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Corporate Managers’ Strategies to Increase Employee Motivation

Salim Ibrahim Hussien
Walden University

Walden University

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Salim Hussien

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Review Committee
Dr. Allen Endres, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Betsy Macht, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Deborah Nattress, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
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Abstract

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MBA, Strayer University, 2015

BSc, Cairo University, 2008

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

The lack of employee motivation can impede organizations’ performance. Corporate leaders are concerned with the lack of motivation, as it can lead to negative attitudes and hinder the implementation of organizational strategies. Grounded in Vroom’s expectancy theory and Herzberg’s two-factor theory, the purpose of this qualitative (identify design) was to explore strategies corporate managers use to motivate their employees. Five participants were interviewed from five corporate organizations that successfully applied motivation strategies to motivate their staff. Data were collected through semistructured interviews and field notes. Using Yin’s five-step data analysis, seven themes emerged: establishing an employee incentive program, creating a healthy work-life balance, providing personal development and opportunities for career development, establishing mentorship opportunities, establishing team bonding through team bonding activities and conflict management, creating information transparency and feedback policy, and promoting a healthy working environment. One key recommendation is that corporate managers regularly review employee incentives with those of key competitors. The implications for positive social change include the potential to improve living standards, individual self-worth, and employees’ self-actualization.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my parents. I thank you for your love, continuous support and encouragement and for always being a source of inspiration.

Acknowledgments

I thank God for giving me the strength and courage to that helped to endure and obtain my doctoral degree. My siblings for their encouragement and support. I would also like to thank my committee Chair, Dr. Allen Endres "ACE", my second committee member, Dr. Betsy Macht, and my URR committee member, Dr. Deborah Nattress. You all are instrumental in achieving this milestone of my study journey. I would like to thank you for keeping me aligned with the Rubric, Scholarly writing, and the standards of our university.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The goal of every organization is to have well-motivated employees who contribute to the performance and sustainability of the organization. Employee motivation is one of the most critical factors for ensuring that employees are attracted and retained to create a competitive advantage in today's competitive world (Setiyani et al., 2019). Some employees may be driven by their achievements, whereas some may be more concerned about the security of their tenure (Alhassan & Greene, 2020). Corporate managers have experienced challenges in recruiting and retaining high-performing employees, which has resulted in reduced performance and employee turnover. Employees who are unsatisfied with their job will not be motivated to perform their duties to successfully achieve performance objectives (Alhassan & Greene, 2020). As each employee is unique, their motivational needs can be different. Individuals have many conditions that may be continuously competing and potentially not aligned with business goals. In this study, I explored strategies that some organizations' corporate managers used successfully to motivate their employees to achieve high performance and support organizational success.

Background of the Problem

Corporate organizations' leaders have multiple strategies, which include employees' motivation to improve performance. Some low performance in corporate organizations has been attributed to inadequate employee motivation (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Managers who can predict, understand, and control employee behavior can identify what drives employees and what employees seek to obtain from their jobs (Fiaz et al., 2017). Some corporate organizations have lacked motivation strategies and incurred high employee turnover. Additionally, inadequately motivated employees are typically a burden to the organization instead of being an asset. Therefore, corporate managers, especially in rapidly developing countries such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE), must understand what motivates employees to create and implement strategies to improve organizational performance. Understanding what motivates employees enables the company to recruit and retain quality employees to achieve and sustain high productivity, performance, and efficiency.

Problem and Purpose

Successful employee motivation strategies are critical in the highly competitive, diversified, and digitized global business environment (Setiyani et al., 2019). The UAE hosts people from approximately 200 nationalities, most of which are in the labor market, making the issue of corporate manager strategy and employee motivation significant (Nair et al., 2019). The general business problem is that employees' lack of motivation can lead to a negative attitude. Employees' negative attitudes impede the implementation of organizational strategies, such as welcoming a diversified workforce and adhering to employment conduct guidelines, among others (Jena et al., 2018). The business problem is that some corporate managers lack successful strategies to motivate their employees. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore successful strategies corporate managers use to motivate their employees.

Population and Sampling

The study population comprised five middle-level corporate managers of five corporations in Dubai, UAE. The positive social implications of the study include that improved motivation may increase employees' job satisfaction, self-worth, and dignity in the workplace. An employee whose self-worth is enhanced also becomes more generous and kinder to family members, friends, and neighbors (Setiyani et al. 2019). Consequently, the bond among family members, friends and neighbors is strengthened, thus improving community cohesion. Organizations implementing successful employee motivation strategies may be seen as being responsible for the well-being of their employees, which is a sign of corporate social responsibility. Managers are likely to be rewarded for implementing successful employee motivation strategies. These rewards may help in enhancing the wellbeing of managers thus strengthening team cohesion and leading to employee longevity and community stability.

Nature of the Study

The three methodologies that may be used in a research study are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Henning et al., 2020). The qualitative methodology is an approach for exploring phenomena whereby data can be collected through open-ended questions, semistructured interviews, field notes, focus groups, and participant observation (Henning et al., 2020). This methodology was suitable in this study because (a) the primary data collection method was semistructured interviews and field notes and (b) the nature of the study warrants a qualitative method as the expected interview responses helped in providing an in-depth exploration of successful strategies the respondents used to motivate employees. By contrast, the quantitative methodology is an approach for examining variables' characteristics or relationships (Aroca-Jiménez et al., 2018). The quantitative method was not a suitable option because my study requires an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon that cannot be expressed mathematically. The mixed methodology is an approach involving the integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods in a single investigation (McKim, 2017). The mixed method was not suitable for my study as it involves expressing variables mathematically, whereas my study involved the use of nonnumerical data where I considered repeated concepts during interview as key themes.

The research designs available to a researcher are phenomenology, ethnography, narratives, grounded theory, and case study. Gaus (2017) described phenomenological design as useful for understanding the essence of experiencing phenomena. According to Blair et al. (2019), phenomenological research design helps researchers understand the personal meanings of the lived experiences of individuals and how people learn from the experience and make meaningful adjustments in their lives based on experience. Understanding the personal meanings of experiencing phenomena was not my goal for this study; therefore, the phenomenological design was not suitable. Ethnography is used to describe and interpret the culture of one or more groups (Blair et al., 2019). I did not seek to explore a group's culture, so ethnography design was not suitable for this study. Neither narrative nor grounded theory were suitable for this study because narrative design is used when the study involves story telling whereas grounded theory involves the development of a new theory from the data collection process. I used a qualitative multiple case study design for this study. A qualitative case study design, according to Gammelgaard (2017), is used to explore a contemporary phenomenon inside its real-life setting, particularly when the distinction between phenomenon and the real-life setting is not apparent. I considered both single and multiple case study design. However, a qualitative multiple case study was suitable because, as described by Yin (2018), the multiple case design is used to explore managers' strategies in various organizations as opposed to a single case study, which would allow a single experience of study on managers' strategies in one organization. For the above reasons, a multiple case study design was appropriate.

Research Question

What successful strategies do corporate managers used to motivate employees?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use to improve employee motivation?
2. What metrics do you use to identify whether employee motivation strategies are successful?
3. What motivation strategies have the metrics identified to be most successful for improving employee motivation?
4. What were the key barriers to implementing the most successful strategies for improving employee motivation?
5. How did you address the key barriers to implementing the most successful strategies for improving employee motivation?

6. What more would you like to add about your experience in developing and implementing successful strategies for motivating your employees?

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual theories of motivation are theories researchers use to try and explain factors that motivate employees in the workplace (Grigaliunas & Herzberg, 1971). The conceptual motivation theories that will inform this study include Vroom’s expectancy theory and Herzberg’s two-factor theory. Vroom’s (1964) expectancy theory posits that employees’ level of motivation in an organization will be determined by the level of reward desired by employees (valence), the assessment of the expected performance (expectancy), and the productivity that leads to a reward (instrumentality). Vroom’s expectancy theory applies to this study because it highlights aspects influencing employee motivation.

Herzberg’s two-factor theory has significance in managerial applications because it can be used by managers to assess existing employee motivation strategies to understand the most successful approaches (Grigaliunas & Herzberg, 1971). Herzberg’s two factor types are (a) hygiene factors, such as company policies and work conditions, and (b) motivational factors, such as achievement, recognition, and growth of employees. According to Grigaliunas and Herzberg (1971), the absence of hygiene factors in the workplace results in employee dissatisfaction. Motivational factors enhance employee commitment to work and, thus, performance. Herzberg’s two-factor theory applies to this study because it depicts factors that lead to employee motivation.

Operational Definitions

Motivated employee: Motivated employees are described as good aspirants who are more active and innovative and can experience the enjoyment and pleasure inherent in the performance of the task or job (Zheng et al., 2021).

Theory X: Theory X advocates believe that employees need to be coerced as well as jointly managed to perform the required task to achieve organizational objectives effectively (Naeem & Azam, 2017).

Theory Y: Theory Y advocates believe that their employees could work best when given some level of autonomy (Naeem & Azam, 2017).

Theory Z: Theory Z leaders is concerned with the attitudes, traits and abilities of all employees (Alqahtani, 2018). Theory Z advocates believe that employee with the right attitude, traits and abilities will perform optimally in any task given in the organization (Alqahtani, 2018).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Researchers, while preparing to conduct studies, select a topic of interest, the population to be studied, and limit the sample size and other vital factors. As such, it is essential to acknowledge that while conducting research, researchers must make assumptions and encounter limitations and delimitations (Queirós et al., 2017). It is imperative for researchers to be mindful of these factors to reduce the negative impact on studies. As each study’s assumptions, delimitations, and limitations are unique in every study, they should be outlined. Furthermore, the collection and analysis of data are based on multiple assumptions. Throughout the process of data collection, researchers are expected to encounter various limitations and delimitations that might interfere with the accuracy of the study inferences (Queirós et al., 2017).

Assumptions

Assumptions are notions that are held to be true without any scientific research in support of the ideas (Schoenung & Dikova, 2016). The first assumption was that the responses provided by the participants are true. The truthfulness of the data has a significant influence on the results' reliability. It is essential for researchers to ensure the confidentiality of the data to enhance the level of data's truthfulness. Thus, the data provided would be valid and reliable. The second assumption was that a qualitative multiple case study research design is the most suitable for this study. The design may be helpful while exploring the strategies used by managers of various corporations to motivate employees. The third assumption was that the participants would not be driven by any agenda or motivational factors that may influence or even shape their responses to the research interviews. This assumption is essential in ensuring that the obtained data represents as accurately as possible the views of all respondents without any bias. The fourth assumption was that the responses that the interviewees provided would not be influenced negatively by the prevailing or current situation such as pay increase or even disciplinary action that the management has undertaken against any employee. It is to ensure that the responses are not biased due to the prevailing situation rather than the real factors involved in employee engagement.

Limitations

The limitations of a study relate to the possible intent and procedural weaknesses of the study (Mitchell & Jolly, 2013). Various limitations in this study might be encountered during data collection. Some participants were not willing to disclose details about their organization fully. Therefore, the authenticity of the study inferences may have been negatively affected. The expected solution for the problem includes assuring participants about the confidentiality of their contributions as well as the use of an additional method of collecting qualitative data in the form of semistructured interviews, and field notes. Another limitation of the study was how the leaders perceived their experience in identifying employee engagement. Various leaders or managers had different perception of what constituted employee engagement, and failure to reconcile such differences may have made the identification and qualifying employee engagement as perceived by these managers ambiguous.

Delimitations

Delimitations are characteristics that draw the boundaries of the research (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). The first delimitation of the current study was that front-line supervisors, employee representatives, and presidents were not included in the sample population as this study was based on the perception of managers and not that of frontline staff or presidents of companies. The second delimitation was that the study focused on managers' strategies that improve employee motivation.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may be of value to business leaders because the results could inform corporate managers of successful strategies for improving employee motivation. A workforce that is motivated is essential for improved organizational performance and productivity (Perrow, 2016). Al Madi et al. (2017) reported that many companies had been faced with reduced productivity and performance because of a demotivated workforce. Demotivated employees are more likely to leave the company; this may result in recruitment costs, retention costs, and reduced company performance (Al Madi et al., 2017). Therefore, business leaders would be highly interested in ways of motivating, retaining employees, and reducing recruitment-related costs to improve business performance enabling organizations to increase and maintain supporting communities' citizens.

Contribution to Business Practice

The results of this study may support business leaders' pursuit of additional ways of motivating employees to increase performance and productivity. According to Perrow (2016), employees are the most valuable assets of any organization, and motivated employees are committed and focused on productivity. The study's findings may further encourage managers to motivate employees to improve productivity and performance by implementing successful motivational strategies.

Implications for Social Change

Employing or adapting the findings of the study could contribute to positive social change by enhancing employees' job satisfaction, self-worth, and dignity in the workplace through successful motivation strategies. An employee whose self-worth is enhanced becomes more generous and kinder to family members, friends, and neighbors (Perrow, 2016). Consequently, the bond among family members, friends and neighbors is strengthened, thus improving community cohesion. Organizations implementing employee motivation strategies may be seen as responsible for the wellbeing of their employees, which could result in employee longevity and community stability.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

I conducted a review of professional and academic literature to build the foundation for a multiple case study and the stated research questions. This literature review was focused on assessing published academic and professional literature on the topic under investigation to identify the past, current, and emerging information that supports addressing the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study, which was to explore successful strategies corporate managers used to motivate their employees. In addition to exploring literature related to the study's conceptual framework (i.e., Vroom's expectancy theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory), I searched for peer-reviewed academic articles that explored different strategies used by leaders in promoting employee engagement in the UAE and other regions. The databases employed in the literature search included ProQuest, Google Scholar, EBSCO, and Semantic Scholar databases. The search strategy included the use of key search terms, including *employee motivation, leadership styles, and employee motivation, Vroom's expectancy theory, Herzberg's two-factor theory, leadership theories, and employee motivation strategies.* As shown in Table 1, out of the 128 peer-reviewed journal articles, 110 (86%) were published between 2018 and 2022 (less than 5 years from the expected approval for publication of this doctoral study). A total number of 135 articles and books and dissertations were used, 113 (95%) were published between 2018 to 2022 while 22 (5%) where published before 2018.

Table 1

Frequency and Types of the Doctoral Study's Reference Sources

Sources	Published 2018–2022	Published before 2017	Total	%
Peer-reviewed journals	110	18	128	86
Books	2	1	3	
Doctoral dissertations	1	0	1	
Other		3		
Total	113	22	135	95

In this literature review, I begin with a discussion of the composite conceptual framework I used in my study: Vroom's expectancy theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory. Vroom's expectancy theory includes physiological needs, employee motivation, and employee engagement, whereas Herzberg's two-factor theory explains motivation in terms of the hygiene factors and the motivation factors. The themes I discuss in the literature review on leadership concepts and leadership styles are (a) authoritarian leadership style, (b) democratic leadership style (c) laissez-faire leadership style, (d) dynamic leadership style, (e) charismatic leadership, (f) situational leadership, (g) transformation leadership, (h) transformational versus authoritarian leadership, and (i) transformational versus transactional leadership which is followed by discussion of theory X, theory Y, Theory X versus theory Y, theory Z, and theory Z versus theory X and Y. I also discussed (a) leadership style and employee performance, (b) leadership style and employee engagement, (c) the concept of performance appraisal, (d) performance appraisal and employee productivity, (e) impact of workplace diversity, (f) impact of working environment on employee performance, and (g) job satisfaction. and concludes with the transition and summary.

Vroom’s Expectancy Theory

The leadership of any organization should consider several factors to ensure that employees are motivated. The theory that suggests motivation as a critical part of management is expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964). This theory was first established and explained in 1964 by Victor Vroom, who sought to address the link between motivation and management. Expectancy theory suggests that employees’ perceived work outcome will determine the level of motivation the employee receives (Vroom, 1964). This theory has been used by researchers and practitioners to assume that employees will make choices to maximize pleasure and minimize the outcomes that will bring pain to them. Vroom introduced a formula that explained how employees make their decision to maximize benefits and reduce pain. It is where motivation was seen as a product of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Vroom’s formula for the force of motivation = expectancy × instrumentality × valence.

Employees’ overall outlook determines the level of motivation they will have in the workplace. Increased effort and higher personal outlook will yield better or improved performance (Vroom, 1964). Employees have a perception that when they work harder, they will achieve something better. When employees have a higher confidence that if they put in more effort as required by their work, they will be able to accomplish their goal, then they exhibit expectancy. Performance can be enhanced by available resources, including the right skills, correct resources, and needed support. Vroom (1964) posited that increased effort will lead to improved performance, as the employee possesses the right tool to help get the work done. Some employees are motivated when they believe that rewards are tied to merits and job performance (Cainarca et al., 2019). The level of confidence that an employee has that achieving a goal will lead to the desired outcome is known as instrumentality (Vroom, 1964). High performance is conventionally correlated with high rewards in many organizations. For instance, monetary incentives have been used to motivate employees to perform better in Italian Public institutions (Cainarca et al., 2019). Although many organizations correlate high rewards with high performance, there are many instances where this theory falls short, as rewards are not always associated with high performance. Other critical factors, such as education, responsibility, and position in the organization, determine the number of times an employee is rewarded.

Employees place different values on outcomes or rewards they receive from the high-performance output they make. The level of how much employees want the desired result is called valence (Vroom, 1964). Organization leaders should understand the motivational factors that are most effective in motivating different age groups (Tence, 2018). For instance, incentives are nonmaterial objects that managers manipulate to ensure employees get the job done. When they are removed, the behavior may cease; therefore, managers need to motivate rather than providing incentives.

Employees feel motivated when they believe that putting in more effort into their work will lead to better job performance. Organizations aiming to improve the performance of the employees need to reward their employees based on performance. It is where the leadership and management develop metrics for a reward system that recognizes the individual and collective performance of individuals (Sukmayuda et al., 2019). The reward system should recognize high performing employees. It is also important to recognize those employees who put in the effort to improve their performance. Therefore, any reward or factors directed to employees should be based on the performance of employees.

Factors such as good pay, favorable administrative and organizational policies, job security, and secure working environment, among other factors, are essential factors in employee motivation. According to Alshmemri et al. (2017), motivational factors result in positive satisfaction among employees and has a positive association with the high-performance level among employees. Employees who feel that their pay is commensurate with their performance will be highly motivated to put in superior performance. Also, supporting factors and work environment are critical in ensuring that employees continue to have superior performance level as it will cause positive satisfaction. Therefore, the organization should develop all these factors to realize improved performance.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Employee working attitudes and their level of performance will be determined by motivation and hygiene factors. The theory that describes these two factors, namely, Herzberg's two-factor theory, was first described in 1959 by Frederick Herzberg (Herzberg, 1966). Herzberg's two-factor theory posits that motivation factors are intrinsic factors that have the potential of increasing employees' job satisfaction. In contrast, hygiene factors are extrinsic factors with the possibility of preventing employee dissatisfaction. Job happiness plays a critical mediating role between job performance and job satisfaction (Al-Ali et al., 2019). Extrinsic factors can eliminate all dissatisfaction related to the job. Job satisfaction will create and maintain positive aspects of employees' job performance. The external factors will ensure that employees can work without difficulty, whereas intrinsic factors will determine the quality of work. Understanding these factors is essential as it helps leaders to satisfy both the extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors for increased performance (Al-Ali et al., 2019).

In any organization, employees' performance could be affected by two types of factors, motivational and demotivational factors. The motivational factors include achievement, proper recognition, and rewards, exciting work, adequate training and development, involvement in decision making, and advancement. In contrast, demotivational factors include poor administration policies, lack of communication, poor work conditions, and poor job relationships (Momade & Hainin, 2019). Employees become motivated when they understand that their work is being recognized and rewarded and that the management is doing everything possible to support them in achieving their goals. Demotivated employees will have the perception that their managers do not value their work and that their organization does not care much to support them to achieve their goals (Al-Ali et al., 2019).

Hygiene factors are factors that address employees' physiological needs, including improving their morale, productivity and engagement. Alshmemri et al. (2017) explained that hygiene factors address various physiological factors of employees' needs. Organizations seeking to improve employees' performance should consider improving these hygiene factors by improving employee morale and engagement (Alhakami & Baker, 2018). Employees engaged by their leadership, are more likely to feel confident that their physiological needs have been addressed. Thus, they will provide superior performance.

Physiological Needs

Physiological needs are those needs that are basic to the human being for survival. They include water, food, and air. According to Alshmemri et al. (2017), addressing physiological needs is critical to all human beings. It means that other needs, such as self-actualization will only be satisfied when all physiological needs have been met. Physiological needs should be satisfied according to their level of significance (Alhakami & Baker, 2018). To employees, physiological needs form a critical set of needs that should be satisfied first. Thus, every employer should ensure that all employees are capable of meeting physiological needs.

Employee Motivation

Employee motivation and its association with work performance has been widely studied in the past and current literature. Motivation factors such as shared values and recognition of employee contribution to the overall job performance have been identified as motivation factors that improve employees' job satisfaction and performance

(Alhakami & Baker, 2018). Employees who have high intrinsic job motivation will demonstrate stronger personal motivation and will be able to carefully determine their work priorities because they believe their work performance will improve if they put in more effort. For instance, employees who say that they influence the job outcome will be able to achieve full job satisfaction and improve on their effort to achieve their desired goals (Tence, 2018). Understanding how employee motivation levels could be improved by applying various strategies is vital in ensuring improved work performance.

Performance appraisal is one of the strategies that could be employed by the organization leadership to have a positive effect on employee motivation and performance. However, the purpose and method of evaluation have an impact on employee motivation and achievement (Al-Jedaia & Mehrez, 2020). The reason why the performance appraisal is conducted is critical in ensuring that employees become motivated to continue working as desired. Assessments could be performed to come up with training plans. For instance, appraisals aimed at recognizing and rewarding employees have a positive impact on employee motivation and performance because when employees are appraised to promote or reward them, then they will be highly motivated to improve their work outcomes (Cainarca et al., 2019). The method used in evaluating employees could affect how they work and their motivation. Appropriate strategies will improve employees’ motivation and work performance.

Employees will be highly motivated and thus give their best performance when they perceive that their effort will be rewarded through a fair system. When an order consists of both non-monetary and financial systems, employees will be positively motivated to improve their job performance (Al Naqbi et al., 2018). Non-monetary incentives such as simple encouragement and recognition could be moral support that employees need to perform their jobs better. Leaders who offer moral support for their employees will encourage them to put out their best performance. Monetary incentives should be equitably distributed among all employees to ensure that employees perceive that the incentive system is fair. For instance, an open incentive system and a merit-based monetary incentive system is positively associated with increased employee performance (Cainarca et al., 2019). It ensures that employees are not only competing with themselves or colleagues but also with their performance and will put in their best to attract high monetary incentives. That only happens through open, fair, and criteria-based management systems.

Developing a sound organizational plan and implementing such policies and strategies openly could help improve employees' performance. Planning and implementing strategic management practices have a positive impact on the performance of employees and organizations (Al Suwaidi, 2018). It could be essential to develop methods, strategies, and plans that are proactive in ensuring that shocks and employee demotivation factors are identified earlier and mitigated effectively to ensure that employee performance is improved. Employees perceive that their jobs are satisfying when they are provided with ample working tools, including support, training, and a better work environment. For instance, empowering employees remain a critical factor in improving employee performance (Bose, 2018). The organizational and management considerations are vital in providing the needed support that will enhance the performance of employees and improve their expectancy that they will be able to perform to the best of their ability and knowledge.

Employee motivation is influenced by complex factors of leadership, organization attributed, and context. Sophisticated leaders, who combine transactional, distributed, and transformational leadership styles within the unique attributes of the organization and specific employee characteristics, increase motivation levels of employees (Belrhiti et al., 2020). Organizations, where leaders balance various leadership styles depending on the particular employee characteristics and current organizational needs, will ensure that the nature of tasks and corporate culture will be in tandem with the employee profile and hence increase their motivation. One leadership style may be insufficient in handling complex staff issues, and unique organizational attributes; therefore, a sophisticated leader is one who knows how to alternate leadership styles based on the current organization and employee needs.

Employee motivation will be high in workplaces, where all needs are recognized and addressed. According to Belrhiti et al. (2020), where goal setting has been improved and developed, employees feel more motivated to give their high performance. Raime et al. (2018) supported this study by arguing that when individual set goals and work towards achieving such goals while at the same time pursuing the organizational goals when both employee goals and organizational goal are aligned. Employees will be more active when they feel that the goals that they set have been realized. In a workplace where employees feel that they have no goals or that their goals have not been achieved, they will feel less motivated thus they will be motivated only to work hard as the low performing employee and will not put in additional effort to complete their duties before the required time. The motivated employees usually put in extra effort to ensure that their performance is at its best. They will work with little supervision as they will be willing to pursue their goals and put in the effort to achieve these goals while at the same time achieving the common goals and objectives of the whole organization.

Employees who feel that they are treated fairly at their workplace are more likely to be highly motivated. According to McLaughlin et al. (2017), employees who perceive that they are treated fairly through equity of their input versus rewards will be highly motivated. Onyekwelu et al. (2020) pointed out that employee will be comparing their rewards such as remuneration with that of their friends, relatives and colleagues with the same qualifications. Employees who feel that their pay or rewards are not equitable with rewards to give to their colleagues will be highly de-motivated to put in more effort as they believe that their efforts are not paying. Less motivated employees will put less effort, which will, in turn, reduce employee performance. Good leaders are those that realize the importance of equity and how they affect employees and their performance. It is critical to ensure that disparities within the workplace are removed, and that rewards are purely based on performance. Using performance as a parameter for reward and promotion will ensure that all employees perceive equity and that they become motivated to achieve high performance.

Leadership strategies applied will have either a negative or a positive effect on employees’ motivation. According to Abualhamael (2017), leadership styles are directly associated with employee motivation and employee satisfaction, both in private and public workplace settings. Leaders who motivate their employees will increase their employee commitment to perform better in their workplace. Leadership is essential in ensuring that employees are encouraged and supported to achieve organizational goals and objectives. According to Al Haj (2017), transformation and transactional leaders can motivate their employees and thus enhance their performance through leading by example. Leaders who are always encouraging their followers are highly likely to influence their followers to put out their best performance.

Leadership style is also associated with employee retention and motivation. Employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and transfer their knowledge to the workplace. As pointed out by El-Zayaty (2018), different leadership styles have been associated with different levels of employee motivation. When employees feel that their leader is always approachable and help them to solve work-related problems, then they will be highly motivated, which improve their performance and allowing employees to achieve their full potential. It is also essential to identify the role that perceived leadership role on employee motivation. It is critical to consider how employees perceive their leaders, as this has a direct effect on their motivation and performance. Leaders should not only be effective in conducting their functions but also be seen by those they lead to be effective in leading them.

Leadership is the primary method used by managers to ensure that various goals in an organization are accomplished. According to Shaaban (2017), the different leadership styles used in an organization, therefore, determine whether the organizational goals are met or not. There is no specific leadership style that has more merit than others.

However, corporate leaders must understand the type of employees they have and then determine which style is the most effective. Interestingly, some organizations prefer using a mix of styles. For instance, both the transactional leadership style and extrinsic motivation approach have been found to have a strong positive relationship with motivation (Shaaban, 2017). There is evidence that both approaches to leadership influence employees to realize individual and organizational goals.

Additionally, employees tend to be significantly motivated by extrinsic factors common in the transactional leadership style (Shaaban, 2017). Therefore, organizational leaders use transformational leadership to inspire employees to perform beyond their scope of practice. Similarly, corporate leaders use transactional leadership to encourage employees to perform within their job duties (Shaaban, 2017). Therefore, employees are strongly motivated by leadership styles that promote extrinsic motivational factors.

The motivation of individual employees is different from team motivation. Al Rahbi et al. (2017) believe motivating teams is more challenging than motivating individuals. The reason is that most of the team members hold varying beliefs, opinions, and values (Al Rahbi et al., 2017). Researchers maintain that it is almost impossible for a team leader to motivate each team as each has different preferences from those of others. Similarly, what motivates one member of the team might not and often does not motivate another member. Another reason why it is challenging to motivate a team more than individuals is that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors need to be considered and determined according to the values and beliefs of the entire team (Al Rahbi et al., 2017). Team motivation is rarely discussed due to its complexity.

There is evidence that organizations that use teamwork have employees with a high level of job satisfaction. According to Al Rahbi et al. (2017), team motivation in an organization has been found to increase trust and promote a positive working relationship among team members. Additionally, team motivation has been credited with reducing the time spent in accomplishing tasks in an organization. However, organizational leaders need to understand that motivation alone is not enough for getting jobs done in a team; Al Rahbi et al. continued. Corporate leaders need to ensure that teams effectively use other communication, delegation, and respect among team members. The leadership styles that support teamwork in an organization include transactional leadership, servant leadership, and transformational leadership styles, as stated by Al Rahbi et al.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is positively associated with job satisfaction, employee involvement in job activities, personal commitment, and personal connection with job activities. Motyka (2018) provided evidence that employee engagement is related to variables such as job satisfaction, employee empowerment, job involvement, and job commitment in an organization. Employees who feel that they are engaged will always exhibit positive job attitudes and thus will perform better when compared to employees who think that the organization leadership does not engage them. Engaged employees will feel that they are empowered and have the capability to handle all demands of their jobs. In contrast, disengaged employees feel that they cannot meet the demand for their work, and they will be less satisfied with their jobs and thus exhibit poor work culture.

Employee engagement is critical for organizations because it determines the survival and smooth functioning of a business. Osborne and Hammoud (2017) found organizations that do not effectively engage their employees fail to obtain a competitive advantage. Osborne and Hammoud concluded that human resource practitioners are interested in ways of ensuring that the workforce is highly engaged. Engaged employees are innovative and dedicated in performing tasks assigned to them by demonstrating high skill that provides the company with competitive advantage. Also engaged workforce ensures that all policies and strategies set out by the management are implemented and that all business objectives and goals are accomplished (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017).

Engaging employees also ensures that employees achieve high connectivity with the organization and hence help the company to maintain its competitive advantage. McLaughlin et al. (2017) argues that employee engagement allows organizations to maintain their level of commitment to ensuring the overall success of the strategies developed to help the business to succeed. That includes becoming connected to the business activities that drive innovation and competitiveness of the organization. In this sense, employee engagement ensures that employees have opportunities to communicate with their colleagues and seek collaborations to help the company achieve its objectives. According to Lampaki and Papadakis (2018), organizations that engage their employees will therefore be in a position to maintain their competitive advantage as their employees will be committed to the organization and will have less intention to jeopardize the effective functioning of the business.

An active organizational culture is essential factoring employees are engaged. Organizational culture is an instrument necessary for high performance, productivity, and success of any workplace. A positive organization culture generates a conducive job environment that facilitates the satisfaction of all the motivational needs of employees (AdjiAchmad, 2018). Employees' intrinsic and extrinsic motivational needs could only be met by a working environment that empowers employees to work. The direct association between organizational culture and employees' satisfaction is essential in developing a good organization culture that supports high productivity and success. Therefore, every organization should strive to align its culture to promote employee satisfaction and success.

Changing the organizational culture of any organization requires the involvement of all stakeholders and practical organizational objectives. According to Aljerawi (2016), factors such as high-power distance, low individualism and organizations that avoid insecurity risks are highly likely to experience high performance. It is affirmed that every organization should be alive to cultural differences brought about by different employees and that organizations need to align their own culture to that capture all employee needs. Aljerawi further posits that organization culture could be affected by the legal laws governing employee recruitment because it determines who is employed mainly in countries with employment policies.

Employees' perception of how well an organization manages its assets also has a positive impact on employee engagement. McLaughlin et al. (2017) further in their study pointed out that there is a strong association between employees' knowledge about organization productivity and engagement. It means that when employees believe that the management is employing meaningful metrics in managing business assets, they will be more willing to support the management in its policies. Managers who put in place performance measurement encourage their employees to become engaged as there is set out goals and methods of achieving those goals through a transparent manner (lghazo & Al-Anazi, 2016). Transparency encourages employees to become supportive as they understand that the management acts openly and that it has stipulated what is expected of them in their work environment.

A negative workplace environment also influences employee engagement. In another study, Hafeez et al. (2019) pointed out that a productive workplace is positively associated with employees' engagement and production. Workplace environment determines the motivation levels of employees. Good leaders need to understand the role of the workplace environment on employee engagement and production. A productive work environment will provide a conducive environment that enables all employees to achieve their potential. The workplace environment should address all needs of all employees, beginning with physiological needs and emotional needs. When employees have their needs met, they will be highly motivated to work hard to achieve organizational objectives and goals. Effective leaders are those who clearly and effectively promote a healthy workplace environment for all employees.

Leadership Concepts

The concept of leadership has been viewed as a natural trait and something acquired through learning and experience. In the past, it was believed that leaders have natural traits that make them unique from their followers (Alghazo & Al-Anazi, 2016). These theories argued that leadership has an inherent factor in which an individual is born. Leaders were able to influence their followers through their inherited traits, abilities, and qualities. Employees were highly motivated when they believe that their leader had some heroic traits and abilities that are inherently derived and that their leadership strength was a natural phenomenon God has given them.

In the recent past, leadership strategies and success have been attributed to the style of leadership. Leadership style could be acquired through education and experience. According to Al-Bahri and Othman (2019), many successful leaders have acquired leadership skills through education and practice. This approach has pushed aside the belief in leadership trait theory and has developed an argument that leaders could decide to be successful or not through their leadership style. Also, leadership has been viewed as a dynamic phenomenon that should be adaptive to change and requirement of the organization (lghazo & Al-Anazi, 2016). As a result, for effective change management, various approaches and leadership styles have been considered as something that is beyond just simple traits but more adaptive and responsive to the requirement of the organization.

Leadership Styles

Authoritarian Leadership Style

Authoritarian leaders are those that acquire their power through threats, punishment, demands, rules, regulation, and orders. According to Al Rahbi et al. (2017), leaders practicing authoritarian style are often distant from their employees and mainly take part in the assignment of duties and strict supervision that does not allow for any questioning or shared decision-making process. This leadership style prevents employees from being creative as they have to follow orders from leaders who dictate everything that they do. In this sense, employees are not free to perform their duties with a flexibility that promotes creativity and high performance. Al-Marhoobi and Attan (2017) further stressed that this style of leadership undermines the individuality of employees further restraining their flexibility. As the workplace is dynamic and changes according to the prevailing situations, leaders should be flexible so that they could be able to adapt to dynamic workplaces if they want their workplace to be highly productive.

Democratic Leadership Style

This style of leadership promotes equal participation and participative leadership that permits self-determination. As pointed out by Naeem and Azam (2017), this leadership style is driven by cooperation, accountability, and delegation of duties. It shows that a democratic leader will be more willing to empower the subordinates working under him/her. Employees who work with a democratic leader will be open and ready to be accountable to their bosses. This leadership style is practical and essential in developing high autonomy and freedom that is necessary for high performance. However, Naeem and Azam (2017) caution that this leadership style should not be used in instances where there are no clear roles assigned to employees as well as in instances where the organization is working under tight schedule. The reason is that democratic leaders will lack strategies of ensuring that each individual can meet their obligations on time, given the high level of autonomy permitted by democratic leaders.

Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

This style of leadership is where the leader is not involved with their subordinates. In this leadership style, leaders do not take part in any active leadership functions of the organization. According to Al Rahbi et al. (2017), laissez-faire leadership style permits employees to control all decisions being made at the organization and solve any problems that could arise during their performance of their duties. In this style, leaders have little or no control of what their subordinates do or fail to do. In this leadership style, employees who have worked in the organization for an extended period will have capabilities of self-regulation and self-monitoring. However, this leadership style could have adverse effects on performance in workplaces where there is a lack of awareness as employees will not be able to work well as their role clarifications will be lacking. Therefore, caution should be taken to ensure that only in workplaces with a high level of awareness and role clarification should this leadership style be successfully promoting high performance.

Dynamic Leadership Style

Dynamic leadership style is effective in promoting high performance in highly competitive industries. As put forward by lghazo and Al-Anazi (2016), adopted or dynamic leadership style is positively associated with high employee motivation and hence high performance. This leadership style calls for leaders to be highly flexible and adaptive to the changing business environment. It requires leaders to use a fluid style that allows them to change according to the employee and team that they are leading. When they feel that the team is affected by a prevailing factor in the environment, they change their leadership style to meet the existing workplace requirements. In this style of leadership, the organization is not concerned with a single employee's capabilities but rather the capability of the entire team to achieve success. It allows leaders to identify opportunities within each challenge faced by the entire team. Such leaders are also caring and humble, thus motivating employees to be active and exhibit their best performance.

Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leadership is positively associated with employees' engagement and thus, employee improved performance. Supratiman et at. (2021), in his study, pointed out that leadership style, such as charismatic leadership has had positive effects on their employees. These sentiments also were supported by Belrhiti, Van Damme, Belalia, and Marchal, (2020), who pointed out that leaders who empower their employees will highly motivate their employees to achieve high performance. Charismatic leaders promote high self-confidence in their followers through the use of effective communication strategies and self-image. As a strategy for employee motivation, charismatic leadership is essential in ensuring that all employees are motivated to achieve the overall organizational goals and mission.

Charismatic leadership is essential in fostering effective organizational communication. According to Ghazal Aswad, N. (2019), organizational communication could be improved by leaders who possess charisma. Employees are more willing to open up to leaders who promote their self-confidence and motivation. Through effective communication and decisive decision making, charismatic leaders inspire their followers using their charisma and empower them to solve their own conflicts while at the same time seek information that improves their performance. Thus, some organizations can maintain high employee motivation and hence high employee performance through a charismatic leadership style, which encourages communication and conflict resolution.

Situational Leadership

This type of leadership is based on the prevailing situation where leaders base their leadership style on the prevailing situation. Fiaz, Su, and Saqib (2017) have pointed out that this is the most effective type of leadership as it adapts to the prevailing situation. This leadership theory believes that leadership should not be cast on stone but rather should be adaptive to the situation. Therefore, leaders should be able to modify their leadership styles whenever the situation demands. Given the current changing global business environment, situational leaders are more likely to succeed than rigid leaders. The application of situational leadership is thus useful in managing the dynamic work environment by ensuring that tasks are defined and allocated according to the existing business environment and available skills.

Situational leadership enables leaders to adjust their management styles to suit the employees’ readiness level as well as existing employee-leaders’ relationships for optimum performance. Employees’ performance is determined by their abilities as well as their readiness to accomplish a given task (Al-Bahri & Othman, 2019). Through situational leadership, leaders will select the best style that balances between task and relationship levels to achieve the best-desired performance. For instance, leaders could engage employees differently by coaching and explaining responsibilities based on employees’ abilities and willingness to achieve a given task. Also, leaders using this leadership approach are very useful in balancing organizational needs while at the same time taking an interest in attending to and addressing the needs of each employee within the workforce.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership includes possessions of leadership traits that are more effective in gaining followers' trust and confidence. Additionally, transformational leadership focuses on developing a vision that is consistent with the mission, policy and strategies of the organization (Shaaban, 2017). Transformational leaders are those who exhibit personality traits of intuition, extroversion, and positive perception (Alajaili & Hanley, (2018). Additionally, transformational leadership style is associated with a high degree of creativity, ability to influence others, and strong moral convictions (Shaaban, 2017). These are fundamental traits that allow leaders to engage effectively with their subordinates and followers through motivation and inspiration rather than through intimidation and rigid rules. Transformational leaders are also creative and most often passionate about motivating employees to achieve specific tasks (Shaaban, 2017). It is essential to note that transformational leaders are in most aspects similar to charismatic leaders. The only difference is that charismatic leaders exhibit a higher degree of self-confidence and increased trust with employees. Transformational leaders can develop confidence within their followers and thus gain their unconditional trust (Hussain & Hassan, 2016). Unconditional trust is important in ensuring that subordinates become more willing to join in building a shared vision as well as becoming inspired by their abilities while at the same time looking up to leaders as their role models.

Transformational Versus Authoritarian Leadership

A transformational leadership style is a key to excellent employee performance compared to authoritarian leadership. Employees exposed to the transformational leadership style exhibit higher performances than employees who work under authoritarian leaders (Achimugu & Obaka, 2019). Leaders applying democratic leadership styles can listen to the contribution of their employees and provide the support needed for better performance. When leaders can listen to their employees, they can understand what motivates them most and thus assist them in doing their best in performing their job to the best of their abilities. This type of leadership is essential in empowering employees to become responsible and take up initiatives that could help the organization move forward.

Leaders who display transformational leadership have a high capability to empower employees more than leaders exhibiting authoritarian leadership. According to Budur (2020), transformational leaders help their followers try new ways of doing things, recognize opportunities, and inspire employees to perform challenging tasks. Transformational leaders provide an avenue for growth for the employees, making them feel empowered unlike in authoritarian leadership where employees have to follow rigid regulations and rules without having any opportunity to try anything new on their own. Transformational leaders, therefore, put much belief in what their employees could achieve when motivated rather than what they could be directed to accomplish by the leadership. Therefore, organizations with transformational leaders will have employees who are empowered to make decisions and take actions that could improve a company's innovation and competitive advantage.

A transformational leader, as opposed to an authoritarian leader, involves employees to take an active role in the decision-making process. According to Al Khajeh (2018), the transformational leader empowers their employees to be actively involved in every step of the decision-making process. This participatory approach is essential in earning the confidence of employees and making them more approachable. By involving employees in decision-making instead of imposing decisions made elsewhere by the management, employees gain ownership of all decisions made within the organization. It makes them more responsible in ensuring that all decisions made at all organizational levels are fully and effectively implemented.

Transformational Versus Transactional Leadership

Employing a transformational leadership style increases intrinsic satisfaction for employees when compared to transactional leadership. Transformational leadership could be the best way for employees to predict intrinsic job positive emotional status (satisfaction) and job experience in employees rather than transactional leadership style (Al Khajeh, 2018). Transformational leadership encourages employees and other subordinates to increase their engagement levels to become motivated with organizational goals and objectives. Transformational leaders support their employees to become more innovative and productive and prevent factors that could result in low motivation. Transactional leadership allows employees to exchange with their leaders, and thus the only way employees could be motivated through this leadership style is through a reward system.

A transactional leader believes that employees become motivated when they are effectively and rightfully rewarded by their employers. By offering or denying employees rewards, a transactional leader can influence his/her employees to achieve the set objectives (Salleh, Fareed, & Hamzah, 2018). A transactional leader will reinforce the excellent performance of employees by giving rewards while will try to minimize low performance by denying employees rewards. It means that employees will be motivated to work hard on their performance to gain higher rewards. Some of the extrinsic rewards that transactional leaders could use include pay rise or improvement of the workplace.

Critical Analysis of Motivational Theories

Theory X

Leaders using theory X approach have a negative attitude towards their employees. As pointed out by Naeem and Azam (2017), such leaders believe that their employees are lazy, and therefore, they are not usually motivated to work. They believe that employees need to be coerced as well as jointly managed to perform the required task to achieve organizational objectives effectively. Leaders who have adopted this attitude believe in strict policies and regulations that they stipulate and expect all employees to follow. With these regulations as their management tools, they like to micro-manage their employees to ensure they meet their set obligation. Theory x leaders also communicate through monologue conversations which is not effective in cultivating good employee relationships, and thus employees working under such leadership will feel less motivated.

Theory Y

Leaders having theory Y attitude are more receptive to employees. According to Naeem and Azam (2017), leaders who work together with their employees will be able to learn their employee’s strengths and weaknesses. Deterding (2019) pointed out that employees who feel that their leaders are approachable when they need them will be highly committed. These leaders believe that their employees could work best when given some level of autonomy. They believe that their employees are self-motivated to work and develop a good working relationship with their peers.

Theory X Versus Theory Y

Leaders and managers are more successful in engaging and motivating employees when they implement theory y than x. A leader who is theory y-oriented often takes decisions that promote the discretion of their subordinates more than theory-x leaders (Almulla & Alzoubi, 2019). That is effective in managing highly professional employees but not effective in managing employees who require guidance and skill development. Achieving high performance requires that managers select types of employees to work in either of these theories. While these theories may approach management differently, they operate under assumptions that employees have unique qualifications and skills, and therefore, they are effective based on organizational characteristics.

Theory Z

This theory focuses on reliance on workers as those who could be responsible on their own. According to Al-Otaibi (2020), personal experiences are essential in ensuring that employees wish are met. Employees are working in an environment where they feel respected. They believe that they are part of the organization will feel motivated to work harder and achieve the organizational goals. The leadership in this theory is concerned with the attitudes, traits and abilities of all employees. That leadership trait alone should not be sufficient in promoting employee's engagement and motivation.

Theory Z Versus Theory X and Y

Unlike theory x and y, theory z does not approach leadership from the perspective of managerial attitude. This theory deviates from theory x and y as it views the organization's effectiveness is influenced by leadership and those led (Alqahtani, 2018). Theory z believes that through a collaborative approach, both employees and leadership are vital in any organization's success. That makes it unique because it views the inclusion of employees as part and parcel of management. When employees and leaders work together, there are high chances that their contribution could accumulate to the overall success of the organizational strategies.

Leadership Style and Employee Performance

Leadership style affects both the motivation and performance of employees. Democratic leadership (transformational leadership) has been identified to enhance employees' performance more than transactional or authoritarian leadership styles (Al-Ali et al.,2019). For instance, democratic leadership involves employees in every step of the decision-making process, which in effect results in enhanced cooperation and an environment that could increase employees' performance (Nair et al., 2019). Democratic leadership allows interpersonal communication and job satisfaction as employees will be supported to air their concerns and contribute their input to balance extrinsic and intrinsic factors to improve their motivation and job performance.

Leadership Style and Employee Engagement

Organization leadership influences the level of employee engagement. Leadership style determines the level of employee engagement and motivation, which further influences organizational success (Al-Bahri & Othman, 2019). In organizations where employees feel that the top leadership highly engages them, there will be a high perception of employee motivation. It means that employees who feel that their leaders are close to them and are always ready to provide any needed support, will be highly motivated and thus will put out higher performance. The success of any organization, therefore, depends on the level of engagement by the top leadership. Leadership style has a critical role in affecting employee engagement in an organization. According to Nair et al. (2019), the leadership style adopted by the top managers of an organization will affect employee motivation. Top organizational leaders should find ways of engaging their employees every time so that employees could feel that the top leadership values them. When leaders engage their employees, they are in a better position to understand the strengths and weaknesses of each employee and how strength could be leveraged to help them improve on their weaker points. Therefore, leaders have the capability of earthier increasing or preventing employee engagement within the organization.

Leaders and their styles of leadership have an influential role in improving the level of employee engagement. As leaders seek to motivate and influence their followers, they demonstrate exact values to their followers and empower them to take part in positive teamwork in a manner that is agreeable to all of them (Fiaz, Su, & Saqib, 2017). In this manner, employees demonstrate their enthusiasm for completing various tasks assigned to them. They also develop a strong bond with their colleagues and their leader, which is crucial for effective communication. Through motivation and influence, leaders could be flexible enough and adaptive to engage their employees to ensure that their employees are effectively engaged for better overall organizational performance.

The Concept of Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal refers to a regular review of employees’ job preface, their skills, and achievements within a specific period. Performance appraisal aims to ensure that an organization’s goals are met effectively and efficiently. An effective performance appraisal system provides adequate feedback to employees regarding their performance and provides data for decision-makers, which helps future planning. The most common performance appraisal methods in organizations today include management by objectives (MBO), 360-Degree Feedback, Assessment Centre Method, and Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale (BARS).

Performance Appraisal and Employee Productivity

Performance appraisal is seen as an essential element to meet different individual and organizational needs. According to Aggabao and Al Awadhi (2017), performance appraisal helps organizations make judgments regarding promotion, demotion, and termination. Performance appraisal also plays a critical role in professional and career development in a business organization (Aggabao & Al Awadhi, 2017). The need for performance appraisal stems from the fact that employees are seen as the leading suppliers of business performance. There is substantial evidence that performance appraisal plays a part in improving the level of employees' performance. Moreover, it allows employees to complete tasks accurately and within the required period.

Performance appraisal has a positive relationship with research and development, organizational success, and employee reward and compensation. As Aggabao and Al Awadhi (2017) argued, performance appraisal has been found to influence employee performance. An increase in employee performance means that an organization is more likely to achieve its goals and objectives (Aggabao & Al Awadhi, 2017). Organizational leaders need to understand that employee training, compensation, job satisfaction, and enabling working environment does not guarantee increased employee production. Therefore, performance appraisal is a prerequisite for ensuring that organizations meet their goals and objectives.

Impacts of Workplace Diversity

Workplace diversity entails having employees of different gender, ages, religion, languages, cultural backgrounds, and races in a company. According to Al-Jenaibi (2017), companies with a diverse workforce benefit from increased creativity, various perspectives, and increased performance. Workplace diversity has a positive relationship with increased profitability and a positive public image for a company. Organizations need to realize that a diverse workforce plays a critical role in helping multinational organizations to achieve their goals. However, it is essential to note managing a diverse workforce is one of the most demanding tasks (Al-Jenaibi, 2017). Managing workplace diversity is becoming a concern for organizations in the UAE. The reason is that because the UAE has the highest rates of migration in the world. The country hosts employees drawn from countries such as Indonesia, Australia, the United States, and the Philippines (Al-Jenaibi, 2017).

Most scholars argue that there is a need for companies to consider diversity in the workforce. Al-Jenaibi (2017) supports the idea by mentioning that research exists to support the idea that foreign employees increase a company's profitability than local candidates. A diverse workforce has a strong relationship with organizational efficiency. Similarly, a diverse workforce is associated with increased efficiency due to a wide range of knowledge, skills, and experiences. Organizations with a diverse workforce benefit from a wide range of ideas and norms unique to each ethnic group represented in the workplace. Al-Jenaibi (2017) argues that employees from a diverse cultural background may share knowledge and skills while working as a team. That helps to increase knowledge about different areas in their scope of practice. Most employees believe that organizational leaders must expand policies to accommodate the diverse needs of a diverse workforce.

Impact of Working Environment on Employee Performance

The working environment dramatically impacts the work-life of employees as they spend most of their time at work. According to Hafeez et al. (2019), employees' working environment has a strong relationship with employee performance. Employees working in poor working conditions, for instance, often fall sick and take medical leaves, which negatively affect performance. As such, employees who are satisfied with their work-life are more likely to produce positive work outcomes. The most common environmental factors that affect employee productivity include noise, temperature, lighting, workplace design, and color (Hafeez et al., 2019). The productivity of employees is often measured by considering the rate of employee absenteeism associated with health issues. The reason is that unhealthy working environments increase the risk of developing health conditions.

Health conditions, in turn, affect the rate of absenteeism either directly or indirectly. Organizational leaders need to note that monetary rewards alone cannot influence employees to increase their productivity (Hafeez et al., 2019). A combination of financial rewards and non-monetary rewards is a fair deal that helps ensure that employee performance is as high as required (Hafeez et al., 2019). Studies claim a positive relationship between increased productivity and working in a peaceful, attractive, well-lighted, and comfortable environment. Additionally, employees need breaks in between working sessions to allow them to relax and refresh. Therefore, an improved working environment improves the health of employees, which results in improved employee performance.

Job Satisfaction and Performance

High job satisfaction has a positive impact on performance in that it leads to higher job performances. Job satisfaction is positively associated with high job performance. Employees who are more satisfied with what they do will have a positive perception that their input will lead to even higher performances (Al Khajeh, 2018). Leadership strategies that will ensure employees’ mental well-being will result in higher job satisfaction and employee happiness. Leaders should improve employees’ factors such as equal pay, better communication, good employee relations, professional development opportunities, and recognition of employees’ efforts are implemented through effective leadership strategies.

Employee satisfaction is determined by the structure of reward and benefits as well as professional development employed within the workplace. According to Lachheb et al. (2019), the structure used to reward high performers is one of the essential aspects of employees in the workplace that increases employee satisfaction and performance. Employees who feel that the systems of reward use by an organization are based on performance rather than other metrics will be satisfied that the workplace employs equity and fairness. Employees’ satisfaction with the workplace is determined by whether they view the working place as a place where they could professionally grow. This requires that management should device appropriate strategies and systems of measuring employees’ performance as well as systems that allow the fair reward to all the high performers.

Also, employee satisfaction and work performance are greatly influenced by the leadership style employed in an organization. A study conducted by Alkassabi et al. (2018) found that leadership style, gender, and job subspecialty were strong determinants of job satisfaction and performance. This study also showed that employees who view their jobs as satisfying were more likely to improve their performance. These findings show that managers should develop strategies of ensuring that employees become satisfied with their jobs irrespective of the demographic differences in addition to rewards and professional development opportunities. Overall, job satisfaction in an organization ensures high input and high performance and should be viewed from a broad perspective rather than just rewards and professional growth opportunities.

Employee burnout hurts job satisfaction among employees. According to Ismail et al. (2015), employees who feel that their work is highly demanding will be predisposed to high employee turnover, and illness, leading to low job satisfaction. Leaders must ensure that strategies reduce employee burnout increase employee motivation and satisfaction, thus high performance (Kuswati, 2020). Organizations should employ strategies that value employees' welfare. Employees, particularly those working in a critical industry such as healthcare, need to have a high level of job satisfaction through improved welfare to reduce burnout. Burnout among employee thus should act as a sign of severe conditions that could result in decreased employee satisfaction and poor performance if not addressed.

Transition and Summary

Section 1 began with a discussion of the foundation of the study, background of the problem, problem statement, purpose statement, and the nature of the study. Section 1 also included the (a) interview questions, (b) conceptual framework, (c) assumptions, (d) limitations, (e) delimitations of the study (f) the significance of the study and (g) review of the professional and academic literature. The conceptual framework for this study comprised Vroom's expectancy theory and Herzberg's two factor theory. The literature review also included a focus on previous research categories such as the association between employee satisfaction and performance, and how employee motivation affects employee performance in an organization.

Section 2 includes the purpose statement, role of the researcher, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments, data collection techniques, data organization techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity. Section 3 include an overview of the study, implications for change in business policies, recommendations for future research, and a reflection of the doctoral journey.

Section 2: The Project

In Section 2, I start by reiterating the purpose of the study, the specific design's methods, and procedures for completing the study. The main components of this section cover: (a) purpose statement, (b) role of the researcher, (c) participants, (d) research method and design, (e) population and sampling, (f) ethical research, (g) data collection, (h) data analysis, and (i) reliability and validity. Each subsection contains in-depth information on features of the study's design for addressing the research question.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore successful strategies corporate managers use to motivate their employees. I used a qualitative multiple case study design to achieve that purpose. The study population comprises five middle-level corporate managers of 5 corporations in Dubai, UAE.

The positive social implications of the study include that improved motivation may increase employees' job satisfaction, self-worth, and dignity in the workplace. An employee whose self-worth is enhanced also becomes more generous and kinder to family members, friends, and neighbors (Setiyani et al. 2019). Consequently, the bond among family members, friends, and neighbors is strengthened, thus improving community cohesion. Organizations implementing successful employee motivation strategies may be seen as being responsible for the well-being of their employees, which is a sign of corporate social responsibility. Managers are likely to be rewarded for implementing successful employee motivation strategies. These rewards may help enhance managers' well-being, thus strengthening team cohesion and leading to employee longevity and community stability.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative study, the researcher plays several roles. I collected data from corporate managers in Dubai, UAE. Data analysis was among my responsibilities to help answer the research questions (Condie, 2012). Prior to conducting the research, I undertook an extensive study of the research topic leading to prior knowledge of various aspects of the topic under investigation. Additionally, I acknowledged that every researcher develops a subjective perspective on issues. Enhancing data validity and reliability requires the elimination of personal judgment. As a researcher, I mitigated personal perspective during data collection and analysis using the following strategies: creating a thorough research plan, using an interview protocol for all participants, conducting rigorous data collection and analysis, and using member checking to validate the transcript.

Researchers get detailed and valuable information for qualitative research from the participants. During an interview, it is essential to understand the interviewee's experience, description, and comprehension of the experience (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). My interview protocol (see Appendix) includes transition messages. With all the participants, I utilized a standard interview protocol, which improved consistency. Standardization was used to eliminate bias and increase reliability (Yin, 2018). I conducted interviews according to the interview procedure and devoted sufficient time to the process to acquire a thorough grasp of the case and the significance of the research question. As a result, for all participants, I used a uniform interview methodology with prepared questions. I asked the same questions to each interviewee in the same order. By adhering to the research design and technique as specified, I managed my personal ideas and prejudices that potentially would have influence study results. I wrote comments in a research field journal immediately after interviews to help check for researcher bias and various body language such as facial expressions.

As the researcher, I had a primary responsibility for the quality of the data collected. As recommended by Castillo-Montoya (2016), I used member checking to check for accuracy and resonance (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). In addition, the strategy of using member checking helps in eliminating any instance of researcher bias, which includes subjective interpretation of participants’ responses. I was aware of the need to manage and mitigate bias that may be created by my experience as a business leader in the UAE. Two types of bias that I had to mitigate are confirmation bias and cultural bias.

Confirmation bias happens when a researcher uses information gathered from the participants to prove their perspective on a matter (Hernandez & Preston, 2013). In most cases, researchers give more weight and preference to responses that support their point of view, whereas they may dismiss or disregard responses that contradict their point of view. I also understand the part confirmation bias can play during data analysis. As Hernandez and Preston (2013) contended, once the researcher has given some data more preference, such data is stressed more than others when conducting data analysis. Therefore, I reevaluated the participants’ impression and gave less consideration to my perspective and hypotheses to mitigate confirmation bias, as Hernandez and Preston argued.

Cultural bias may significantly influence data collection and analysis procedures. Cultural bias involves understanding issues and making assumptions through a cultural perspective (Kim & Zabelina, 2015). As this study focuses on the UAE, a location with unique cultural values, it is essential to acknowledge the bias and implement a suitable mitigation strategy. I embraced cultural relativism as opposed to ethnocentrism during data collection and analysis. With the help of Kim and Zabelina’s (2015) explanation, I understood that ethnocentrism can be a significant source of bias as it involves analyzing a culture based on values and norms. Cultural relativism involves understanding one’s culture in terms of beliefs and activities of that culture (Kim & Zabelina, 2015). I exercised my understanding of the culture in the UAE and mitigate the influence of my assumptions on the culture on the data collection and analysis process.

I am aware that some participants value how other people view them or what others say about their opinions. In such cases, the respondents may provide answers they believe would make them socially popular. As such, the respondents’ desire to be liked by others may induce them to provide inaccurate answers on sensitive topics, thus leading to bias (Datta, 2019). I took the initiative to inform the respondents about their freedom to provide accurate answers regardless of other factors. I guaranteed anonymity during the process; as such, no respondent was required to offer personal identification information. Therefore, respondents could feel safe to provide answers reflecting their inner feelings about the topic investigated. I also complied with the research ethics principles stipulated in *The Belmont Report*, by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1979). The core principles of respect, benevolence, and justice in *The Belmont Report* require that participants clearly understand the intent of the research and its potential risks or benefits, and that they voluntarily consent to participate in the study. Using this strategy helped in treating all respondents with equal fairness and respect they deserve. I am aware that it is not possible to eliminate all bias in research. However, the strategies mentioned above were implemented to mitigate bias.

Participants

The participants for this doctoral study were five mid-level managers from five different corporations that had achieved the goal of motivating and inducing positive employee attitudes in the workplace through various managerial strategies. The inclusion criteria for recruitment were (a) mid-level manager in a corporate organization, (b) with 5–10 years work experience, (c) the companies had verifiable website, (d) minimum sales of $1 million per annum, and (e) business located in Dubai, UAE. I welcomed participants of any gender, race, and level of educational attainment who have a minimum of 5–10 years’ work experience. I used voice and video calls through the Zoom videoconferencing platform (https://zoom.us) for the data collection process. I identified potential participants through LinkedIn, companies’ websites, and requested the contacts of potential participants. As necessary, I used companies’ rosters to identify and obtain contact details (email addresses and phone numbers) for the potential participants.

In cases where I was required to sign an agreement concerning the use of data obtained from the corporations, I did so before obtaining contact details of participants. My initial presumption was that corporate managers are busy individuals and that I might not find most of them in their offices. In cases where I did not meet them in the office, I left a message that indicated my intention along with my contact information and a next call date. I used snowball sampling for identifying and recruiting potential participants. These strategies helped in creating a good rapport with my points of contact and a good impression. I called every manager whose contact I obtained to check whether they were suitable as a participant according to the inclusion criteria for this study. It was also my responsibility to ensure that respondents selected were those with whom I had no direct relationship.

I sent the selected participants consent forms by email with the details of the purpose of the study. It was not mandated that participants sign the informed consent form, but the respondents were requested to feel free to give consent in any manner convenient. In such cases, audio records were used to record the interview for transcription and member checking, as Foe and Larson (2016) hinted. I booked appointments with the participants who agreed to the interview. Before the interview, I sent interview protocols to consenting participants to help them make necessary preparations. I was fully aware that the participants expected me to adhere to the data gathering agreement and to uphold the ethical standards for research activities. It takes a lot of energy to concentrate, decode, and encode information. In cases where respondents have to answer many questions, the participants experience fatigue. Consequently, when faced with different questions worded similarly, they may provide similar answers. In such cases, the brain habituates, or similarly, goes on automatic mode where reasoning is limited (Yin, 2018).

Research Method and Design

As a researcher, I adopted a qualitative research method aimed at ensuring that the topic under study was explored in context-specific settings. A researcher can elect to follow one of three research methods: qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method. Quantitative research is characterized as the mathematical portrayal and control of observations to depict and clarifying the phenomena that those observations reflect, whereas qualitative research is portrayed as the nonmathematical assessment and translation of observations to find fundamental implications and patterns of connections (Mamabolo & Myres, 2019). Auditing these meanings of what is implied by quantitative versus qualitative research helps recognize the purposes behind every technique's fundamentally discrete utilization and the ongoing contention among researchers concerning the general estimation of each approach (Mamabolo & Myres, 2019).

Research Method

I used the qualitative method for my proposed research study. The word qualitative infers an accentuation on cycles and implications that are not thoroughly analyzed or estimated, as far as amount, sum, degree, or recurrence (Mamabolo & Myres, 2019). Researchers who use qualitative methods stress the real world's socially built nature, the personal connection between the specialist and what is considered, and the situational requirements that shape inquiry. In contrast, the quantitative method requires the estimation and examination of correlational or causal connections among variables, not procedures. The inquiry is suspected to be inside a value-free system (Mamabolo & Myres, 2019).

In the qualitative method, story depiction and consistent correlation are generally utilized to comprehend the populaces or circumstances being considered. While using a quantitative approach, mathematical assessment and measurable deduction from a generalizable example are regularly utilized according to the size of the population of interest (Hope et al., 2019). Therefore, a quantitative approach is regularly observed as a technique attempting to exhibit causal connections under normalized (controlled) conditions. On the other hand, the qualitative approach is generally observed as a strategy looking for better comprehension of some specific, regular (uncontrolled) occurrence (Hope et al., 2019). The mixed methodology is an approach involving the integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods in a single investigation (McKim, 2017). The mixed method was not suitable for my study as it involves expressing variables mathematically, whereas my study involved nonnumerical data where I may consider repeated concepts during interview as key themes.

The qualitative methodology is an approach to exploring phenomena whereby data are collected using open-ended questions through interviews, focus groups, and participant observation (Fletcher, 2017). Similarly, Mohajan (2018) explained that the qualitative method is where a researcher seeks information about a phenomenon within a real-world setting without manipulating any aspects of the phenomenon under investigation. I selected the qualitative method for several reasons. Researchers using the qualitative method use semistructured interviews, field notes, focus group and observation in collecting data, which according to Creswell and Creswell (2018), could provide in-depth and additional information from the respondents as the structure of the questions does not restrain them. Second, the qualitative method was selected because, as observed by Creswell and Creswell, using the qualitative method allows a researcher to capture individuals' perspectives. Using the qualitative method facilitated my exploring and obtaining an in-depth understanding of the corporate strategies used by managers to motivate employees in the UAE.

The philosophical approach that was adopted in this study is interpretivism. According to Fusch et al. (2017), interpretivism allows a researcher to premise that there are multiple meanings and realities that are subjective and directly co-created by the context and the researcher. It underscores the interpretive role of the researcher. It is where the researcher believes that an empathetic understanding of corporate managers' strategies to motivate their employees is mainly concerned with interpreting feelings and experiences and exploring the reasons behind corporate managers' strategies (Mohajan, 2018). Epistemologically, I believe the situation within an organization shapes the experience and interpretation of participants. In terms of the time dimension, I conducted the research at one point in time, meaning that the study method adopted a cross-sectional dimension.

Research Design

The research design involves the research tool that was adopted for the data collection process. I considered several qualitative research designs including (a) case study, (b) phenomenology, and (c) ethnography. Gammelgaard (2017) asserted that a qualitative case study design is used to explore a contemporary phenomenon inside its real-life setting, particularly when the distinction between the phenomenon and the real-life setting is not apparent. Gaus (2017) described the phenomenological design as useful when understanding the essence of experiencing phenomena. According to Blair et al. (2019), using a phenomenological research design helps researchers understand the personal meanings of the lived experiences of individuals and how people learn from the experience and make meaningful adjustments in their lives based on experience. However, understanding the personal meanings of experiencing phenomena was not my goal for this doctoral study; therefore, the phenomenological design was not suitable. Ethnographic designers seek to describe and interpret a culture-sharing group (Blair et al., 2019). I did not seek to explore a group's culture; therefore, an ethnographic design did not align with my study's purpose. I considered both single and multiple case study designs. A qualitative multiple case study was the best fit for my study because, as described by Yin (2018), using a multiple case design allow the researcher to explore and compare managers' strategies in various organizations as opposed to a single case study, which would allow the researcher to explore managers' strategies in only one organization.

Yin (2017) stated that researchers use a qualitative multiple case study design to explore the phenomenon in real-time within its natural context. A case study is designed to understand the participants' experience with phenomena from multiple perspectives. The nature of the research question for this study required an in-depth investigation of managers' strategies in motivating their employees in the UAE. According to Hamilton and Finley (2019), using a qualitative case study design facilitates an in-depth investigation of phenomenon using several types and sources of data. Therefore, I carried out an in-depth inquiry into the research questions through a qualitative multiple case study design. Through such in-depth exploration, using a qualitative multiple case study enables researchers to understand how value is cocreated (Creswell & Creswell, 2019; Howitt, 2019). Therefore, a multiple case study design was chosen to enable an in-depth inquiry of the phenomenon under investigation. In addition, according to Levitt et al. (2017), value is mainly created within a context determined by the participants and various actors interacting in the cocreation process, and using a multiple case design facilitates understanding the specific context and focus for value creation. Lastly, choosing a qualitative multiple case study research design was motivated by Rahman's (2017), who explained that through a qualitative case study, one could identify and explain the processes involved in value cocreation. It is crucial as my purpose for this study was to explore the strategies used by corporate managers to motivate employees in the UAE. Principal themes could only emerge after carrying out interviews, effective documentation, and interpretation of the obtained data. For the above reasons, since my focus was to explore and compare strategies corporate managers use to motivate employees, a multiple case study design was appropriate.

Data Saturation

Data saturation is the point in data collection when respondents provide responses similar to those already collected by the researcher. Similarly, at data saturation, no new information is provided by the participants (Sechelski & Onwuegbuzie, 2019). Data saturation is an important aspect that ensures that the research is valid. Achieving data saturation depends on the type of research design employed. In ensuring that data saturation is achieved, qualitative multiple case studies need to utilize various sources and types of data for and identifying focus areas (Constantinou et al., 2017; Guest et al., 2020; Hennink et al., 2017). I used two primary sources of evidence to ensure that data saturation was achieved: semistructured interview and field notes. Nassaji (2015) identified qualitative data collection tools to include, field notes, self-reflective journal entries, a focus group, and semistructured interview. Semistructured interviewing is used when reaching individual participants with interview with some flexibility of a follow-up questions to achieve the meaning in the data collection process (Nassaji, 2015). Field notes are predominately used to aid in constructing thick, rich descriptions of the study findings, interview, and document review process (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). Field notes are used in qualitative studies to provide audit trail information in understanding the study (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). A combination of field notes with other qualitative data collection tools result in allowing for data transmission in full depth and meaning of qualitative studies (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). As Nelson (2017) noted, data triangulation is achieved using several types and multiple sources of evidence to collect data to ensure the validity of data collection and data saturation. Following the approach taken by Rashid et al. (2019), in this study, I used (a) participant semistructured interviews and (b) field notes to achieve data triangulation and saturation for the qualitative multiple case study design.

The primary type of evidence that I used was semistructured interviews, which I used to focus on discussions based on interaction with participants, understanding participants’ roles, feedback processes, and contributions. The second type of evidence was field notes. I used two types of data collection processes to ensure data saturation and enable data triangulation.

Population and Sampling

Population

As a case study, my intended focus for the study was to explore the strategies corporate managers used to motivate their employees in Dubai. As this is a multiple case study, it is crucial to identify enough firms to include in the study (Chowdhury et al., 2020; B. Lee & Saunders, 2017; Yin, 2017). I included five study participants, one each from five companies located in Dubai, UAE, as the population for this multiple case study. According to Creswell and Creswell (2019), a qualitative case study researcher should not be concerned with obtaining a random sample but obtaining data from a representative sample. B. Lee and Saunders (2017) inferred that the population include all individuals who meet the set selection or inclusion criteria in a qualitative case study. The five selected companies include companies that have implemented successful employee motivation strategies that have catalyzed positive employee attitudes using different managerial strategies. Therefore, five managers (one from each of the five companies) comprises the study’s participants. The inclusion criteria include (a) mid-level manager in corporate organization (b) with 5–10 years of work experience, (c) the company to have a verifiable website, (d) indicated staff retention is a result of staff motivation (e) minimum sales of $1 million per annum, and (f) business located at Dubai, UAE.

Sampling

I used purposeful sampling in this study. Purposeful sampling is a technique in which researchers choose information-rich participants based on the study's objectives (Kalu, 2019). I achieved a 100% sample of all five managers of the five Dubai participating companies. The purposeful sampling method was employed to identify and select suitable respondents based on the study's purpose.

Purposeful sampling can enhance data saturation because selecting information-rich or experienced participants in issues concerning employee motivation have similar strategies for enhancing employee motivation (Saunders et al., 2018). Thus, I obtained similar responses upon asking a question repeatedly from the participants. In the proposed study, I used a strategy suggested by Sebele-Mpofu and Serpa (2020), which includes combining the sampling process with data collection and analysis to identify both similarities and differences. Also, during coding, thematic saturation is achieved when additional data do not result in the emergence of new themes (van Rijnsoever, 2017). Data saturation was achieved when I began to identify similar responses repeatedly and when no new information was presented. I ensured I continued the data collection process until saturation was reached.

Ethical Research

I ensured that my research was ethically conducted by committing to comply with all legal and ethical requirements and through obtaining Institutional Review Board

(IRB) approval from Walden University (Approval no. 08-05-22-0759147). Second, all participants were informed of their roles and responsibilities associated with agreeing to participate in the study by informing them of their rights and their organizations' rights, according to *The Belmont Report*, by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1979). Participants were informed that they would be free to withdraw from the study at any time without being obliged to provide any reason. The method of communication between the participants and me was through phone calls, text messages or email. Also, individuals' and firms' confidentiality and privacy were assured before, during, and after the study. To ensure confidentiality, participants' personal information was not disclosed. Each company are represented with code such as PC1 to PC5, in accordance with their corporation. I used codes for participants and companies such as PC1, PC2, PC3, PC4, and PC5 respectively. The codes and numbers were used to distinguish between participants and corporations within the same corporation. "P" refers to participants and "C" refers to corporations. For example, the codes for the participants from Company 1 are PC1, PC2, PC3, PC4, and PC5.

Consent forms were provided to all participants before admitting the participant in the study. Furthermore, the collected data are stored in a locked file for 5 years before destruction. Lastly, I avoided deception in any form and at any stage of the research process and made all participants aware of what was expected of them during the study. Most importantly, I brought to the participants' attention that they are free to withdraw from the study at any moment by notifying the researcher through phone calls, text messages or emails. I also mentioned to all the participants that there were no incentives for participation. All the five participants participated without anyone gave reasons for withdrawing from the study. Due to COVID-19, the Walden University IRB limited interaction with research participants including obtaining informed consent from research participants and data collection to virtual platforms only (Walden University, 2020).

Data Collection Instruments

As the researcher, I was the primary data collection instrument (Guest et al., 2017; Yin, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2019). The secondary instrument that was used was the semistructured interview, and field notes. The use of semistructured interviews allows standardization and additional options for probes (Falcon, 2020; Rashid et al., 2019) and is critical in ensuring that the researcher delves deeper to obtain and understand the phenomenon under investigation (Yin, 2018). For the interviews, I used a semistructured format with open-ended questions. The use of a semistructured interview protocol ensures that correct topics and questions were covered and ensures that interviewer bias is minimized, and interviews are conducted within time constraints (Hagaman & Wutich, 2017; Guest et al., 2017; Weller et al., 2018). I used a standard interview protocol (see Appendix) with all the participants to enhance consistency (Yin, 2018). Using an interview protocol may reduce bias and enhance trustworthiness. The unstructured nature of the interview process may still leave room for insights, digressions, and other personal reflections of the interviewees (Yin, 2018). Bias is the tendency which prevents unprejudiced consideration of the data. A biased study loses validity in relation to the degree of the bias.

Triangulation and member checking are two key approaches to ensuring reliability and validity of qualitative research. Triangulation can be described as the use of multiple data sources, such as semistructured interviews and field notes, in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Patton, 1999). Triangulation is the system that confirms validity or the truth through the convergence of information from different sources. Member checking is the process of systematic feedback from the participants to review and validate their data to ensure the collected data is consistent with their motives. Providing an opportunity for study participants to review the accuracy of the interview responses can enhance the quality of the data collected (Harper & Cole, 2012). To ensure data reliability and validity, I ensured that participants reviewed their transcripts to validate that the transcriptions align with the data collected through the interview process.

Data Collection Technique

As the primary research instrument, I prepared and familiarize myself with the interview protocol (see Appendix) and prepare information for assuring informed consent. Also, the interview setting was set in a safe and convenient location for all participants. I used the Zoom virtual meeting for the data collection process because of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions to physical meetings. I introduced the topic and informed the participant that the interview would last no more than 30 minutes. The interviews lasted for 40-60 munities. Additionally, I was sensitive to nonverbal cues and body language. As needed, I listened and interacted with the participants through video conferencing interviews while recording such interactions with a digital recorder to save the recordings. I also prepared a second recording device in case one malfunction. Again, journal notes through field notes were used to keep a record of the interview. The journal included a semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix) containing an introduction, rules of the interview, the interview questions and for seeking clarifications and providing thanks. Most importantly, I used member checking to assure data validity and reliability. Member checking was used to ensure that the responses I have summarized are exactly what the participants meant to say.

The advantages of using semistructured interviews are as follows:

- The participants who can neither read nor write can answer interview questions.
- The nonverbal behavior of the respondents can be seen, unlike when using questionnaires.
- The interviewer chooses the order in which questions are asked (Kaufmann & Peil, 2020).

The following are the disadvantages of interviews:

- Time-consuming and potentially costly.
- An interviewer's age, race, or physical appearance may influence the participant's response.
- There is no anonymity for participants who may prefer to participate secretly (Kaufmann & Peil, 2020).

Data Organization Technique

For data organization, I used a stationery logbook, reflexive journal, and a computer cataloging and labeling system in which data will be labeled and stratified according to the topic and data collection dates. I used the same data organization techniques for the semistructured interviews and field notes. Microsoft Excel, analog notebook, digital notebook, and flash drive serve researchers well for storing temporary and permanent information (Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014; Sechelski & Onwuegbuzie, 2019). I used Microsoft Excel as a tool for listing names of prospective participants. When the individuals became participants, a new file of the same format contained the new list. As noted by Onwuegbuzie & Byers (2014), by so doing, every piece of information was accessible on demand. I stored data in both soft and hard copies to avoid data loss for 5 years. After 5 years, I will destroy the data records and audio recordings by shredding raw data and by erasing audio recordings. I used data organization and storage devices such as computer external hard disks, flash disks, or DVDs. Since I was aware of the potential for technical failures of electronic devices, to mitigate data loss, I kept hard copies of all data in a safe box in my study room.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of identifying and understanding data meaning (Sechelski & Onwuegbuzie, 2019). I used Yin’s five steps of data analysis: (a) compilation, (b) disassembling, (c) reassembling, and (d) interpretation, and (e) conclusion (Yin, 2017). As a brief explanation for the use of the proposed data analysis process, I disassembled data in the first two steps to eliminate themes that are not related to my study's purpose. In the third step, I reassembled the data to facilitate identifying themes. The fourth step consists of checking for patterns within data and documentation for interpreting meanings of the data and information. The final step was to summarize the data into individual structural descriptions of the experiences for identifying and describing the principal themes. I used Microsoft Word to transcribe the interviews and enter the information into NVivo 12. I used the NVivo 12 software to organize the data for data analysis and mitigating bias in the interpretation and analysis (Dalkin et al., 2021). After completing the interview and data transcription, I provided each participant with a copy of their interview transcript. I requested the participants to check and confirm whether the transcript truly reflects what they intended to say. The process is known as member checking and is helpful for assuring data validity (Castillo-Montoya, 2016).

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are the two major terms that define psychometric properties in academic research and are the integral component of scales and instruments (Souza, Alexandre, & Guirardello, 2017). Furthermore, understanding these concepts help a researcher explain how well a method, technique, or test measures the desired variables or phenomenon of interest (Andrade, 2018). In this heading I discussed the concepts of and differences between assuring studies' reliability and validity in quantitative and qualitative research, and how I used these concepts in my proposed study.

Reliability

Reliability is one of the concepts used to assess the quality of research. In quantitative studies, reliability refers to the ability of an instrument to consistently give the same results if used in the same situation repeatedly (Cypress, 2017). However qualitative researchers focus on assuring and demonstrating dependability, the qualitative analogue to the quantitative concept of reliability (Cypress, 2017). Dependability means aligning the findings and the data so that when another researcher analyzes and interprets the data, similar results are obtained (Fraenkel et al., 2019). In addition, dependability implies consistency on the part of the researcher, meaning that the decision of the researcher is unambiguous for assuring other researchers can consistently arrive at comparable findings over time (Roberts et al., 2020).

Cypress (2017) posited that dependability is achieved by engaging experienced qualitative researchers to peruse the transcribed materials to validate the themes and identified descriptors for the study. For my study, I ensured a field journal to ensure that all the decisions I made are transparent and clear. Transparent and clear presentations of research processes enable assuring that consistency and trustworthiness are achieved (Fraenkel et al., 2019; Northway, 2017). Feedback and member-checking are critical in fostering the trustworthiness and consistency of obtained data (Bates et al., 2018; Stevenson & Taylor, 2019; Walliman, 2017). I used member checking and derivative participants' feedback to assure data reliability. I was vigilant during data analysis by conducting member checking to enhance dependability. I assured the study's dependability through member checking of data interpretation. To further assure dependability, I established an audit trail to enable tracking and replicating the research process. I also expected to assure dependability through my committee members' review of my proposed interview protocol and member checking processes.

Validity

Cypress (2017) described validity as "the state of being well grounded or justifiable, relevant, meaningful, logical, confirming to accepted principles or the quality of being sound, just, and well founded" (p. 256). While the quantitative researcher is concerned about studies' reliability and validity, the qualitative researcher must address studies' trustworthiness through addressing: credibility, transferability, confirmability, data saturation, dependability, and consistency (Falcon, 2020). Verifying that these criteria have been addressed provides the basis for assuring the rigor of a qualitative study (Williams et al., 2020). To ensure validity, I interviewed the participants adhering to the interview protocol and spend adequate time in the interview and process to gain a sound understanding of participants' answers to the interview questions. I used member checking to ensure data validity; after conducting the interview and transcribing the audio recording, I interpreted the transcription and share the interpretation with the participants to obtain feedback for validating my interpretation of the interview data. Triangulation can be described as the use of multiple data sources in qualitative research to develop a valid and comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Patton, 1999) I used methodological triangulation, using semistructured interviews and field notes.

Credibility

Credibility consistent with demonstrating studies' findings warrant belief and trust. Credibility is achieved when research findings can be adjudged to be an accurate depiction of reality (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In addition, credibility determines whether the research findings represent plausible information derived from the original data and are a correct interpretation of the original experiences and views of the participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). I used member checking, transcript review data triangulation to achieve credibility.

Transferability

Transferability means enabling other researchers to determine if applying the findings of a study is possible for the other studies' contexts. Transferability is achieved if the results of a particular study can fit into similar contexts using other participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). To enhance the transferability of my study, I provided sufficient information about my study population and the data collection processes so that other researchers can ascertain if my study findings can apply to their own populations. Cypress (2017) suggested that one method to improve transferability in qualitative research is by the utilization of a purposive sampling method for recruiting research participants. Such a method will guide other researchers to determine if the study findings can be reproduced in their own domains.

Confirmability

Confirmability means the extent to which other researchers can confirm the research study's findings. Confirmability ensures that study's findings and interpretation are based on data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). I ensured confirmability by grounding findings and data interpretation on objective valid data rather than my point of view.

Data Saturation

Data Saturation is the point in data collection when respondents provide responses similar to those already collected by the researcher. Therefore, data saturation is when no new information is provided by the participants (Sechelski & Onwuegbuzie, 2019). I used data from participants' interviews, meeting observations, audio records, and meeting notes. Using these three types of data collection processes, I expected to achieve and demonstrate data saturation.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 contained an explanation of the purpose of the planned study approach, including (a) role of the researcher, (b) the participants, (c) research method and design, (d) population and sampling, (e) ethical research, (f) data collection instruments, technique, and organization, and (g) data analysis techniques. Section 2 concludes with a discussion of the methods and techniques for assuring the reliability and validity of my study. Section 3 will contain an introduction, the purpose statement, and the research question. I will summarize the presentation of the study's findings. Section 3 includes (a) application to professional practice, (b) implications for social change, (c) recommendations for action, (d) recommendation for further research, (e) researcher reflections, and (f) an overall conclusion.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore successful strategies corporate managers use to motivate their employees. I used a qualitative multiple case study design. The inclusion criteria were (a) mid-level managers in corporate organizations (b) with 5–10 years' work experience, (c) demonstrated successful staff retention as a result of staff motivation, (d) the company had a verifiable website, (e) minimum sales of $1 million per annum, and (f) business located at Dubai, UAE. All participants met the inclusion criteria (see Table 2). The data collection tools were semistructured interview and field notes. The principal study findings included (a) establishing an employee incentive program; (b) creating a healthy work-life balance by encouraging break time and annual leave, providing the option to work from home, and offering flexible schedules; (c) providing personal development and opportunities for career development; (d) establishing mentorship opportunities; (e) establishing team bonding through plan team bonding activities and train team on conflict management; (f) creating information transparency and feedback policy; and (g) promoting a healthy working environment.

Table 2

Participants Profile

Participants	Level of grade	Work experience	Gender	Location
PC1	Middle level	6+	Female	Dubai, UAE
PC2	Middle level	5+	Female	Dubai, UAE
PC3	Middle level	6	Male	Dubai, UAE
PC4	Middle level	5+	Male	Dubai, UAE
PC5	Middle level	9	Female	Dubai, UAE

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question is: What successful strategies do corporate managers used to motivate employees? In this section, I present the findings thematically, as summarized in Table 3 along with their related codes and the frequency with which they occurred in the interviews.

Table 3

Emergent Themes Through Data Triangulation

Theme Number	Codes	Themes	No. of occurrence	% of occurrence
1	Staff incentive forms a significant part of the company's annual budget. Not fulfilling that aspect of the bargain make the staff feel something is wrong, and you won't want to create that impression	Establishing an employee incentive program	5	100
2	Sustaining the human resource assets is to motivate them through work-life balance	Creating a healthy work-life balance	4	80
3	Most corporation had retained its staff through sponsorship program that boost employee's confidence as well as assure the employee their relevance at the job space because of personal development	Provide Personal Development and Opportunities for Career Development	5	100
4	Mentor-mentee relationship are relevant to organization motivation despite some challenges such as gender and tribal sentiments in a mentor-mentee program	Establish mentorship opportunities	5	100
6	Using team bonding strategy, both the weak link and the stronger link in the department finds a common point of strengths and aligns for efficiency and effectively of purpose	Establish team bonding environment	5	100
6	Employees of organization determines the work culture and health of the working space	Create information transparency and feedback policy	5	100
7	A conducive working environment promote performance	Promote a healthy working environment	4	80

Theme 1: Establishing an Employee Incentive Program

The first theme that emerged from the data analysis through semistructured interview and field notes was establishing an employee incentive program. All five participants (100%) confirmed that they established an employee incentive program as a successful strategy to motivate employees. For example, PC1 explained,

> At first, I realized that productivity was reducing in terms of sales figures, customers patronages and reduction in call in customers. I invited the members of the executive committee (Excos) to figure out what was wrong with the performance. Then we resolved to focus on two areas of incentive programs such as profit-sharing and training overseas of staff with outstanding performance. The next month, sales figures increased exponentially.

PC2 also mentioned the benefits of incentive programs:

> using incentives such as praise, recognition, money, and entertainment had produced a tremendous motivation to my staff over the years. Some weekends are used for team entertainment for the achievements of previous weeks. This is how staff are retained and motivated.

PC3 mentioned, “Staff incentive forms a significant part of the company’s annual budget. Not fulfilling that aspect of the bargain make the staff feel something is wrong, and you won’t want to create that impression.” PC4 specified, “We organize special health and wellbeing-focused program as incentive programs for staff whose performance review increase above the threshold defined at the beginning of the year.” PC5 stated, “Since the inception as head of department, I have devised a means to keep staff motivated through incentives such as one-off gift cards, birthday celebrations, and weekend team bonding activities."

Findings revealed that employees who receive annual raise in salary and those who have attended trainings in the recent years have higher loyalty to the organization. Other incentives that were identified to have played an important role in the organization include birthday recognition, special gifts, profit sharing, and letter of recognition.

This study findings aligned with the conceptual framework and previous literature. According to the Porter-Lawler model, incentive management contributes to improved job satisfaction and performance (Zhang et al., 2021). Zhang et al. (2021) analyzed tourism's short, medium, and long-term incentives officers using the Porter-Lawler model and expectation theory for explaining the effectiveness of incentives for providing motivation for employees. Gilmore (2022) inferred that employee incentive plans can be used to increase engagement and staff performance. The theme on using employee incentive program as a mean to motivation in a corporate organization confirms previous literature's findings.

Theme 2: Creating a Healthy Work-Life Balance

The second theme that emerged from the data analysis through semistructured interview and field notes was creating a healthy work-life balance. Four (80%) of the participants confirmed that they created healthy work-life balance as a successful strategy to motivate employees. PC1 stated,

> In this organization, staff is entitled to an hour break for lunch daily, flexibility in working from home, open communication, horizontal organizational structure

> where staff could easily walk into the senior officer’s office to ask for help and encourage staff to make time for family. The key performance indication for each staff member includes the number of time work-life is balanced and indicated in the performance report. Also, the work-life balance culture is built into the succession planning process; taught during the staff orientation for quick adaptations into working environment.

PC2 explained,

> We prioritize employee’s health, and how staff make space for family time. We also ensure that there is flexibility in working from home. Working from home became a popular practice during the COVID-19 pandemic and it is still in practice to date; this time not for the reason for social distancing, rather for work-life balance element of the organization to motivate employees to have time with family, while deadlines are maintained for the organization.

PC3 mentioned,

> A survey was carried out among staff in 2021 on staff engagement. The result revealed disparity between engagement and disengagement among staff. When further probe was done on the disengagement reason, much of it was associated with lack of motivation and work-life imbalance. The company resolved to prioritize work-life balance at workplace. One of the decisions reached was to ensure that all staff exhaust their annual leave to spend time with family.

PC4 stated,

> In our organization, part of the code of conduct is maintaining healthy work-life balance among all staff. The elements of work-life balance are included in the key performance indications (KPI). Some of those KPIs are (a) asking for help from supervisors, working from home two days in a week, quarterly report of a visit to medical center for checkup, and team bonding activities carried out within the departments.

PC5 stated,

> In our organization, employees are treated as the most important assets. Therefore, sustaining those assets is to motivate them to perform optimally. One of such ways to motivate our employee is through work-life balance schedule and routines in and outside the office.

The theme on healthy work-life balance aligns with the conceptual framework of Herzberg two factor theory of motivation (Singh & Bhattacharjee, 2021). Singh and Bhattacharjee (2021) proposed that mediators and triggers, two interrelated categories, interact to produce satisfaction. Mediators include motivators and hygiene factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic rewards linked with one’s work, demography, and environmental conditions and provide the context through which job happiness can be analyzed. In contrast, triggers are important work or nonwork events that change one’s reference point, including getting a promotion, relocating to a new place of employment, or establishing a family (Singh & Bhattacharjee, 2021). The motivator and hygiene factors are linked to the Herzberg two-factor theory of motivation used as the conceptual framework in this study.

Creating a healthy work-life balance also aligns with previous researchers' findings on work-life balance. For example, creating a healthy work-life balance provides employees with sufficient time to spend time with their families and engage jointly with spouses on children upbringing. However, Begum et al. (2022) also explained the negative relationship between work-life balance and job instability. Job insecurity is associated with longer workdays and less family time. Job insecurity has an adverse effect on health and the quality of family time since it causes worry between partners and kids, whether they are employed or not. Work intensification and job insecurity have a negative impact on work-life balance (Begum et al., 2022). There is a misalignment on how motivation could be provided using work-life balance during job loss, recession in a country, and job insecurity, where fewer employees must complete the work of the separated employees.

Theme 3: Provide Personal Development and Opportunities for Career Development

The third theme that emerged from the data analysis through semistructured interviews and field notes was providing personal development and opportunities for career development. All five participants confirmed that they provided personal development and opportunities for career development. PC1 stated,

> Employees want to be guaranteed of timely and regular promotion. Most importantly is to earn such promotions, which make employees to engage in self-development. However, their loyalty is not grounded when such self-development is financed by the staff involved. Personal developmental agenda is a scheme

> promoted in our organization to retain staff, promote, and compensate such staff in their current role. These strategies of personal development and opportunity for career development had been the strategy in motivating staff for optimal performance.

PC2 stated,

> At the beginning of the year, the human resources development a training plan which entails one local training and one international training. Employees in Dubai prefer United Kingdom for international trainings. These trainings are job related; areas such as project management, IT, digital transformation, and human resources receive more attention for both local and international trainings. The strategy behind this is to ensure that the core support and business unit staff are retained in the system for a longer period.

PC3 stated, “this corporation had retained its staff through sponsorship program that boost employee’s confidence as well as assure the employee their relevance at the job space.” PC4 explained,

> The organization spends significant amount annually to keep every employee to date in terms of career development courses. These courses are tailored driven to relevance to the department. At times, employees go into long term contract to undertake some commitment not to leave the organization after such training is completed. However, all labor laws of Dubai are respected.

PC5 stated,

Employee personal developmental courses are both the immediate required courses and the future courses needed. For instance, the post retirement courses are not needed for the employee to perform on the job, rather such training is required for the employee to fit adequately into the next stage of life after retirement. Such trainings demonstrate concern and the wellbeing of the employee and ultimately as motivation factor.

Providing personal development and opportunities for career development aligns with pervious literature on personal development and career development. Briscoe-Palmer and Mattocks (2020) appraised that beyond educational requirements, a professional path includes crucial learning opportunities such as training, which is the competences that must be acquired, developed, or maintained, and crucial elements of job success. Some of the competencies include analytical and problem-solving skills, oral and written communication, digital technologies, professionalism and work ethics, cooperation and teamwork, leadership, and fluency in several languages and cultures (Briscoe-Palmer & Mattocks, 2020). Conversely, activities offered by universities are skills-based training are intended to educate individuals to develop their abilities, by focusing on both the crucial development experiences and competences elements of a career path (Briscoe-Palmer & Mattocks, 2020). Cheah et al. (2021) concluded that employee competence, level of previous experience, and readiness must be considered for planning and implementing career development and personal development. Staff strength should play a significant role in planning staff development (Cheah et al., 2021).

Theme 4: Establish Mentorship Opportunities

The fourth theme that emerged from the data analysis through semistructured and field notes confirmed that the participants established mentorship opportunities as a successful strategy to motivate employees. PC1 stated:

> Mentorship program has been used to achieve tremendous success in motivating staff. As soon as a staff is employed in this organization, he or she is assigned a mentor for one year long. The duty of the mentor is to ensure that the staff succeed at the job placement. The performance is co-jointed between the mentor and mentee, which makes this exercise objective and sustainable. The mentee one day become in mentor. The criteria of graduating a mentee into a mentor are contained in the human resource manual of the organization.

PC2 stated “while the mentor-mentee relationship has some challenges such as gender and tribal sentiments in a mentor-mentee program are adequately addressed in our organization” PC3 mentioned:

> Every new employee is given a mentor and that employee is treated as mentee for six months. Within these six months, it is assumed that the employee just graduated from school. They are not given stressful job or deadline to meet. The exception to this is when such employee is an experienced staff member. In the case of an experienced staff, the mentorship period is three months. The mentorship period is when you learn the culture, the vision and mission of the company. We take out mentorship period seriously; at this period, you rotate desk

> to learn every element of the company’s culture and philosophy. We believe every employee has the potential to become the managing director someday.

PC4 mentioned:

> employees are supported to succeed on the job; both old and new staff are encouraged to have a mentor. The mentor could be the line manager or someone different. But this also does not lead to other kind of relationship aside from the work. The ethical guideline is clear on the mentorship program. No senior staff is allowed to take advantage of the mentorship program. Conflict of interest is checked in the program. The sole aim is to motivate staff and to build a succession plan in an indirect way.

PC5 stated “When I first joined this organization, I had a mentor who supported me to settle down on the job. We still hold that culture of mentoring strong. I think that motivation is vital for every staff.”

Establish mentorship opportunities aligns with the conceptual framework of Herzberg’s theory of motivation. According to Ngwenya et al. (2018) motivation in the workplace refers to employees’ readiness to demonstrate a high degree of tenacity to fulfill organizational goals while also satisfying workforce requirements. Ngwenya et al. (2018) described motivation as a psychological process that prompts continual, individual goal-oriented behavior. Mentoring as an element of motivation where an individual is being taught to succeed by another experienced person in that field. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivations are the two types of motivation that can be distinguished. The feelings of satisfaction, meaning, interest, and accomplishment are what drive intrinsic motivation rather than an increase in pay and benefits (Ngwenya et al., 2018). Furthermore, Ngwenya at al contended that since intrinsic rewards are internal to everyone, employers cannot give them to specific people in form of mentoring (Ngwenya et al., 2018).

In an academic setting for instance, qualified mentors are trained to teach in their specialized disciplines, most notably in courses leading to degrees in a variety of programs; they frequently find themselves performing responsibilities that are not a part of their training as teachers (Wahidi et al., 2021). However, mentors are also given the necessary training to work as a team to manage a variety of academic programs. This is a vast field that is constantly expanding, especially as more institutions of higher learning start to offer a variety of courses that will equip graduates to compete on the job market anywhere in the rest of the world (Wahidi et al., 2021).

Theme 5: Establish Team Bonding Environment

The fifth theme that emerged from the data analysis through semistructured interview and field notes was established team bonding environment. All five participants confirmed that they established team bonding environment as a successful strategy to motivate employees. PC1 stated:

> The organization stresses on team building and bonding. The work environment is saturated with frames and write up to create a team mindset. You see descriptions such as “Together Everyone Achieve More” and another team write up. The team formation stages such as forming, norming, storming, performing is emphasized

in this organization. The reason why we do not include adjoining is the fact that we do not want to input into staff how temporary working together could become.

PC2 mentioned:

To motivate employees is to make them work together and achieve a greater result for the benefit of the individuals as well as the organization. We have two performance appraisal systems: the individual appraisal and the team appraisal. An employee is appraised on the two appraisals annually, and that has created a team setting in the organization. We care for each other; we celebrate each other and ensure your wins are everybody’s wins. For example, employees celebrate long service awards due to the success of other team members.

PC3 stated:

Team formation activities such as brain-trust is what we have used over the years as motivation. At the beginning of the year, we draw a roaster where each staff member is expected to prepare a discussion among other staff. Every Monday morning, a presenter presents a topic that have been well researched. The presentation is analyzed, evaluated and critique after the presentation and comments are shared. This activity had made on the average, every staff member had become a great public speaker.

PC4 mentioned:

We had encouraged staff members to create team bonding activities over the weekend or after working hours to have a leisure to celebrate minors and major wins. The supervisor and every member of the department are supported for such

> activities. We have observed over the years that with a heathy team in place, every member of staff succeeds. And when success is guaranteed, staff turnover is at its minimum.

PC5 stated:

> team performance is part of the annual review for each department in this organization. Using this strategy, both the weak link and the stronger link in the department finds a common point of strengths and aligns for efficiency and effectively of purpose.

Theme 5 aligns with the conceptual framework of expectancy. Team performance management is described as the process of evaluating an individual employee's, team's, department's, or agency's performance (H. Lee, 2018). Expectancy theory is the foundation of the widely held assumption that performance management will increase public employees' motivation (H. Lee, 2018). A multi-level strategy that includes team performance, their work and social contacts, and the team's interaction patterns is necessary to comprehend team learning (London, 2021). Feedback is necessary for ongoing team and individual learning (London, 2021). Team members, the team, and or the leader may receive feedback from leaders, coaches, and human resource department specialists regarding processes and results (London, 2021). The team may take some time to ponder to receive input from the members' various points of view as well as data from stakeholders outside the team (London, 2021).

Theme 6: Create Information Transparency and Feedback Policy

The sixth theme that emerged from the data analysis through semistructured interviews and field notes was creating information transparency and feedback policy. All five participants confirmed that they created information transparency and feedback policy as a successful strategy to motivate employees. PC1 stated:

> To motivate our employees, we ensured that the work culture and communication are transparent, without any element of toxicity. This work culture is embedded into the recruitment process. We hire people who we believe have the soft skills or who can be trained to adapt to the work culture of effective communication and transparency. Our offices are open and without barriers from gaining entrance or exit into other staff offices.

PC2 mentioned:

> Staff motivation is important for us as an organization. Staff motivation guarantees customers relation, employees' engagement, and an increased bottom line. Therefore, the strategy we adopted was effective communication, transparency, and feedback. When staff could communicate freely in the system, the toxic nature of the work is eliminated, the workplace become a second home to all staff members. The avenue for communication is also important; we organize customer and staff forums where both staff and customers could meet to interface and share their experiences.

PC3 stated "the kind of employees you assemble in the organization determines the work culture and health of the working space. In our organization, we promote transparency in communication and welcome constructive feedback." PC4 mentioned:

> The communication that is allowed in the office determines if staff are motivated or demotivated. Allowing abusive word in an office environment could create demotivated staff. On the other hand, consciously allowing positive appraisal and constructive correction allows for a healthy working environment. Therefore, it is a rule in this organization to be polite towards staff and customers, hire people who respect transparency, and lead by example.

PC5 stated:

> In this organization we do a 360-degree performance review where the superior and subordinate can appraise each other. From the subordinate perspective, the appraisal usually includes how comfortable and how easy it is to work with the superior and vice versa. Having transparent communication and feedback has helped improved communication, improved staff retention and increased employee engagement.

Theme 6 aligns with the conceptual framework and the previous literature on motivation through effective communication. Mansour (2020) identified the benefits of transparent information as including democracy, accountability and participation at workplace, good governance, increased efficiency and effectiveness, and a weapon to control abuse of power and corruption.

Transparency and accountability are embraced by many of the most influential organizations as their guiding principles and accepted business practices (Heimstadt & Dobusch, 2020). In contrast, activists utilize internet channels to plan lengthy and significant protests other businesses, charging them with secrecy, unethical business methods, and a lack of accountability (Heimstadt & Dobusch, 2020). It becomes harder to abuse power the more people and organizations demand accountability and openness (Heimstadt & Dobusch, 2020). Theme six aligns with previous literature of motivation in corporate organizations.

Theme 7: Promote a Healthy Working Environment

The seventh theme that emerged from the data analysis through semistructured interview and field notes was promoting a healthy working environment. Four participants (80%) confirmed that they promote healthy working environment as a successful strategy to motivate employees. PC1 mentioned:

> Motivation is vital to this organization. In achieving motivation among employees, we ensure that the working space and desk is comfortable for all staff, we build in recognition and award programs, we also ensure that staff bonding activities such as “Thank God Is Friday-TGIF” are created in the system. Also, the look and feel of the working environment is important. We have a checklist for all our offices across the country. The color, the working description, the plants, water, and air are major priorities.

PC2 stated:

> In making sure staff are motivated, the office working environment is important. We use white color on our walls, and ensure see-through glasses are used. The elevator system is checked by experts to avoid any jam of the elevator, an experience that can be traumatic if not managed adequately. We also ensure that intercoms are install on every employee desk and we built a policy for the use of intranet such as handout for communication. There are kitchen services in all our branches where staff could eat at lunch breaks.

PC3 stated:

> All staff feel motivated because of the decent working environment of ours. We pay attention to details; the detail of the look and feel of the environment, uniformity in dressing especially when it has to do with branded T-shirts. All staff put on the branded T-shirt on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and everyone have sense of belonging. Birthdays are celebrated with all members having photograph along with the celebrant were the department in charge of branding supervise the photograph and printing. This is enabled because of the decency of the working environment. No staff is allowed to eat at their desk, rather at the central kitchen area that is cleaned regularly.

PC4 mentioned:

> From our survey on staff engagement, 100% of the staff ticked working environment as a criterion for employees’ engagement. With such a vital information, we invested in the look and feel of the workplace, knowing that staff spend significant time at work during working days more than they spend at

home. Therefore, the plants are monitored to ensure they remain healthy and green all the time. The ACs are serviced regularly. The beverages such as coffee are replaced regularly.

Theme 7 aligns with the conceptual framework and previous literature on motivation. The leadership's interest in evaluating the health of the workforce increased as health care costs rose (Marshall, 2020). Enhancing the type of welfare provided to the staff was one aspect of the approach to motivation and staff wellbeing. Employers frequently concentrate on measuring presenteeism and absenteeism, workers' compensation, short- or long-term incapacity, productivity metrics, and employee turnover or replacement expenses (Marshall, 2020). Shams-White et al. (2019) evaluated working environments as means for assessing comfort and sanity to increase performance among staff. The work environment must therefore be planned for the physical and mental success of employees.

Applications to Professional Practice

The study findings can provide corporate managers with successful strategies to motivate employees. Corporate managers confronted with a high turnover rate can increase staff retention by adopting or adapting the previously identified strategies. Such corporate managers can use the findings from the current study to review and, as necessary, improve their incentive policies, work-life balance, training and practice, mentoring, team bonding, communication and working environment policies. Salau et al. (2020) revealed that workplace conditions contribute 89.6% to academic staff retention at state universities in UAE. The author concluded that the workplace has a favorable and significant impact on academic staff retention. Workplace environments include the infrastructure, the look and feel, the desk, the classroom in a school environment, the health and safety conditions, and the laws that govern the country's workplace (Salau et al., 2020). Corporate managers should ensure that the workplace environment is prioritized when reviewing strategies for motivating staff.

Chowkase et al. (2021) revealed that the workplace could be a virtual environment. Online education since the COVID-19 pandemic has received positive attention from stakeholders. The ability to develop a positive workplace environment can provide the desired motivation for employees. Online courses can be either synchronous, asynchronous, or a combination of the two (Chowkase et al., 2021). While asynchronous online learning forms are flexible in terms of time and pace, synchronous online learning incorporates real-time involvement. Both types can share many characteristics, even if each has advantages and difficulties. Promoting interaction is crucial to increase motivation and engagement in online learning. Student-student, student-teacher, and student-content interactions are the three types necessary for effective online learning (Chowkase et al., 2021). Corporate managers could also harmonize the working environment through the physical and virtual workplace and ensure that both platforms provide motivation to employees by ensuring that the workplace is effectively built.

Implications for Social Change

Findings from this study suggest that favorable social implications include employees' job satisfaction, self-worth, and dignity in the workplace through successful motivation strategies. An employee's enhanced self-worth becomes more generous and kinder to family members, friends, and neighbors (Perrow, 2016). Consequently, the bond among family members, friends and neighbors is strengthened, thus improving community cohesion. Organizations implementing employee motivation strategies may be seen as responsible for the well-being of their employees, which could result in employee longevity and community stability. Di Bernardo et al. (2019) analyzed disadvantaged employees in other organizations and concluded that social change initiatives were the most significant change elements for employees' wellbeing.

Recommendations for Action

The first recommendation is that corporate managers address the importance of employee incentives through conducting regular reviews of employee incentives from the industry and competition perspective. This recommendation is grounded on theme one. Incentives could come in several forms such as salary, bonuses, hardship payment, pension payment, hospital payment, children payment, housing allowance, training allowance and other conditions. Corporate managers must ensure that they are conversant with current trends on employee incentives to have a first mover advantage on staff motivation.

The second recommendation is that work-life balance be assessed in detail and is grounded on the second theme. The number of days a staff member can work from home versus working from an office, lunch break, annual leave, adequate sick leaves and other details that guarantee work-life balance should be protected and verified with policies and procedures. Every year, work-life balance should be an item on the review of key performance indicators and tracked to know the percentage of achievement and satisfaction for all staff.

The third recommendation is that corporate managers create a team development environment, psychology, and philosophy among staff. Corporate managers should ensure that all staff are trained and participate through a team bonding system and initiative. Supervisors should be tasked to assure that new staff succeed in their role through a team formation orientation, and achievement of this task should form a part of the performance appraisal for the supervisors.

The fourth recommendation is that corporate managers ensure that the working environment supports the employees' dignity, aspiration, and psychological and philosophical make-up. The working environment should be an attraction for every employee. The work environment should be a pride to the employees; a placed employee would work at their optimal level and sanity (Di Bernardo et al., 2019). Corporate managers should invest in infrastructures such as office space, kitchen, gym after work, seat-out spots, flowers in the office, white painted walls, and a mirror in the restrooms. Corporate managers should create a state-of-the-art environment that complements salaries and other benefits.

Corporate managers and stakeholders should address each of the four recommendations. The shareholders who have invested in the company need to pay attention to these findings and ensure the results are incorporated into the organization's strategic documents and organizational manuals or policies. These recommendations should form a checklist for managers seeking workplace motivation. Employers should realize that other competitors may have already adopted these recommendations into their practice, and that not applying them could result in being competitively disadvantaged.

The results from this study will be disseminated through publications such as books and conference presentations. Other means of dissemination include seminars, workshops, and training. I would consult for organizations in Dubai and organize awareness lectures using social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram to discuss these strategies that corporate managers can use to motivate their employees to achieve and sustain performance improvements.

Recommendations for Further Research

This qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore successful strategies corporate managers use to motivate their employees. I used a qualitative multiple case study design. Various limitations in this study were encountered during data collection, as some participants were unwilling to disclose details about their organization fully. Therefore, the authenticity of the study inferences may have been affected negatively. The expected solution for the problem includes assuring participants about the confidentiality of their contributions and using an additional method of collecting qualitative data in the form of semistructured interviews and field notes. Another study limitation was how the leaders perceived their experience in identifying employee engagement. Various leaders or managers had different perceptions of what constituted employee engagement, and reconciling such differences made the identification and qualifying employee engagement as perceived by these managers difficult.

In the future, I recommend employing the quantitative methodology to study the relationship between motivation and staff retention rate for corporate organizations. The reason for this recommendation is a qualitative study has a limitation of generalization, whereas a quantitative study is generalizable. This study may not be transferable to other parts of the world because of the associated limitations of a qualitative study. The use of quantitative methodology should help address any subjective responses during the interview process to a more objective data collection process. I would also recommend that, even if the qualitative study is retained, the number of corporate managers and organizations should be increased from five to 15 participants. This recommendation results from noting the need for a phenomenological study to better understand the meanings of the lived experience of the participants.

Reflections

The DBA study was rigorous and, at the same time, worth the journey. At the inception of my DBA study, I realized there are rules such as writing style, assignment deadlines, responses to discussions, and having to search and research for articles to support any claim made to colleagues in class. I realized that I was building my confidence level in handling tasks. I also realized that my writing became more articulate and focused on addressing subject issues. Another significant rule that shaped my learning was the avoidance of plagiarism and having to attend residencies while learning. My DBA study was due to my work environment and opportunities in Dubai. The high employee turnover rate is a significant issue in Dubai’s corporate industry. Such a high turnover rate will eventually lead to job losses because an inconsistent employee could be considered the weakest link during business turbulence. The root cause of such artificial job scarcity is typically the lack of motivation stemming from deficient existing systems (Setiyani et al., 2019). The Walden University advocacy for social change is one of the first attractions upon admission to study at Walden University. The social change paradigm aligns with my personal goal of assisting organizations in operating at optimal levels through a knowledge-based understanding of organizational improvement possibilities.

Conclusion

In addressing the specific business problem of finding out how corporate managers could apply successful strategies to motivate their employees, a multiple case study was adopted by employing five corporate managers to respond to the interview questions and field notes that were created through the conceptual framework that underpins the study. As a result, seven themes emerged from the study that provided the successful strategies corporate managers can adopt to motivate their employees. The derivative strategies and recommendations were establishing an employee incentive program, creating a healthy work-life balance by encouraging break time and annual leave, providing working from home options and offering flexible schedules, providing personal development and opportunities for career development, establishing mentorship opportunities, establishing team bonding through plan team bonding activities and train team on conflict management, creating information transparency and feedback policy, and promoting a healthy working environment. Based on these strategies and recommendations corporate managers can develop and implement processes that ensure the importance of employee retention strategies are recognized and addressed to retain employees for sustaining performance.

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Appendix: Interview Protocol

I appreciate your time in taking part in this interview. This research will examine the strategies that managers use in motivating their employees. Sharing your experiences, opinions, ideas, and thoughts will be very insightful for this study. I will use a hand-held audio recorder and take some notes (field notes) to help me remember the responses and our interactions. This interview will last not more than 30 minutes. If you feel unwilling to respond to any question or probing, you will be free to ‘pass’ or prompt me to stop or go to the next question.

Systems in Place to Support School Readiness

What are the things that you do or incentives you use to keep your employees motivated?

Could you think of any other motivational factors?

According to you how do you view financial rewards as part of incentive?

Could you please elaborate?

How do you view your compensation levels compared to others within the same industry in Dubai?

Please could you elaborate further?

What types of rewards do you use in your firm?

Why do you think they are effective in motivating your employees?

Do you think leadership style has a role to play in empowering or motivating your employees?

Why?

When you rate your company in a scale of 1 to 10 with one being not effective and 10 being very effective, what score could you give your company?

Why?

Once again, thank you for taking part in this study.