase turnover.

Managers can help mental health workers in destressing by encouraging a healthy balance between work and personal life and providing opportunities for employees to pursue hobbies outside their job. The next step for managers is to offer training classes for employees to help them become better at managing job and personal pressure, disagreements, change, and how to have a positive outlook on adversities people experience in life. Finally, managers should refer employees to seek support from the organization's employee assistance program, which is often provided through the organization's healthcare or life insurance vendor. Employee Assistance Programs provide employees and their immediate families with a range of services, such as counseling, wellness advice, financial and legal consultations, and more.

### **Recommendation 3: Hiring Qualified Employees**

The retention of human capital within the organization can be boosted by increasing the hiring and retention of higher-caliber direct care professionals (Purdy & Antle, 2022). The use of both formal supervision and peer support is advised for managers who want to raise the level of emotional support in the workplace. Another critical step in the hiring of qualified employees includes providing more details in job postings based on skills that can be transferred from the candidate's experiences to positions in human services (Fisher, Thomas, et al., 2022). Job postings should include a real-life description of the role and its influence on the organization and the individuals it serves (Locke et al., 2022). The next step is to develop a rigorous resume screening process to improve the hiring process. Creating procedures for categorizing direct care professionals' applicant resumes from entry-level to advanced positions improves human resources' capacity to weed out unqualified applicants from the candidate pool.

The findings from this research will be presented at either conferences or other digital dissemination. In addition, the findings will be summarized in a document, and each participant, as well as leaders from participating organizations, will receive a copy. The results of this study will also be made accessible to future researchers and other organizations by way of the ProQuest/UMI dissertation database.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This research aimed to explore leadership strategies managers at mental health organizations used for retaining direct care professionals. Through the use of methodological triangulation and data analysis, I was able to identify four themes that

impact the retention of direct care professionals: (a) communication, (b) training, (c) advancement opportunities, and (d) employee incentives. Despite the study's contributions, there were several limitations. The first limitation is access to participants due to their work schedules. The second limitation is participant bias. The third limitation is that the results may not be generalizable because this study is limited to direct care professionals that work in mental health settings; the findings may not be applicable to other direct care staff who perform similar health care duties. The fourth limitation is the research participants' willingness to disclose what they might have considered confidential or sensitive proprietary information about their organization. Despite these limitations, this study's findings contribute to the existing demand for research on the leadership strategies used by mental health organization managers to retain direct care professionals.

It is recommended that researchers replicate this study with diverse populations of managers from rural, suburban, and metropolitan areas to discover if the environment contributes to staff retention. Another recommendation is that future studies opt for measuring the actual turnover rate, as they offer a more accurate view of how leadership strategies actually contribute to the retention of direct care professionals. The third recommendation is to investigate the relationship between leadership styles and direct care professional retention.

The recommendations from this study could provide organizations with an in-depth insight into the tools and skills managers at mental health organizations use to retain employees. Understanding factors that influence employee turnover could provide

training departments, administration, human resource departments, finance departments, and medical services with pertinent information on how to increase the retention of direct care professionals and possibly improve the working environment for employees and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### **Reflections**

I found the Doctor of Business Administration doctoral study process to be one of the most challenging yet rewarding life experiences. The level of specificity and coherence necessary throughout the study procedure tested every facet of my academic skills. However, the continuous support of my chair and peers inspired me to finish the doctoral race. As I examined the literature, and gathered data from semistructured interviews, and reviewed corporate papers, I discovered that my preconceived belief that compensation was the primary determinant in the retention of direct care professionals was false. However, completing this qualitative multiple case study gave me a new perspective on the difficulties that are involved with the recruitment and retention of direct care professionals in organizations that serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### **Conclusion**

Boosting the retention rates of direct care professionals in the mental health industry is crucial. The retention of direct care providers increases productivity, business growth, and profits and reduces the number of direct care professionals who intend to leave their jobs. The findings from the semistructured interviews and corporate papers indicated that participants believed that communication, training, advancement



opportunities, and employee incentives were successful leadership strategies that would help in retaining direct care professionals. The findings from this study have the potential to improve these factors and the quality of services provided to individuals living with intellectual and developmental disabilities. When managers at mental health organizations are aware of the factors that contribute to staff turnover, they could develop a proactive strategy that would enable them to continue advocating social change through services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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## Appendix A: Interview Protocol

1. What strategies do you use to retain direct care professionals in your organization?
2. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies to retain direct care professionals?
3. What key barriers, if any, did you encounter implementing the strategies for retaining direct care professionals?
4. How did you address the key barriers to implementing the strategies for retaining direct care professionals?
5. What role did management have in implementing strategies to retain direct care professionals?
6. What additional information would you like to share about your organization's strategies to retain direct care professionals?