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Strategies to Improve Employee Retention in Nonprofit Organizations

Robert A. Thornburg
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Robert A. Thornburg

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Lisa Kangas, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Edgar Jordan, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

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

Walden University
2023

Abstract

Strategies to Improve Employee Retention in Nonprofit Organizations

by

Robert A. Thornburg

MS, Southern New Hampshire University, 2016

BS, University of South Florida, 2013

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

October 2023

Abstract

Talented employee turnover in nonprofit organizations has the potential for excessive costs and unfavorable outcomes. Nonprofit organization managers are concerned with retaining talented employees not only to sustain competitive advantage but also to continue to provide essential services. Grounded in person-organization fit theory, the purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that four nonprofit organization managers in the southern United States use to increase employee retention. Data were collected using semistructured interviews and a review of organizational retention documents. Through Yin's five-step data analysis process and thematic analysis, four themes were identified: (a) employ competitive benefits and compensation, (b) foster an innovative and engaging organizational culture, (c) enable employee development, and (d) maintain high levels of employee satisfaction. A key recommendation is for nonprofit managers to provide intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to improve culture. The implications for positive social change include the potential to retain talented employees and better serve local and socially disadvantaged communities.

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Dedication

I dedicate my doctoral study to the following individuals:

In loving memory of Ms. Nancy Duffield Dunn, from 1994 until your passing, you always accepted and believed in me. Although you were never officially my teacher, you taught me so much about loving who I am, being myself, and believing in myself when I did not believe in myself. I love and miss you.

In loving memory of Ms. Francis Virginia Lee Harper (Gigi), you are the one who always loved me unconditionally in my life and accepted me for who I am.

Additionally, I dedicate this study to my committee and faculty of Walden University, particularly Dr. Lisa Kangas; to my mother and father, who always believe in me, love me, and are the best parents I could ever ask for.

Lastly, I dedicate this study to my comrades, who gave the ultimate sacrifice in service to our great nation:

sergeant first class Makkar

staff sergeant Ignacio

sergeant Repass

specialist Saunders

specialist Rivenburg

specialist Petraitis

specialist Mathis

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(In loving memory)

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Section 1 provides the background of the problem, problem and purpose, population and sampling, nature of the study, research question, interview questions, conceptual framework, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, significance of the study, and a comprehensive review of the literature. Section 1 also provides implications for social change and operational definitions relevant to this study.

Background of the Problem

Nonprofit organizations often provide essential medical services or essential goods to socially disadvantaged communities (Marcela et al., 2021). To provide essential medical services or essential goods, nonprofit organizations must compete for public service contracts, donors, sponsors, clients, employees, revenue, and volunteers.

Nonprofit organizations must also achieve and sustain competitive advantage to continue to provide essential goods and services to socially disadvantaged communities (Currie et al., 2022). Nonprofit organizations must attract and retain talent to achieve and sustain competitive advantage and maintain competitive advantage (Marcela et al., 2021).

Nonprofit organization managers must adopt strategies to retain employees who will enable the organization to maintain competitive advantage.

The cost of replacing a single employee can be as high as 90%–120% of an employee's annual salary (Walker-Schmidt et al., 2022). In 2020, the average nonprofit employee turnover rate was 43.1%, which was 10% higher than the national average employee turnover rate (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). High cost of employee turnover can have negative effects on nonprofit organizations because talent is

a crucial factor in nonprofit organizations (West, 2022). Additionally, nonprofit organization managers must retain talent to not only sustain competitive advantage but also to continue to serve their respective communities (Stater & Stater, 2019). By improving employee retention, nonprofit organizations can reduce turnover costs and sustain competitive advantage while providing essential services to socially disadvantaged communities (West, 2022). Nonprofit organization managers can continue to provide essential services to underprivileged communities if the managers adopt strategies to improve employee retention.

Problem and Purpose

The specific business problem was that some nonprofit organization managers lack strategies to improve employee retention. The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that managers in a nonprofit organization use to improve employee retention.

Population and Sampling

I used purposeful sampling and conducted interviews with four organization managers in a single nonprofit organization located in southern United States. To participate in this qualitative case study, participants were required to be a manager in the organization chosen for this study who had successfully adopted strategies to improve employee retention. In addition to semistructured interviews, I also reviewed internal employee retention documents.

Nature of the Study

There are three types of research methods: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. A researcher uses qualitative methodology to explore a phenomenon (Dawadi et al., 2021). I used the qualitative method to explore a phenomenon of value congruence to improve employee retention, and the phenomenon did not require numerical analysis.

Quantitative methodology includes numerical data to determine a cause-effect relationship or statistical tests to test a theory or hypothesis (Henson et al., 2020).

Quantitative methods were unsuitable for the current study because I did not analyze numerical data to determine a cause-effect relationship or use statistical testing to test hypotheses. Finally, researchers use mixed methods when combining qualitative and quantitative elements in their research (Stoecker & Avila, 2021). Quantitative and mixed methods were inappropriate for my research study because it did not entail hypothesis testing or numerical data analysis.

I considered four types of qualitative research designs for my study: case study, ethnography, phenomenology, and narrative. The purpose of case study research is to use multiple data collection techniques (Guo, 2019). Researchers typically choose a case study design when asking “what” and “how” interview questions and when using multiple ways to collect data, such as interviewing, reviewing company documents, and conducting in-depth analysis. Celikoglu and Hamarat (2022) indicated that ethnography research design is concerned with sociocultural patterns in a cultural setting. I did not use an ethnographic design because I did not focus on sociocultural patterns in a sociocultural setting. Arnout et al. (2019) described the focus of the phenomenological approach as

individuals' lived experiences. Phenomenology was inappropriate for the current study because the focus was not understanding participants' lived experiences. The narrative design includes collected stories and group conversations (Potter, 2013). The narrative design was inappropriate for my study because the purpose of my study was not to tell stories.

Research Question

What strategies do some nonprofit organization leaders use to improve employee retention?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use in your day-to-day operations to improve employee retention?
2. What strategies have helped you most to reduce employee turnover?
3. What strategies have you implemented to be the least effective when reducing employee turnover?
 - How did you address the least effective strategies to reduce employee turnover?
4. When you started your nonprofit organization, what factors drove you to implement strategies to reduce employee turnover?
5. What method(s) do you find work best to improve overall retention within your organization?
6. How have your employees responded to your employee retention strategies?
 - How did you measure the effectiveness of the strategies implemented?

7. How has employee turnover affected your organization, based on your experience?
8. What additional information would you like to share about the strategies you use to reduce voluntary employee turnover?

Conceptual Framework

The person-organization (P-O) fit theory was relevant to the conceptual framework for this study because the P-O fit theory is the congruence between individual values and organizational norms. Argyris (1957, as cited in Derindag et al., 2021) introduced the P-O fit theory, which is built on the premise that an organization contains different types of climates that play an essential role in the attraction and selection of organization members. P-O theory is a framework designed to explain that organizations select candidates who fit organizational climates and values, and candidates choose to remain with organizations based on the alignment of organizational values with individual values (Argyris, 1957).

Furthermore, the P-O fit theory is explained in two types: supplementary and complementary (Guan et al., 2021). According to Guan et al. (2021), supplementary fit is appropriate for instances in which the individual and organizational values align. In contrast, complementary fit is appropriate when individual characteristics/values make whole the organization's values (Guan et al., 2021). Kristof (1996) identified four factors to measure P-O fit theory: values, personality, knowledge, and skills and abilities. Kristof's measurement points allow for leaders in organizations to continuously measure P-O fit theory when selecting candidates and retaining employees. P-O fit theory was

appropriate for my study because it related to participants' perceptions of organizational culture and strategies nonprofit organization managers use to improve employee retention. P-O fit theory also aided in addressing the research problem, purpose, and nature of the findings in my study because findings in similar research revealed that the alignment of people within organizations could lead to improved employee retention.

Operational Definitions

Employee job satisfaction: An individual's feelings, perceptions, and attitudes toward a job that affect the P-O fit of the worker (Montuori et al., 2022).

P-O fit theory: The compatibility of individuals and organizations, including how an individual's values, interests, and behavior are consistent with or compatible with an organization's culture as a whole rather than specific functions or tasks (Olubiyi et al., 2019).

Value congruence: Alignment of values of individuals and the organizations they work for (Olubiyi et al., 2019).

Voluntary turnover: Deliberate separation of workers leaving their present place of employment (Derindag et al., 2021).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Cypress (2018) noted the importance of identifying assumptions, limitations, and delimitations that should be considered when conducting a study. This section focuses on the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations that impacted my study.

Assumptions

According to Kulshreshtha et al. (2021), an assumption is an embedded and unconscious observation made about people that can contrast with reality. I assumed that all participants would answer the interview questions truthfully and accurately. Bougie and Sekaran (2020) noted that participants might exhibit personal bias when responding to questions, which may alter their responses. Another assumption was that organizational employee retention documents provided by participants would be relevant to my study.

Limitations

Zhou and Jaing (2023) noted that limitations are shortcomings, conditions, and influences beyond the researcher's control. One limitation of the current study was using only two data collection techniques, which were interviews and employee retention documents. This limited the ability to collect additional data from other data collection techniques, which could have limited the validity of data saturation and results of the study. The second limitation was participants may not have answered the interview questions honestly; therefore, there could have been bias in data collected from the interviews.

Delimitations

According to Cooker (2022), delimitations are boundaries within a study. One delimitation of the current study was the focus on a single nonprofit organization that serves LGBTQIA+ individuals, which could have limited the findings to a specific

organization. Another delimitation was the geographical location, which was a single city in the southern United States.

Significance of the Study

The results of the study may provide new strategies for organization managers to improve retention, which could reduce employee retention costs and improve organizational sustainability. Moreover, organization managers may discover additional strategies to improve employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. According to Bodjrenou et al. (2019), employees with greater organizational commitment and job satisfaction are less likely to leave their organizations. Therefore, the findings from the current study may contribute to improved initiatives that stimulate positive social change.

Contribution to Business Practice

Nonprofit leaders may find the results of this research significant for reducing voluntary employee turnover. Hlongwa et al. (2023) noted that researchers are considering different strategies to address historically high voluntary employee turnover. Additionally, high turnover causes reduced economic growth and significant costs to organizations (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Using the right strategies to improve employee retention is beneficial to organizations through increased innovation and sales and lower retention costs (Andrews & Mohammed, 2020). Findings from my research could have implications for leaders seeking to reduce employee turnover costs and increase organizational productivity.

Implications for Social Change

Social change is the result of organization leaders' ideas and actions to improve the social quality of life for society (Lindsey & Wiltshire, 2022). The implications for positive social change include improving retention at nonprofit organizations. By improving employee retention, nonprofit organizations could be better positioned to provide vital services to underprivileged communities and communities with special needs. Additionally, increasing service could expand nonprofit organizations and access to additional benefits for disadvantaged communities and special populations.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The literature review in my study was a comprehensive analysis and synthesis of literature relevant to employee retention from a collection of peer-reviewed journals, websites, academic journals, and other sources. The literature review includes a description of the P-O fit theory, followed by supporting and contrasting theories (Herzberg's two-factor theory and job embeddedness theory). Also, I explain why I selected the P-O fit theory for my conceptual framework and why the other theories were not appropriate for my study.

In my literature review, I explore strategies that improve employee retention such as employee benefits, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational culture. I also review content on motivational factors consisting of training and development, programs, and encouragement for personal growth. Finally, I explore other qualitative case studies that included the P-O fit theory, Herzberg's two-factor theory, job

embeddedness, and strategies to improve employee retention and reduce employee turnover.

To conduct the literature review, I reviewed Walden University Library databases to acquire literature, such as Academic Search Complete, ProQuest, EBSCO, Business Sources Complete, EBSCO open access complete, Sage Journals, Emerald Insight, IEEE, ERIC, and Science Direct. The Walden University Library was my primary search source, and Google Scholar was my secondary source for journals. Key terms and phrases used in my search included *person-organization fit theory*, *Herzberg's two-factor theory*, *job embeddedness theory*, *employee retention reduction strategies*, *employee turnover*, *nonprofit organizations*, *job satisfaction*, *organizational culture*, *employee benefits*, and *person-job fit theory*.

The dates of research ranged from 1984 to 2023, and the peer-reviewed scholarly journal article box was checked to ensure the search engine provided only peer-reviewed articles. I focused on articles that were published within 5 years of my anticipated graduation date, though I considered older articles for the conceptual framework to provide depth and a complete history of my conceptual framework in relation to the business problem. My sources were both peer reviewed (90%) and published within 5 years of my anticipated graduation date (85.03%) of 2023 (see Table 1).

Table 1*Source Accountability*

Reference type	Reference count	% of total references
References (books, journals, websites)	219	98%
Peer-reviewed references	201	90%
References published within the last 5 years	192	85.7%
References from books	5	2%
Total	224	

Application to the Business Problem

The objective of my qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that managers in a nonprofit organization use to improve employee retention. The conceptual framework for this study was grounded in P-O fit theory.

P-O Fit Theory

The conceptual framework for this study was grounded in the P-O fit theory. P-O fit theory is a holistic concept about the importance of compatibility between individuals and organizations. Additionally, P-O fit theory is used to explain the importance of aligning individual values, interests, and behaviors with the organization's culture rather than a specific function or role (Olubiyi et al., 2019). Guan et al. (2021) noted two concepts of P-O fit theory. The first concept is complementary fit, which exists when the characteristics of an individual compliment or make whole the characteristics of an organization. The second concept is supplementary fit in which similar characteristics exist between the individual and the organization.

The purpose of P-O fit is to explain the relationship between the alignment of individuals and organizations. Argyris (1957) introduced the P-O fit theory to explain the

importance of aligning individuals and organizations. R. Zhang et al. (2022) noted that P-O fit theory also provides insight into organizational climates in organizational members' selection, attraction, and attrition. Sun et al. (2023) noted the importance of both individual and organizational values and aligning individual values with organizational values. Findings from the current study may highlight triple fit between individual preferences, organizational values, and organizational incentive mechanisms on individual performance within organizations.

P-O fit theory is simple to measure and assesses levels of fit for organizations and individuals. Kristof (1996) expanded P-O fit theory and created a commensurate measurement of P-O fit theory defined as the description of the person and organization within the same content dimension., Kristof identified four criteria for P-O fit theory: values, personality, knowledge, and skills and abilities. Supeli and Creed (2014) expanded the measurement and assessment of P-O fit theory using the following criteria for assessing P-O fit: perceived fit, subjective fit, and objective fit. Also, Supeli and Creed implemented self-report measures of P-O fit theory, which allowed for expanding P-O fit theory research. Measuring P-O fit is crucial for understanding the alignment of individuals with organizations to ensure individuals make whole the organization.

When organizations hire individuals to make whole the organization, organizations use the complementary fit concept of P-O fit theory. Myer et al. (2016) conducted a study of customer service employees in a United States call center to determine the effectiveness of complementary fit. Findings indicated that when individuals complement the organization, organizations perform better financially.

Additionally, complementary fit can increase organizational ethical behavior, provided the organization adheres to high ethical standards. Despite limited research on the complementary fit concept of P-O fit theory, research demonstrated the increased effectiveness of complementary fit on employee retention and organizational performance.

When an organization employs individuals whose individual values are aligned with the organization's values and culture, the organization is practicing supplementary fit of P-O fit theory. Pasko et al. (2020) examined the differences in individual work-related attributes. Pasko et al. determined that various organizational culture-specific programs and organizational values are essential to individuals when selecting organizations to work at. In addition, organizational values and culture are fundamental in determining the alignment of values and employees' continued willingness to commit to their organizations.

When organizations use attraction and selection practices to hire individuals for the organization and not only the role within the organization, organizations can benefit from increased performance. Aslan et al. (2021) noted the importance of perceptions of organizational culture and performance, and hiring individuals for organizations and ensuring the alignment of individual values with organizational values increases organizational member performance. Additionally, Yang and Yu (2019) noted a strong relationship between job seekers' job preferences and recruiting organizational culture. Judge and Cable (1997) and Goodman and Svyantek (1999) noted the importance of aligning individuals with organizations during the hiring process and the benefits of

increased employee retention and organizational performance. Aligning individuals with organizations is vital during the hiring process, and models have been introduced to further P-O fit theory research.

Studies of P-O fit theory also led to identifying the attraction-selection-attrition model. Kristolf (1996) noted that, according to the attraction-selection-attrition model, attributes of people, not the nature of the external environment or organizational technology, are the fundamental determinants of organizational behavior. Furthermore, Qu (2021) noted the importance of the attraction-selection-attrition model in increased employee retention/homogeneity over time. The attraction-selection-attrition model is a tool for organizations to improve employee retention.

In addition to the attraction-selection-attrition model, organizations employ hiring practices to socialize potential members during the hiring process to align individuals and organizations. For example, Huang (2021) indicated that individual personality traits and attributes screened during the selection processes increases organization P-O fit levels and demonstrates increased effectiveness in hiring practices. Additionally, Bowen et al. (1991) highlighted basic steps in the hiring process, such as assessing the overall work environment including organizational culture, evaluating the type of people required to align to an organization, and designing rites of passage that will allow the individual and organization to assess the potential for and continuous reinforcement of P-O fit theory while employed at the organization. Findings indicated that organizations using basic steps have improved employee retention.

P-O fit theory is used to explain the compatibility of organizations to individuals in instances when individuals volunteer for organizations. Additionally, needs fulfillment, values realization, and self-identify dimensions of P-O fit theory can explain decisions to volunteer for organizations. For example, Bahat (2021) conducted a study of 138 volunteers in a nonprofit organization and determined that alignment of individuals and organizations provides the highest explanation for contribution to the organization. Additionally, P-O fit theory can explain the reasons behind volunteering for nonprofit organizations because individuals are satisfying their individual needs while making whole an organization.

P-O fit theory can also be attributed to higher organizational commitment and job satisfaction levels. For example, Aslan et al. (2021) noted that organizational culture and cohesion, as well as alignment of both organizational and individual values, are essential to higher levels of commitment and job satisfaction. Goodman and Svyantek (1999) hypothesized that organizational shared values were ineffective in organizational values and individual values, and contextual performance. However, Goodman and Svyantek found a strong relationship between P-O fit theory, organizational commitment, alignment of organizational values and individuals, and contextual performance. P-O fit theory can positively influence job satisfaction and increase employee retention.

P-O fit theory has also been used to assess levels of organizational commitment. Naz et al. (2020) indicated that levels of organizational commitment are higher when individual values are aligned with organizational values. Maloni et al. (2016) indicated that organizational commitment varies at each level and that organizational approaches to

commitment and P-O fit theory may not be a one-size-fits-all approach. Despite findings regarding position level in an organization from Maloni et al., Cable and DeRue (2002) noted that the better individual values are aligned with organizational values, the higher the organizational commitment. Cable and DeRue noted that P-O fit is different with each job position level within the organization, suggesting no one size fits all for values alignment would increase organizational commitment. P-O fit can be used to assess organizational commitment and job satisfaction, which can improve employee retention.

P-O fit theory can be used to increase job satisfaction. P-O fit theory can also be used to assess and link to higher levels of job satisfaction (Tsai & Yen, 2020). Job satisfaction is aligned with improved retention and organizational commitment, should individuals be appropriately aligned with organizations in terms of values (Bin Shmailan, 2016). Organizations that use P-O fit theory to ensure organizational members are aligned with the organization could improve job satisfaction and employee retention.

P-O fit is also used for explaining the role of organizational culture in aligning individuals with organizations. Organizational culture is an essential component of P-O fit theory because individuals continuously assess an organization's culture to determine whether the organizational values are aligned with individual values. For example, Judge and Cable (1997) expanded P-O fit theory to include the alignment between job seekers' organizational culture preferences and individual preferences. Findings showed that job seekers' organizational culture preferences play a crucial role in job seekers' employment decisions, which impact employee retention. Additionally, Chowdhury et al. (2021) noted the importance of perceived organizational culture on individual employee decisions,

which further highlights the importance of P-O fit in organizational and individual employee decisions.

In addition to organizational cultures' role in employment decisions, individuals also evaluate the alignment of the organization's values in making employment decisions. Hicklenton et al. (2020) noted the following seven values that contribute to individual perception of P-O fit:

- organizational support of individual values (value alignment)
- social values
- development value
- environmental values (organizational culture)
- environmental values
- self-transcendent values
- self-enhancement values

Hicklenton et al.'s identification of individual values furthers P-O fit theory research, which aids in organizations understanding what values influence individual employment decisions. Organizational culture plays a role in both P-O fit and influence individual employees and their decisions to continue to be employed with their respective organizations.

In addition to perceived organizational culture, organizational culture continues to play a role during individual employment; therefore, organizations must continuously monitor individual and organization value alignment at all position levels within the organization (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Cable and DeRue (2002) and Katsikea et al. (2015)

noted that organizational culture played a crucial role in employees' intent to quit their organization. When organizational culture is perceived as toxic for individuals, employees are more likely to leave their organization. Therefore, organizations must consistently monitor organizational culture to ensure the best alignment of individual values. To build a viable organizational culture, organizations must foster a supportive work environment. Yusliza et al. (2020) examined the relationship between a supportive work environment, P-O fit, and employee retention in Malaysia. Yusliza et al. noted that organizational cultures that facilitate a supportive work environment boost higher levels of P-O fit and improve employee retention. Trevino et al. (2020) also noted the role of organizational culture in P-O fit and the role of societal culture in shaping organizational culture. Yusliza et al. noted that organizations must continuously adapt organizational cultures as societal values shift to remain sustainable in terms of attractiveness and consistent alignment of P-O fit. Yusliza et al. furthered P-O fit research in the discussion of the influence of society on organizational/individual alignment of values.

Organizational culture plays an important role in both P-O fit and employee retention.

P-O fit theory is universal and can be applied to organizations of other ethnic groups and cultures (Peltokorpi et al., 2019). Peltokorpi et al. noted that P-O fit theory impacted organizations' attractiveness to individuals. Moreover, findings indicated that demographic characteristics, work-related skills, and value orientations had moderating effects between the organizational characteristics and organizational attractiveness perceptions.

P-O fit theory can be used to explain organizational performance in terms of innovation. When individuals are aligned with organizations, organizations benefit from higher levels of innovation, provided the organization fosters a culture that is conducive to innovation (Saether 2019). For example, Zhang (2021) found that strong organizational identification contributes to higher levels of innovation. Additionally, P-O alignment is also linked to higher levels of organizational performance. Lastly, organizations should provide a culture conducive to training and development. Individuals can achieve perceived overqualification that promotes creative performance.

Supporting and Contrasting Theories

The theories I compared, contrasted, and identified that support the P-O fit theory consisted of the person-job (P-J) fit theory, the job embeddedness theory, and Herzberg's two-factor motivational theory. In addition, the resourced-based view (RBV) of the firm shares the same fundamentals as the P-O fit theory by improving employee retention and keeping resources for an organization.

P-J Fit Theory

Contrary to the P-O fit theory, one supporting theory is the P-J fit theory. The P-J theory was introduced by Argyis (1958) to explain the alignment of individuals and the demands of the job (demands-abilities) or the values/desires of individuals and the attributes of the job (needs-supplies) (Edwards, 1991). Consequently, Kristof (1996) noted that job requirements are often aligned with organizational characteristics and values. Goetz and Wald (2022) further noted the importance of aligning individuals' characteristics with organizational positions, which further validates Kristof's findings.

P-J fit theory supports P-O fit theory, as P-J fit theory focuses on the specific job within an organization, while P-O fit theory focuses on the organization.

P-J fit theory compliments P-O fit theory because organizations that align individuals with job demands often align individual characteristics with organizational characters (Alfi et al., 2021). Furthermore, Kristolf (1999) noted that P-J fit theory leads to P-O fit theory because organizations often seek to hire individuals whose characteristics often align with organizational values and characteristics.

P-J fit theory is a crucial component of P-O fit theory and when combined can influence employee retention. Organizational leaders who assess demands-abilities fit (evaluation of the match between individual characteristics and job demands) experience improved employee retention. Individuals are more likely to stay within their organizations when a job aligns with the individual (Sylva et al., 2019). Also, Nugraha (2021) stated that when P-J and P-O fit theories align, employees exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction that results in improved employee retention. According to (Sylva et al., 2019) P-J fit theory is a component of P-O fit theory, and when combined the alignment of individual and organizational values can result in improved employee retention. .

Job Embeddedness Theory

Job embeddedness theory is different from P-O fit theory. It was not suitable for the conceptual framework of my study. Job embeddedness theory was derived in 2001 by Mitchell (2001) as a construct of on-the-job-embeddedness. Mitchell (2001) explained how individuals embed themselves within an organization, and the sacrifice of leaving the organization can influence the employee's decision to continue to stay within an

organization. When individuals are embedded in one specific job, they are restricted from potential personal growth. Job embeddedness theory fails to address the consistent alignment of individuals and organizations.

Job embeddedness theory is not similar to P-O fit theory as job embeddedness does not necessarily indicate a proper alignment of individual values with organizational values. Marasi et al. (2013) conducted an exploratory study using health care professionals and discovered that the more embedded employees are, the more adverse or deviant behavior employees become, thereby creating a toxic organizational culture that can hinder organizational performance. Shibiti (2019) further noted that job embeddedness does not improve employee retention, and could also hinder organizational performance, which is the opposite of P-O fit theory. Job embeddedness does not ensure the alignment of individuals with their respective organizations.

P-O fit theory is concerned with the alignment of individual and organizational values to improve job satisfaction and employee retention (Olubiyi et al., 2019). Whereas job embeddedness theory research demonstrates that the longer employees are embedded in their positions, the more likely employees are to leave their organizations due to a lack of growth opportunities. Therefore, job embeddedness theory is linked to higher levels of employee retention and could cause the misalignment of individuals and organizations (Treuren et al., 2021). Job embeddedness is not a long-term viable strategy to improve employee retention.

Job embeddedness theory was not suitable for the conceptual framework for the following reasons: First, my doctoral study focused on strategies nonprofit managers use

to improve employee retention. Research on job embeddedness theory confirms that job embeddedness is linked to higher levels of employee retention, which was not the focus of my doctoral study. Second, the doctoral study focused on improving employee retention through the lens of aligning individuals with organizations, to which job embeddedness theory is concerned with individuals' embeddedness in positions within organizations.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Although there are similarities between the P-O fit theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory, they are ultimately dissimilar, making Herzberg's two-factor theory inappropriate as the conceptual framework for my doctoral study. Herzberg's two-factor theory began in the 1950s to understand the motivation of employees (Herzberg et al., 1959). One goal of Herzberg's two-factor theory was to explore employee's attitudes towards their current jobs, attitudes towards their current job, and experiences in their current job and organization (Saehya & Shane, 2020). Since I was not seeking to understand the motivation of employees, Herzberg's two-factor theory was inappropriate for my doctoral study.

Herzberg's two-factor theory is similar to the P-O theory in that both theories seek to understand the needs and values of individual employees (Alrawahi et al., 2020). However, despite the similarities in the concentration of needs and values of individual employees, the goals of both theories are different. Herzberg's two factor motivation theory is concerned with the needs and values of individuals to determine the hygiene factors that lead both to job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction (Kotni & Karumuri 2018).

Herzberg's two factor theory is inappropriate because I did not explore hygiene factors behind job satisfaction.

Additionally, Herzberg's two-factor theory is particularly concerned with improving job satisfaction and factors that lead to job satisfaction (Staempfli & Lamarche, 2020). For example, Thant (2021) noted the motivational factors that influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and the role of Herzberg's two-factor theory in influencing job satisfaction, and not employee retention. Although job satisfaction is a product of the P-O fit theory, as employees exhibit higher levels of satisfaction if individuals are aligned with organizations, job satisfaction is not the only or primary focus of the P-O fit theory, which is not similar to Herzberg's two-factor theory.

Herzberg's two-factor theory is not suitable for the conceptual framework for the following reasons: First, although job satisfaction will be explored as a hygiene factor in the influence on employee retention, it was not the focus point of my doctoral study. Second, I did not review motivational factors behind individual employees, nor did I look at the motivational factors behind organization which is the focus of Herzberg's two-factor theory. Finally, since I focused on aligning individual values with organizational values and exploring strategies nonprofit managers use to improve employee retention through the lens, Herzberg's two factor theory was inappropriate for my doctoral study.

RBV Theory

RBV is similar to P-O fit theory in that both theories seek to improve employee retention; however, both theories are ultimately dissimilar. Resource-based View of the

firm began in the 1980s (Wernerfelt, 1984) examined an organization's competitive advantage as a collection of specific resources, deriving from human capital and management deployment and maintenance of strategic resources paramount in organizational sustainability. Freeman et al. (2021) further Wernerfelt in stating that human capital is unique organizational resources and that the development and maintenance of human capital for continued organizational sustainability. Both authors concluded the role of RBV in achieving and sustaining competitive advantage which is inappropriate as the conceptual framework for my study, as my doctoral study focused on strategies to improve employee retention.

RBV theory is not as suitable to my study because although RBV theory elaborates on the importance of human capital and improved employee retention, RBV theory does not provide strategies to improve employee retention. Gerhart and Feng (2021) noted that RBV does not address firm-specific human capital issues and raises important questions such as P-O fit on organizational value creation and sustainability. Moreover, Dionysus and Arifin (2020) noted the role of RBV to explain the vital role of human capital in organizational performance but does not enable organizations to improve employee retention. P-O fit theory is a more suitable conceptual framework as P-O fit theory enables organizations to improve employee retention, to which RBV theory does not.

Although RBV theory was reviewed as a potentially suitable theory for my doctoral study, it was not the best choice for the following reasons: First, RBV does not enable me to understand the impact of individuals as a collective resource for

organizations. Second, I am not reviewing the role of individuals as resources as a means of competitive advantage for an organization. But RBV theory does not examine the role of individuals as a means of improving employee retention. Lastly, P-O fit theory can be used as a standalone conceptual framework to examine strategies to improve employee retention. Burvill et al. (2018) noted that RBV was not a standalone theory as a means to explain employee turnover. Since RBV theory cannot be used as a means a means to improve employee retention, RBV theory was not the best theory as the conceptual framework for my doctoral study.

Strategies to Improve Employee Retention

Research has shown that the average cost of recruiting and training employees to replace departing employees is around 60% of the departing employees' annual salary (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Therefore, managers can use the themes identified in my doctoral study to make strategic organizational investment decisions in fostering an organizational culture to improve employee retention. Additionally, managers can use the themes identified in my doctoral study to develop an understanding of the employees' values to determine if employees' values align with the organizations' values, which could improve employee retention.

Managers can develop a working knowledge of strategies to improve employee retention for an organization, which has proven to be the end result of higher levels of job satisfaction (Slatten et al., 2021). Additionally, Thome and Greenwald (2020) noted that employees enrolled in employee development programs is an effective strategy to reduce employee turnover, which justifies the added expense to the organization as employee

retention is improved. Providing employee growth opportunities and training and development opportunities such as tuition assistance programs could allow employees to achieve full potential within organizations.

Nonprofit organizations frequently have to adapt business-like approaches for societal improvement and development (Lacruz et al., 2021). Research has shown that less than 30% of employees are committed to their organization (Hornickel, 2019). Organizational commitment is effective in reducing employee turnover. The need to increase organizational commitment and job satisfaction is essential, especially when it is essential to align employees' values with the organizations' values. For higher organizational commitment to happen, managers must spend time with their employees, to which managers spend less than 25% of their time with their employees (Hornickel, 2019). Nonprofit organizational managers should boost organizational commitment and job satisfaction if organizations want to improve employee retention.

Enhance Employee Compensation and Benefit Practices

Pay and benefit factors can significantly influence voluntary employee turnover. When there are higher levels of satisfaction with employee pay and benefits, organizations tend to have higher levels of employee retention. One aspect of compensation and benefits is fairness in compensation for all individuals within an organization. For example, Rivaldo (2021) determined that fairness in the distribution of salaries is attributed to higher levels of satisfaction and improved employee retention. Additionally, Shakil (2020) noted the importance of money in terms of motivation and the ability to attract, retain, and encourage organizational members into a higher level of

organizational performance. Also, Sudior et al. (2021) found that compensation fairness leads to higher levels of satisfaction and organizational commitment. Compensation practices are highly attributable to both job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Assessing employee compensation plans are a tool to boost employee retention. Employee compensation practices are a strategy to improve employee retention, thereby lowering the cost of employee recruitment (Sephavand & Khodashahri, 2021). Employee recruitment is crucial for organizational sustainability, as organizations must consistently attract talent to remain competitive. In addition, employee compensation is a critical factor for employees deciding on where to work and whether to remain employed with their organizations (Ryu & Jinnai, 2021). Ben-Gal et al. (2022) found that compensation and benefit practices significantly impact individual decisions regarding where to work. This impact could drive P-O fit, as organizations that offer competitive compensation and benefits packages that meet the needs and values of employees could further align organizations with individuals. Additionally, Conroy (2022) further noted that pay practices, including pay volatility, could influence both employee turnover and individual employment decisions. By evaluating employee compensation practices, organizations could improve employee retention, thereby reducing recruitment costs.

Employee compensation can also be attributed to higher levels of job satisfaction. Compensation satisfaction is linked to job satisfaction which is also connected with improved organizational employee retention (Jolly et al., 2021). Additionally, Christiano (2021) found that employee compensation has a 64.5% impact on job satisfaction. To further solidify the direct result of employee compensation on job satisfaction (which

directly impacts employee retention), Lestari et al. (2021) noted that although employee compensation does not impact employee loyalty to their organization, compensation does heavily impact job satisfaction. To further solidify the impact of compensation on job satisfaction, Nurhadi and Ayob (2022) also found that compensation practices significantly impacted job satisfaction, and organizations should consistently evaluate compensation practices to boost job satisfaction.

Lack of merit increases in compensation is attributed to higher levels of employee turnover for organizations. Fyu and Jinnai (2021) noted the following: First, bonuses and recognition incentives as recognition do influence employee turnover as those who receive monetary incentives as recognition are more likely to remain with their organization. Second, merit pay based on job performance is attributed to improved retention as high-performing individuals receive merit pay increases. Third, group-based merit pays, which is based on group performance, is not attributed to employee retention. Should organizations provide regular merit increases as part of employee compensation practices, organizations could improve employee retention.

Employee compensation has a direct effect on the overall performance of an organization. When an employee is satisfied with their overall compensation, employees are more likely to achieve higher performance, which aids in the organization's overall performance (Kim & Jang, 2020). To further solidify the notion that compensation impacts organizational performance and employee retention, Artiza et al. (2021) also noted that compensation and rewards directly impact organizational performance and employee retention. Findings from both studies solidify the importance of compensation

practices as both a means to improve employee retention and boost organizational performance.

In addition to compensation, organization benefit packages for employees have a significant impact on both P-O fit, job satisfaction, and P-O fit (Kaylanamitra et al., 2020). One benefit that is paramount to the alignment of individuals with organizations and improving employee retention is work-life balance. Work-life balance allows employees with a higher quality of life through a higher balance of employees' personal lives and professional lives. Work-life balance increases organizational attractiveness for prospective employees and allows for greater retention amongst internal organizational employees (Zumrah et al., 2022). Organizations that use work-life benefits are more likely to experience improved employee retention.

Another benefit that is used to retain employees is retirement benefits. Deferred retirement benefit packages could potentially influence employee retention, as organizational members could be more willing to stay with organizations that allow for continued benefits after members retire (Andrews & Mohammed 2020). Also, Quinby (2020) noted that organizational members are influenced by retirement benefits in their intentions to remain with their organizations. Benefit packages that include retirement benefit options are a strategy to improve employee retention.

Enhance Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is paramount to understanding the contributing factors of employee turnover. In addition, Job satisfaction is also linked to organizational culture, organizational commitment, innovative behavior, and a product of proper person-

organizational alignment. Additionally, supervisors play a critical role in enhancing job satisfaction, as employees view supervisors as representatives of the organization (Byza et al., 2019). Additionally, Cayak (2021) also identified that supervisors and sustainable leadership heavily influence job satisfaction and influence employees' perception of the alignment of individual values with organizational values, as employees view supervisors as the face of the organization. Therefore, the alignment of supervisors to employees aligns persons with organizations long term.

Individual chosen career path also impacts both job satisfaction and employee retention. Individuals choose particular career paths, and within that career path, individuals choose organizations that align with their values and offer a particular desired career path. Historically individuals aligned with specific career paths and organizations are more likely to leave organizations, frequently, leading to higher turnover levels. However, Redondo et al. (2021) noted that individuals who are in particular are less likely to leave organizations provided that individuals are satisfied in both their positions and organizations. Although career path is a determinant in choosing organizations and specific job positions, it has proven to lead to higher turnover for organizations.

Employees who exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction are also more committed to their organizations. Historically studies have yielded mixed results on the relationship between job satisfaction and organization (Saridakis et al., 2020). Complimenting findings from (Saridakis et al., 2020), Park (2020) found that employees supervisors heavily influence employees' job satisfaction and motivation, which influences organizational commitment. Saridakis et al. (2020) also noted the strong relationship

between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. However, Rajabi et al. (2021) also identified a strong relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment and noted that motivation is a product of high levels of both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The higher the levels of employee motivation, which could be a product of P-O fit, the higher job satisfaction, the higher an employee's commitment to their respective organization.

Organizational climate heavily influences job satisfaction. Employees who are satisfied with the overall environment of their organizations tend to exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction. Sainju et al. (2020) found that organizational climate heavily influences job satisfaction and employee retention. Additionally, Yu (2021) found that employees working remotely boosts their perception of organizational climate through greater autonomy in work, which boosts satisfaction levels. Lastly, Shepard et al. (2020) noted the role of organizational climate in shaping job satisfaction and employee retention, furthering the relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction. Findings from all three studies show the strong influence of organizational climate and organizational climate's role in improving job satisfaction, which can improve employee retention.

The higher the level of job satisfaction amongst organizational members, the higher the organizational performance. Stamolampros et al. (2019) concluded that organizations with higher job satisfaction, lower employee turnover, perform better overall. The higher employee satisfaction, the better organizations can perform.

Job satisfaction heavily influences employee retention. Employees who are more satisfied with both their positions and organizations are less likely to leave their organizations. Zhao et al. (2021) discovered that job satisfaction directly influences voluntary turnover as the more employees are satisfied with both their jobs and organizations, the less likely the employees are to leave their organizations. To further solidify the findings of Zhao et al. (2021), Wang et al. (2020) also found that employees who are satisfied with their jobs and organizations are less likely to leave their organizations. Therefore, improving job satisfaction is a strategy that can improve employee retention.

Enhance Organizational Culture and Commitment

Organizational culture plays a significant role in employee retention. Robertson (2021) noted specific opportunities that organizational leaders have missed, which has led to higher employee turnover such as:

- perceived justice (perception of fairness in treatment and opportunity access) in the workplace, which is a theme to improve employee retention
- employee recognition in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards
- work environment, which is social characteristics that impact a work setting
- work–life balance and job demands
- work engagement, which is organizational commitment
- organizational leadership and communication

Additionally, Wright (2021) also noted that organizational culture heavily influences employee retention. Organizations that consistently evaluate organizational culture can improve employee retention.

One significant aspect of organizational culture that impacts employee retention is dignity and respectful treatment of all organizational members. Van Jaarsveld et al. (2019) noted that employees who are not treated with dignity, fairness, and respect by their organizations are significantly more likely to leave their organizations. Furthermore, Robertson (2021) noted the importance of organizational leadership and the impact of leadership on organizational climate. In ensuring fair treatment of organizational members, the role of the supervisor is paramount for both the employee and the organization. Dale et al. (2018) noted four dynamics that heavily influence employees' perception of organizational culture:

- perceived supervisor fairness
- perceived supervisor honesty
- perceived supervisor concern for employees
- perceived recognition for work performed

Organizations can improve organizational culture, which improves employee retention by treating organizational members with fairness, dignity, and respect.

Another aspect of organizational culture that influences both organizational commitment and employee retention is work-life balance (Robertson, 2021). Wen et al. (2020) noted that employee burnout is the result of lack of work-life balance within organizational culture. Employees that exhibit burnout are less committed to their

organizations and significantly more likely to leave their organizations. Additionally, Kim and Gatling (2019) noted that organizations who exhibit higher levels of employee turnover, employees are less likely to align with their organizations, and commit to their organizations. Organizations that fail to incorporate work-life balance as part of organizational culture, are less likely to have committed employees, and have higher levels of employee turnover.

Additionally, organizational compensation practices influence both organizational culture and organizational commitment. Sihotang (2021) noted that compensation has a significant influence on both organizational culture and organizational commitment, both of which influence employee turnover. Moreover, Vizano et al. (2021) noted that both compensation and organizational culture have a direct effect on employee retention. Lastly, Baskro et al. (2021) also noted that compensation has a positive effect on organizational culture, organizational commitment, and employee performance all of which influence employee retention. To improve organizational culture and commitment, organizations should review employee compensation practices, which will improve employee retention.

Organizational human resource practices are highly influential in both P-O fit, and organizational culture (Kim & Gatling, 2019). Molahousseini et al. (2020) noted that human resource departments shape organizational aesthetics which influences organizational employee retention. Furthermore, Basnyat and Lao (2019) found that employee's perception of human resource implementation and communication of organizational strategies, goals, and requirements heavily influence both P-O fit, and

employee retention. Human resource departments that effectively communicate to organizational members and maintain an organizational culture that fosters employee commitment can improve employee retention (Seggewiss et al., 2019). Human resource departments are highly influential in both organizational culture and P-O fit.

Organizational human resource practices have potential impacts on employee retention.

Another factor that highly influences organizational commitment is organizational leadership. Bodjrenou et al. (2019) stated that organizational leaders that empower employees, build trust, and values the contributions of employees are more likely to have higher levels of organizational commitment. Additionally, Bayram et al. (2020) noted that organizational leadership is a mechanism that mitigates role stress (stress felt by employees within an organization) and noted that the more support by leadership, lower stress levels, higher organizational commitment. Also, Yang et al. (2019) innovative organizational leaders who foster creativity within organizations can increase organizational commitment. By organizations empowering leaders to be innovative, instill creativity amongst organizational members and providing support amongst employees, can increase organizational commitment and improve employee retention.

Increasing organizational commitment amongst organizational members is a strategy that can be used to improve employee retention (Haque et al., 2019). One factor that influences organizational commitment is empowerment of employees across the organization (Kim & Beehr, 2020). Additionally, Xu et al. (2022) noted the importance of leadership and organizational leadership in P-J fit for employees. Taking leadership further, Weis and Rosendale (2019) noted that employees who feel that organizational

leaders who provide perceived support for employees are more likely to remain with their organizations. By increased employee empowerment and support for members by leaders, organizations can increase organizational commitment, thereby improving employee retention.

Enhance Growth, Training, and Development

Growth, training, and development programs are a strategy to improve employee retention. Ju & Li (2019) noted that job training and growth opportunities positively influence employee retention, indicating that organizations that provide greater access to employee development programs, have lower organizational turnover. Additionally, Cernatescu et al. (2021) also noted that access to organizational training and growth opportunities also experience lower organizational employee turnover.

Organizations that provide greater access to internal coaching programs to enhance individual growth have improved employee retention. Lyons and Bandura (2021) noted that organizations that use coaching/support programs, facilitate greater employee growth, and employees are more likely to stay with their organizations. Additionally, Tenakwah (2021) and Corbin (2020) highlighted the importance of internal support as well as strong onboarding procedures as a means of improving employee retention. Having greater access to internal coaching and mentorship programs aids in employee development and can improve employee retention.

Organizations that allow for upward mobility can improve employee retention. Andrews and Mohammed (2020) noted that organizations that provide for development programs that allow for greater upward mobility within organizations, leads to improved

employee retention. Additionally, Sainju et al. (2021) also noted that upward mobility or opportunities for career advancement provides for greater job satisfaction and improved employee retention. Also, Nica (2018) noted that the longer employees remain in their current positions with no ability to promote within organizations, are significantly more likely to leave their organizations. Pasko et al. (2020) noted the impact of individual advancement within an organization and individual willingness to remain with an organization. Organizations that provide for advancement/upward mobility within organizations could improve employee retention.

One education program that is effective at improving employee retention is tuition assistance programs. BiMattio and Spegman (2019) noted that organizations that provided continuing education programs have lower organizational turnover. Additionally, Ju and Li (2019) illuded that employee benefits (i.e., tuition assistance) benefit programs are a strategy to improve employee retention. Tripathy et al. (2020) stated that organizations that not only offered tuition assistance programs, but organizational leaders that created an organizational culture of constant learning, also significantly improved employee retention. Organizations that offer tuition assistance programs which allows organizational members to continue education, is a strategy to improve employee retention.

Organizations that provide growth, education, and internal training programs can ensure greater alignment with P-O fit, which improved employee retention. Pasko et a. (2020) noted that employees consider education benefits offered by organizations, internal development programs, and upward mobility when selecting preferred

organizations to work. Yusliza et al. (2021) noted the importance of the alignment of individual values with organizational values to improve employee retention.

Organizations that use development, education programs, and allow for career progression can ensure both P-O fit and is a strategy to improve employee retention.

P-O Fit as a Retention Strategy

The strategy of P-O fit theory in retaining employees is aimed at aligning individual values and organizational values that could potentially affect employee turnover intentions in the workplace. According to Skelton et al. (2019) the average cost of replacing an employee is around 100% of a single employees' annual salary. Considering the rate that employees are leaving their organizations, it is essential to understand strategies for organizations can use to improve employee retention.

Employee perception of P-O fit influences employee's decision to both work for an organization, and to remain with an organization once hired. Jansen and Shipp (2019) explored employee's perceptions of both work environment and organizations amongst employees who have been with their organizations for an extended period and found that employees are consistently assessing their fit with their environments and organizations. Similarly, Follmer et al. (2018) also conducted interviews with 81 members from several organizations and discovered that perceived misfit at work influences employees' turnover intentions. Leaders in organizations who ensure consistent integration at work can reduce employee turnover.

Person-Job (P-J) fit is a vital component of person-organization fit, and organizations should assess hiring to ensure applicants are the right fit for a particular job

as a means of improving employee retention. Jerez-Jerez et al. (2020) explored the role of occupational identity within organizations and found that employees who were the right fit for particular occupations were less likely to leave their organizations. Additionally, Verquer et al. (2003) conducted a review of existing literature and identified P-J alignment as a component of P-O fit and a strategy to reduce employee retention. By ensuring individuals are aligned with their positions and organizations, organizations can improve employee retention.

Additionally, individuals develop perceptions about both organizational positions and organizations based on the situation they are applying with. For example, Ericsson et al. (2022) conducted a study of individual perceptions of jobs within an organization and identified that perceptions of position play an important role in the organization's perception, which is based on which they are applying. Therefore, the alignment of positions with organizations is beneficial to the organization in ensuring that values are aligned for both the individual, job, and organization. Employee compensation does significantly impact organizational commitment, as employees seem to be more committed to their organizations the more satisfied, they are with their compensation (Hilimi et al., 2020). Additionally, Purti et al. (2021) also stated that there is a significant influence between both employee compensation and organizational commitment. Further solidifying the impact of compensation on organizational commitment. Sudiro et al. (2021) also found that compensation practices are directly linked to organizational commitment. Employee compensation significantly impacts organizational commitment,

and impacts value alignment between organizations and individuals, as well as perceptions about organizations.

P-O fit can be used for organizational hiring practices and ensuring the right alignment of individual values and organizational values. Bowen et al. (1991) conducted a study to establish the importance of hiring for the organization and discovered that organizations that hired individuals and matched organizational values experienced improved employee retention. Anderson et al. (2017) furthered Bowen et al. (1991)'s research by performing a causal test of P-O fit and identified the importance of *triple fit* which is the alignment of personal values, organizational values, and organizational incentives as a means of improving employee retention. Similarly, Bahat (2021) conducted a case study of nonprofit volunteers and noted that individuals often choose organizations based on the organizational values and goals and by aligning individuals with goals is a strategy to improve employee retention. When organizations hire individuals whose values align with organizational values, organizations can experience improved employee retention.

P-O fit can be used to assess organizational compensation practices, which is effective in improving employee retention. Andrews and Mohammed (2020) conducted a multiple case study of small and medium sized organizations and identified employee compensation as a theme of improving employee retention. Additionally, Kalyanamitra et al. (2020) also identified employee compensation practices as a theme of improving employee retention. By improving employee compensation, organizational members

could stay longer with their current organizations, instead of leaving organizations that compensate employees better.

Another method of employee compensation is relational compensation or reward compensation for organizational members. Organizations that employ relational compensation practices are more likely to have motivated individuals who are less likely to leave their organizations. Additionally, relational compensation is linked to higher levels of organizational productivity. For example, Naveed et al. (2021) conducted a study of 800 employees in several hotel organizations and found that relational compensation leads to improved employee retention. Also, relational compensation leads to higher levels of employee motivation as employees are more motivated to higher levels of productivity. Moreover, relational compensation could potentially impact employee retention as motivated employees are less likely to leave their organizations (Hetina et al., 2021). Relational compensation is linked to motivation and is a strategy to improve employee retention.

P-O fit practices can be used to assess organizational benefit practices for employees. Benefit practices for employees is one aspect that employees use to evaluate potential fit with an organization (Fisher & Wilmoth, 2017). Anderson et al. (2017) noted that employees evaluate organizational benefit practices as well as organizational culture when looking at prospective employers. Similarly, Cable & Rue (2002) conducted a mixed-methods study of both managers and employees of several organizations and found that both pay raises and benefit practices is part of person-needs fit, which drives individual perception of P-O fit. P-O fit can be used to assess organizational benefit

practices, which can enhance employee's perception of fit within an organization and improve employee retention.

Employee benefit packages can influence organizational productivity and employee retention. Therefore, organizations must deploy benefit packages that are highly competitive as benefits can increase organizational productivity, employee commitment, and job satisfaction which improve employee retention. For example, Sreenath et al. (2019) noted that benefits such as work-life balance, training and development, insurance and retirement benefits, family care programs, and recognition heavily influence both organizational productivity and employee retention. Moreover, Houseworth et al. (2020) noted that employers who fail to offer health benefits and paid time off benefits experienced a significantly higher turnover rate as employees left those organizations for organizations that offered both health insurance and paid time off benefits.

Improving employee benefit packages is a strategy organizational leaders can use to improve employee retention. Corbin (2020) explored strategies to improve employee retention and identified benefits such as work-life balance has an impact on improving employee retention. Similarly, Kalyanamitra et al. (2020) conducted a study amongst six pharmaceutical companies and found that employee benefit practices such as: work-life balance, health and wellness benefits, and retirement benefits on improving employee retention. Lastly, Wilson (2016) explored strategies for hospital leaders to improve retention and identified employee benefit practices which includes work-life benefit as a

strategy to improve employee retention. By improving employee benefit practices, organizational leaders can improve employee retention.

P-O fit can be used to increase higher levels of job satisfaction which increases organizational performance and improve employee retention. Bin Shamalin (2016) conducted a study and found that employee satisfaction is linked to higher organizational performance and improved employee retention, should individuals have aligned with the organization properly. Additional Olubiyi et al. (2019) explored strategies to improve employee retention, using a case study of 15 employees and identified job satisfaction as a theme that could improve employee retention. Improving job satisfaction is a strategy for organizations to improve employee retention.

By improving job satisfaction, organizations can not only improve employee retention but also increase organizational commitment. Lu et al. (2019) performed a literature review of job satisfaction research and determined that job satisfaction heavily influences organizational commitment. Moreover, Verquer et al. (2003) also explored organizational commitment and noted that organizational commitment is a theme of job satisfaction which also a strategy to improve employee retention. Additionally, Kilaberia (2020) conducted a case study of 44 individuals over five years and discovered to influence of organizational commitment on job satisfaction. By improving job satisfaction, organizations can improve both employee retention and organizational commitment.

Work engagement is a product of job satisfaction, leading to higher organizational commitment, higher motivation, and improved employee retention. Edwards-Dandridge

et al. (2020) conducted a study of 155 registered nurses and concluded that job satisfaction heavily influences employee retention. Moreover, job satisfaction influences organizational commitment, work engagement, and motivation. Additionally, Stamouli and Gerbeth (2021) conducted a study of 96 various health care professionals and found that job satisfaction heavily influences organizational commitment. Also, Gani et al. (2020) concluded that individual characteristics that lead to job satisfaction, such as career development, compensation, and organizational culture, influence job satisfaction, leading to organizational commitment.

Increasing job satisfaction is a strategy that improves employee retention. Rivaldo (2021) conducted a case study of 45 individuals of a single hospitality organization and identified the impact of job satisfaction on employee's intention to leave an organization, noting that the lower the job satisfaction, the more likely an individual is to leave an organization. Additionally, Verquer et al. (2003) conducted a literature review of previous studies and noted that job satisfaction contributes to individuals' perception of P-O fit and intentions to remain or leave their current organizations. Similarly, Penconek et al. (2021) performed a systemic review of 11 electronic databases and identified the theme of job satisfaction and increasing job satisfaction as a means of improving employee retention. By increasing job satisfaction, organizations can both ensure continuous alignment of individuals and organizations and improve employee retention.

Organizational leadership heavily influences individual turnover intentions, and organizations must ensure proper alignment of leaders with the organization to improve employee retention. In terms of organizational leadership, one crucial aspect is the role of

an employee's immediate supervisor. Aloiso et al. (2021) explored factors that influence employee retention and identified the role of immediate supervisors in increasing job satisfaction and influencing employees view of organizational culture and note the role of positive leadership on improving employee retention. Similarly, Robertson (2021) noted the role of first line supervisor's role in both promoting employee engagement and increasing job satisfaction as a means of improving employee retention. Immediate supervisors play a vital role in employee's perceptions of both organizational leadership and improving employee retention.

Another aspect of organizational leadership that influences both P-O fit and employee retention is the role of providing feedback and performance appraisals to employees. Kalyanamitra et al. (2020) performed a single case study of six individuals and noted the importance of supervisors' continuous evaluation on performance as a means of promoting employee development and improving employee retention. Additionally, Wang et al. (2022) conducted a study of 330 employees within a single hotel group and noted the importance of performance appraisals as a characteristic of organizational leadership that impacts employee retention. Feedback and performances are a strategy that could improve employee retention.

Another aspect of organizational leadership that impacts employee retention is the employee's perception of internal justice or equal accountability for all employees. Hartman (2014) conducted a study of 45 government employees and determined that supervisors who provide feedback and equal accountability amongst employees builds trust and increases job satisfaction. Additionally, Robertson (2021) noted the importance

of resolving leadership issues such as fairness and internal justice between employees and supervisors as a means of improving employee retention. By improving fairness and equal accountability, organizations can improve employee retention.

Servant leadership styles are a component of organizational culture that impacts P-O fit and is a part of organizational culture that can impact employee retention. Dutta and Khatri (2017) performed a comprehensive literature review of both employee turnover and servant leadership and determined that servant leadership promotes positive organizational behavior and culture that improves employee retention. Also, Walumbwa et al. (2010) conducted a multi organizational study and found that servant leadership which is highly attentive to supporting employees does improve both satisfaction of employee's organizations and improved employee retention. Servant leadership is a potential strategy that could improve both job satisfaction and employee retention.

Organizations that foster a culture that motivates employees can improve employee retention. Hartman (2014) conducted a case study of 45 government employees within a single federal agency and found that employees who were unmotivated were more likely to leave their organizations. Additionally, Landry et al. (2017) conducted a comprehensive review of existing literature pertaining to both employee retention and motivating factors that impact employee retention and found that organizational cultures that motivate experienced improved employee retention. Creating an organizational culture that motivates employees is a strategy to improve employee retention.

Another aspect of organizational culture that assists organizations in both P-O fit and improved employee retention is creating an environment that allows for both

individuality and supportive work environments. Lee et al. (2018) conducted a literature review of both individuality and supporting work environment and noted that organizations that foster a supportive work environment have improved employee retention. Similarly, Palfranan and Lancaster (2019) conducted a case study of 34 employees within several organizations and noted the more employees were supported and allowed to express their individuality the less likely employees were wanting to seek other employment organizations. Organizations that create a culture that promotes individuality and foster a support work environment could experience improved employee retention.

Organizational human resource practices and organizational communication also impact employee retention. Andrews and Mohammed (2020) conducted a case study to explore strategies that small and medium organizations, which included nonprofit organizations, used to improve employee retention, and identified effective organizational communication as a theme of employee retention. Additionally, Basnyat and Lao (2019) also conducted a case study of 15 employees in several hotel organizations and identified that human resource practices and effective communication impact employee retention. Furthermore, Kalyanamitra et al. (2021) performed an analysis of existing turnover research and noted that human resource practices impact employee retention. Organizational human resource departments play a vital role in employee retention and by having effective human resource departments and effectively communicate across an organization, organizations can improve both P-O fit and employee retention.

One specific human resource practice that both impacts employee retention and P-O fit is training, growth, and development of organizational members. One factor that an employee considers when choosing organizations is the availability of growth and development programs (Allen et al., 2016). Similarly, Andrews and Mohammed (2020) conducted a case study of strategies managers of small and medium enterprises use to improve employee retention and noted that managers use growth and development programs as a means of improving employee retention. Also, Slatten et al. (2021) conducted a case study of nonprofit organizations and identified that employees are more likely to work for nonprofit organizations due to the perception of better benefit programs which includes training and development programs. Corbin (2020) also noted that providing equal access to training and development programs is a strategy to retain employees since development programs is one aspect employees consider when working for an organization. Providing training and development programs is a strategy that can aid in ensuring both P-O fit and improving employee retention.

Another aspect of growth and development programs is upward mobility opportunities for employees as a means of improving employee retention. Allen et al. (2016) conducted a case study that explored the effects of the lack of upward mobility for employees and noted that the longer employees stay in current positions, the more likely they were to consider leaving their organizations. Similarly, Ellis (2020) conducted a case study of a single organization and identified upward mobility as a strategy that improves employee retention. Also, Mangi et al. (2019) noted the role of upward mobility as a means of increasing motivation among employees, enabling them to stay within their

organizations. Upward mobility is a strategy that improves employee retention as it provides greater opportunities for growth within a particular organization.

Transition

Section 1 included the purpose and problem statements, nature of the study, research question, interview questions, and explanation of the theory in the conceptual framework. Section 1 also included operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations, the significance of the study, contribution to business practice, social change implications and a comprehensive review of the literature.

Section 2 includes the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, research method, and research design. Section 2 also includes descriptions of the population and sampling, ethical research. Section 2 includes data organization and collection techniques, data analysis and collection instrument, reliability, and validity. Section 3 includes recommendation for both action and future research, presentation of findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, reflections, and conclusions.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 provides descriptions of the following: role of the researcher, participants, research method, design, population and sampling, and ethical research. Section 2 also contains data collection instruments, data collection techniques, data analysis and organization, reliability, and validity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that leaders within a nonprofit organization use to improve employee retention.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I adhered to the data collection process because I was the primary data collection instrument. According to Elmersjo and Rosqvist (2022), a researcher's primary role is to adhere to the data collection process. I collected data through semistructured interviews and review of organizational employee retention documents.

My experience with employee retention came from over 20 years of working with employees in the retail industry, military, and government: therefore, I was familiar with the topic of employee retention. Olubiyi et al. (2019) noted the importance of furthering research in employee retention. However, I did not research this topic until the current study. Moreover, I did not have any prior knowledge of or any relationship with the participants, and I did not know them prior to conducting the interviews.

Because I was the researcher for this study, I followed all ethical procedures outlined in the *Belmont Report* to mitigate bias when analyzing data that I collected. The

Belmont Report outlines key ethical procedures concerning respect for participants to ensure there is no harm to participants during the research process (Anabo et al., 2019). I used an interview protocol to not only improve the quality of the research but also to increase the validity and effectiveness of the interview process (see Evans et al., 2022). I also used an interview protocol when collecting data to mitigate potential bias and to ensure consistency of each interview.

Participants

Each participant was in a leadership role within the selected nonprofit organization and had implemented successful strategies to improve employee retention. The criteria to participate in this study were to be in a management capacity and to have used successful strategies to improve employee retention, which were appropriate for answering my research question. Knechel (2019) highlighted not only the role of participants in research but also selecting the right participants as part of the research design phase. I sent an email to the director of human resources requesting their permission to use their organization to complete my study. The director of human resources provided me with access to four participants and a signed partner organization agreement from the organization for my case study. To build trust and an effective working relationship with the participants, I provided open, honest, and effective communication. Additionally, I explained the objective of my study in the initial meeting with each participant.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

I reviewed three types of research methods for this study. The three types of research methods are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (A. Mitchell & Rich, 2020). Bhangu et al. (2023) noted that researchers choose qualitative methodology when seeking to explore a phenomenon. I chose qualitative methodology to explore a phenomenon of strategies to improve employee retention in a single nonprofit organization. According to Yin (2018), researchers select their research method based on the purpose of the research and the research question. Additionally, Hallam (2022) noted that qualitative researchers focus on uncovering trends in human perception. Strategies for improving employee retention are based on human perception, making qualitative methodology suitable for my study.

Quantitative methodology is appropriate when researchers want to examine the cause-and-effect relationship between the variables. Additionally, researchers use quantitative methodology when collecting numerical data to examine the relationship between variables (Henson et al., 2020). Quantitative methodology was inappropriate for my study because I did not look at a cause-and-effect relationship, test a hypothesis, or use numerical data to examine the relationship between variables.

Mixed methods are another viable research method that was considered but deemed unsuitable for my study. According to Johnson (2019), method methods incorporates both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analysis. My study did not include quantitative data collection; therefore, I did not select a mixed-

methods approach. Researchers can use mixed methods when testing a hypothesis, conducting statistical analysis, and collecting numerical data. Mixed methods were not suitable for my study because I did not test hypothesis or use statistical analysis to examine the relationship between variables.

Research Design

I considered four qualitative designs for this study: case study, phenomenology, narrative, and ethnography. A single case study design was chosen for this study. Yin (2018) noted that a case study is an empirical research method that enables researchers to perform a detailed investigation into a phenomenon in a particular environment. Additionally, case studies enable researchers to ask questions to gain understanding and insight regarding a phenomenon (Hott et al., 2023). A single case study design was appropriate for my study because I asked a “what” question within a single case.

Single case studies are a qualitative design researchers can use to obtain a more comprehensive interpretation of a single case. Bondia and Gracia (2022) noted that researchers select a single case study when seeking to reveal in-depth insights on a single case. Moreover, Yin (2018) noted that case study research is appropriate when a researcher is seeking insights into a phenomenon. A single case study design was appropriate for my research because I sought to obtain in-depth insights of a phenomenon within a single case.

Phenomenology is focused on the participants’ lived experiences of a phenomenon. Rierola-Focks et al. (2022) noted that phenomenology is used when the researcher wants to conduct a direct investigation and provide a description of a

phenomenon centered around participant's lived experiences. Phenomenology was inappropriate for my study because I did not seek to explore participants' lived experiences.

The narrative research design is centered around the complexity of human lives, cultures, and human behavior. According to Shirmohammadi et al. (2018), narrative research is suitable for studies that focus on the stories of human beings, their cultures, and their lived experiences. Furthermore, Madden et al. (2018) noted that the narrative design focuses on individual experiences and their stories. The Narrative design was inappropriate for my study because I did not focus on participants' cultures, experiences, or personal stories.

Ethnography is a qualitative research design that centers around the study of participants in a real-time, real-world environment. Kian and Beach (2019) noted that ethnography is applicable to researchers when the objective of the research is to explore a culture in real-time and real-world environments. Because the objective of my study was not exploring a culture in a real-time, real-world environment, ethnography was not a suitable design for my study.

Reaching data saturation is important for qualitative research. According to Guest et al. (2020), data saturation is critical for a qualitative researcher because it enhances the validity of the study. Guest et al. stated that data saturation is reached when the researcher finds no new themes, codes, or information being obtained during the data collection process. To ensure I reached data saturation, I reviewed internal retention

documentation and conducted semistructured interviews until the data became repetitive and no new information or themes emerged related to the research question.

Population and Sampling

I selected four organization managers from a single nonprofit organization. To be eligible, participants had to be a manager within the organization and have successfully implemented successful strategies to improve employee retention. To understand a phenomenon in qualitative research, researchers use a variety of sampling methods. Bulbul and Ozdinc (2022) described a variety of sampling methods, one of which was purposeful sampling. Benoot et al. (2016) noted that purposeful sampling enables researchers to gain an understanding of a phenomenon through acquiring data, analyzing the data, and interpreting the meaning of the data. Additionally, purposeful sampling is the careful identification and selection of participants who are knowledgeable and experienced regarding the subject matter (Iezadi et al., 2018). Purposeful sampling was suitable for my study because the goal was to purposefully sample four managers within a single organization who had used successful strategies to improve employee retention.

In qualitative studies, the goal is gaining an understanding of the phenomenon through collecting relevant, rich data. Schnitzler et al. (2022) noted the importance of reaching data saturation, which means collecting data until no new themes are identified. Also, Boddy (2016) stated a sample size is appropriate for a study when the researcher can provide evidence that the analyzed data answer the research question and describe the phenomenon. Additionally, Schnitzler et al. noted that data saturation is reached when no new data or themes emerge. I interviewed four business leaders and reviewed

organizational retention documents until no new data emerged to answer my research question.

When selecting an interview setting, researchers should consider an environment that will foster reflexive engagement, ensure participants' comfort, and minimize distractions during the interview process (Schmidt et al., 2018). Schnitzler et al. (2022) noted the importance of keeping participants in their natural environment. Also, Feigean et al. (2018) noted the importance of naturalistic setting for interviews. I conducted virtual interviews with each of the participants via Zoom to ensure the participants were in their natural setting and to minimize distractions.

Ethical Research

Ethical principles are a vital part of any research and should be considered by researchers when investigating a phenomenon. According to Atenas et al. (2023), ethical research is defined as the application of professional codes of conduct and moral guidelines designed to mitigate the harm caused to participants in the study. I conducted my study in accordance with the ethical requirements of Walden University's Institutional Review Board (approval number 05-12-23-1037390). I had the organization sign a partner organization agreement, and I ensured that each participant signed a participant consent form prior to their participation in the study. Dankar et al. (2019) noted that informed consent for each participant allows for the assurance of confidentiality, knowledge of the benefits of participation, and full disclosure of the potential risk factors of participation. I obtained signed informed consent from each participant. Each consent form indicated that there would be no monetary payments or

incentives for participants. Each participant was emailed a copy of the consent form, and consent was obtained and reviewed by me prior to conducting the interview.

Participants had the right to withdraw from my study at any time. Participants also had the option to withdraw in writing or by telephone. Stovel et al. (2018) noted the benefits of tangible and intangible incentives as a means of encouraging participants to participate in research. Participants who volunteered to participate in my study did not receive any tangible or intangible incentives. Roa and Biller-Andorno (2022) noted that providing financial incentives to participants could lead to inducement.

Researchers should always strive to uphold ethical practices to ensure appropriate protections for participants. Fox and Busher (2022) emphasized the importance of ensuring ethical practices in research practices and protections. Additionally, Oye et al. (2019) noted the importance of ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. To ensure confidentiality, I assigned each participant an alphanumeric code of P1 through P4. All data were saved on a flash drive or via hard copy, which were locked in a file cabinet in my home. The cabinet was accessible only to me. Following a 5-year period, all hard copies will be shredded, the flash drive will be destroyed, and files on my computer will be deleted to prevent unauthorized access.

Data Collection Instruments

I was the primary data collection instrument. According to Karagiozis (2018), the researcher is the primary data collection instrument in the data collection process. Collins and Stockton (2022) noted the role of researchers in qualitative research as the primary data collection instrument. I was the data collection instrument in my case study. Two

data collection techniques used by researchers in case studies are interviews and organization document reviews (Saunders et al., 2016). One data collection technique that I used was semistructured interviews. Kaliber (2019) recommended semistructured interviews as a means of data collection because the researcher can reconfigure data gathered based on participants' responses. I collected data by reviewing organizational turnover documents and conducting semistructured interviews. Centeno et al. (2019) also stated that semistructured interviews allow for deviation to thoroughly explore each participant's relationship with their particular organization.

Qualitative researchers can use an interview protocol as a means of ensuring data are collected consistently during the interview process. Braaten et al. (2023) noted that an interview protocol includes interview questions and researcher scripts to ensure consistency across all interviews with participants. I used an interview protocol (see Appendix) to ensure consistency during the semistructured interviews.

There are a variety of ways qualitative researchers can enhance the reliability and validity of the data collected (Hurst et al., 2015). Member checking allows for qualitative researchers to ensure that data is ethically collected, analyzed, and reported, therefore, improving the reliability and validity of the data collected (Motulsky, 2021). To enhance the reliability and validity of data collected in my study, I used member checking in to verify the information collected with each participant for accuracy.

Data Collection Technique

The researcher is the data collection instrument in the data collection process (citation?). Karagiozis (2018) noted that the role of a researcher in a qualitative research

study is the primary data collection instrument. I was the data collection instrument in my case study. Two data collection techniques used by case study researchers typically include interviews and organizational document (Saunders et al., 2016). I reviewed organizational turnover documents and conducted semistructured interviews to collect data for this single case study. One data collection technique I used was semistructured interviews. Kaliber (2019) suggested that semistructured interviews are a means of data collection because researchers can reconfigure data gathered based on participants responses.. Centeno et al. (2019) stated that semistructured interviews allow for deviation when exploring each participant's relationship in their organization. Therefore, I recorded all interviews, and used transcription software for interviews and member checking.

Qualitative researchers can use an interview protocol as a means of ensuring data is consistently collected during the interview process. Motulsky (2021) noted that an interview protocol includes the interview process used with participants. I used an interview protocol (see Appendix), which enabled me to collect all detailed information consistently with each participant. This included data from interview questions from participants on strategies to increase employee retention.

There are a variety of ways qualitative researcher can enhance the reliability and validity of the data collected (Hurst et al., 2015). One advantage of member checking is that it allows for qualitative researchers to ensure that not only is data ethically collected, but also ensured consistency of each interview. Interview protocol also assists with improving both the reliability and validity of the data collected (Gonzalez-Salgado et al., 2022). Therefore, to enhance the reliability and validity of data collected, I used member

checking in my doctoral study through scheduling follow up meetings to verify data collected during initial interview with participants.

One disadvantage of this technique is limited time spent with participants. I only conducted the interview and performed member checking which is only two meetings with the participants. To mitigate this disadvantage, I took notes to ensure I gather as much data as possible considering the limited time with each participant.

Data Organization Technique

Qualitative researchers have a variety of organization techniques when organization data collected during research. Williams and Moser (2019) suggested the use of electronic filing systems in which the researcher organizes files by participant to enable greater efficiency in grouping data. In addition, Swygart-Hobaugh (2019) suggested that using organization software as a means of transcribing information. I used NVivo 14 to transcribe interviews and organize the interviews by participant, through electronic filing and labeling. Additionally, I organized the notes that I took from participants during the interview process in hard copy format. And I converted my notes into electronic format and label the electronic files appropriately. I secured all raw data and information collected from participants both in hard-copy format and on a flash drive, which will be kept in my office for a period of 5 years.

Data Analysis

Methodological triangulation was used in my doctoral study. According to Kotus and Rzeszewski (2015) methodological triangulation is reviewing multiple data sources to confirm findings. Fusch and Ness (2018) noted four types of triangulations, aimed at

achieving data saturation: data, investigator, theory, and methodological. Heensen et al. (2019) noted that methodological triangulation is the convergence of multiple sources and methods of data analysis into a single conclusion enhance the validity of the conclusion reached. I used methodological triangulation in my doctoral study because I collected data from multiple sources and methods. I conducted semistructured interviews, performed member checking, and reviewed employee retention documents to collect and analyzed the data to ensure data saturation.

Yin's (2018) five step data analysis process to analyze data includes: compile the data, disassemble the data, reassemble the data, interpret the data, and conclude. Step one and two of Yin's five step analysis process which is compiling the data and disassemble the data, Yin noted the role of coding as a means of conducting data analysis. Since I used NVivo as a tool to transcribe my interview for member checking, NVivo was useful in the data analysis phase as the transcripts will be in electronic format. I used NVivo software which analyzed open-ended responses to the questions collected during each interview. Elliott (2022) highlighted the functionality of NVivo in terms of analyzing open-ended question responses and transcription, combining, and coding different forms of data.

By using NVivo, I transcribed and coded the participants responses and the documents collected to identified common themes. I also used coding to and identified themes as part of disassembling and reassembling the data. Ayre and McCaffrey (2022) noted the role of thematic analysis is a technique used to analyze patterns of meaning within a dataset, which is often used in qualitative research. It was also noted that

thematic analysis allows for capturing similarities, differences, unexpected ideas, and description of the phenomenon under study. Data interpretation occurred in this phase of data analysis. I also concluded through the connections of the themes or findings and linked the themes identified to my conceptual framework.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Ensuring data reliability is vital to ensuring that the research conclusions reached are reliable consistent. Korstjens and Moser (2018) noted that to achieve data reliability and dependability, there must be consistency. To ensure dependability I ensured that I conformed to the acceptable analysis process set forth by Walden University's Institutional Review Board, and I preformed member checking. Additionally, I scheduled and met virtually with each participant post-interview to ensure I had accurate interpretation of what was communicated to me during the interview. I reviewed all audio recordings thoroughly, capturing the key highlights, and ensured that I understood the data, and documenting when the interview transpired.

For researchers to navigate barriers in data reliability, it is essential to implement a decision-making process to identify common themes in data. Kornbluh (2015) noted that researchers must establish guidelines to both compare and identify decision-making structures for the convergence of prominent themes and member checks during the final documentation process. Spiers et al. (2018) noted member checking as a verification strategy to ensure data reliability. Additionally, I performed member checking by

allowing all participants to review their transcribed responses and made corrections as needed to ensure the data is reliable and accurate.

Validity

To ensure the highest level of credibility, it is essential to have multiple sources of data. According to O'Lary et al. (2017) to validate data, the researcher should have multiple sources of data and review data collectively, not in isolation to support conclusions reached. Therefore, to ensure credibility in my study, I collected data from multiple sources by using multiple sources by using methodological triangulation. To reach data saturation, I collected data through semistructured interviews and reviewed internal employee retention documents until no new themes emerge. Additionally, Messick (1992) noted validity is consistently evolving and validating data is making a reasonable case with available evidence to justify the conclusions made with data available. Additionally, to ensure validity, data must be credible, and I ensured validity and credibility through member checking of data interpretation with participants during the interview process. To maintain data validity, I remained objective throughout the entire process to address and correct any issues that arose.

Member checking is a vital tool for qualitative researchers to ensure that data collected is valid and credible. DeCino and Waalkes (2019) argued that when instances of researcher-participants arise, member checking not only yields value to researchers but provides a means of correcting any discrepancies to ensure that data collected is valid and accurate. DeCino and Waalkes noted that researchers should remain open to a variety of interactions with both organization and participants, and embrace differences of opinion,

which could enhance findings. I consistently followed the interview protocol that will be agreed-upon on the research form, which included provisions allowing for participants to withdraw consent at any time. Additionally, I remained unbiased during the data collection and analysis process.

Transferability of a study is essential for a qualitative researcher. Daniel (2018) noted that transferability in qualitative research is aligned with reliability within qualitative methodology. Furthermore, Daniel (2018) also noted that transferability could provide lessons for researchers based on findings. Descriptions of the researcher process, participants in the study, and context was provided to demonstrate the similarities in this case study are different.

Trustworthiness is an essential component of achieving confirmability. I achieved methodological triangulation through the use of multiple data sources and achieved data saturation. Methodological triangulation increases the trustworthiness of data through the collection of data from multiple sources (Kotus & Rzeszewski, 2015). I identified common themes and commonalities until no new themes emerged and reached data saturation. Additionally, I reviewed organizational employee retention documents in addition to semistructured interviews to enhance trustworthiness of data.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I provided a description of the role of the researcher, participants, research method, research design, population and sampling, and ethical research. Section 2 also contained data collection instruments, data collection techniques, data organization techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity. Section 3 includes presentation of

the findings, applications to professional practice, the implications for social change, recommendations for action and future research, reflections, and a conclusion.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Section 3 includes a presentation of the findings. Section 3 also includes applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for future research, reflections, and a conclusion.

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies that managers within a single nonprofit organization used to improve employee retention. The data to determine these strategies came from interviews with four managers and company retention documentation from a single nonprofit organization. The findings revealed four strategies that organization managers can use to improve employee retention: competitive benefits and compensation, innovative and engaging organizational culture, employee development, and satisfaction.

Presentation of the Findings

The research question for this study was the following: What strategies do some nonprofit organizational leaders use to improve employee retention? Table 2 includes information about the four themes: (a) employ competitive benefits and compensation, (b) foster an innovative and engaging organizational culture, (c) enable employee development, and (d) maintain high levels of employee satisfaction. Table 2 also provides the number of participants in this study, the number of documents in this study, and the number of times each theme was mentioned during the interviews and in the documents. Each of the identified themes is discussed in the subsequent subsections.

Table 2*Major Themes*

Node/Theme	Number of responses from interviews	Number of documents reviewed	Total number of times the theme was addressed
Employ competitive benefits and compensation	4	3	28
Innovative and engaging organizational culture	4	3	22
Enable employee development	4	1	32
Maintain high levels of employee satisfaction	4	2	22

Theme 1: Employ Competitive Benefits and Compensation

Ensuring competitive employee benefits and compensation is a strategy to improve employee retention. Naveed et al. (2021) noted that an organization that offered highly competitive compensation and benefit packages experienced improved employee retention. The findings from my study confirm that employing employee benefits and compensation practices is a strategy that improves employee retention.

The theme of employing competitive benefits and compensation was identified based on participants' responses. All four participants noted that the organization offers above average compensation for all employees and above market benefit practices, and experiences lower than industry standard employee turnover. P1 said "we offer a very competitive compensation plan that includes a great bonus plan that everyone can participate in." Additionally, P2 noted that "all of our employees except executives are paid hourly, which enables employees to earn additional money through overtime, and

ensure they are adequately compensated for time worked.” P3 stated “we offer opportunities for employees to work overtime to add additional income, and provide above average annual merit increases; we also provide additional compensation for employees who cannot work remote.”

Benefit programs are also important in retaining employees. P2 said “we pay 100% of the employee’s health insurance premiums, as well as vision and dental premiums.” Participants reported that many of the organization’s employees remain employed with the organization because of the benefits offered at no cost to the employee. In addition to health benefits, the organization offers work–life balance programs that influence employee retention. P2 noted that “all employees that do not work in our clinics are full remote, and have flexible hours.” P1 noted that “for those employees who cannot work remote, they are given a higher rate of compensation as an incentive for them to conduct in-person work.” Additionally, internal employee retention documents indicated that employee benefits and compensation were a means of keeping employee retention high within the organization.

Correlation to the Literature

Pay and benefit practices influence employee retention. When employees are satisfied with their compensation and benefits, the organization can experience higher levels of retention. According to United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021), the average turnover rate for nonprofit organizations is 43.1%. At my chosen organization, the average turnover rate is 6%. Shakil (2021) noted the importance of money and benefits in attracting, retaining, and motivating employees to higher levels of

performance. Ben-Gal et al. (2022) also noted the role of compensation practices in employees' decisions about where to work and remain employed. By offering higher levels of compensation, overtime, and bonus plans, nonprofit organizations can experience improved employee retention. Findings from my study confirm that competitive compensation is crucial for improving employee retention.

Organizations that offer competitive employee benefits also experience improved employee retention. Kalyanamitra et al. (2020) noted the importance of offering benefits such as health and wellness insurance, other wellness benefits, and work–life balance programs in improving P-O fit alignment, job satisfaction, and employee retention. Findings from my study support existing research that competitive benefits, including work–life balance programs, improve employee retention.

Correlation to the Conceptual Framework

The key component of P-O fit theory is linked to my findings in determining the compatibility of organizations in fulfilling the needs and values of individuals. Hu et al. (2020) noted the importance of benefits and compensation in ensuring the alignment of individual values and needs with organizations. Participants in the current study noted the importance of compensation and benefits in employees' decisions to remain with the organization, and that employees value above average benefits and competitive compensation. Organizations' long-term ability to sustain competitive advantage depends on human capital; by ensuring P-O fit, organizations can sustain improved retention.

Theme 2: Foster an Innovative and Engaging Organizational Culture

Organizational culture impacts employee retention. Chowdhury et al. (2021) noted the influence of perceived organizational culture on individual employment decisions in choosing an organization to work for and remaining with an organization. Findings from my study confirm that organizational culture plays a role in improving employee retention.

The theme of fostering an innovative and engaging organizational culture emerged from the responses provided by participants. All four participants discussed the culture of the organization as part of their responses. P4 discussed the role of communication from top management and the ability of employees to communicate with top management. Additionally, Hicks (2020) noted the importance of communication from leadership and the perception of positive organizational culture. P3 stated that “when I first started in this position I spoke with employees daily. I have had to pull back due to the workload and I noticed that morale decreased.” P2 stated “everyone wants to be heard, and it is important to ensure they are heard.” Internal retention documents revealed the importance of communication as a means of retaining employees, and that my selected organization had a very low turnover rate. My findings confirm that management communication with employees is important in cultivating a positive organizational culture.

Another aspect of organizational culture is management empowerment of employees within the organization. P4 stated

I'm trying to engage everyone to lead themselves, to recognize that they have personal power and that as their leader, empowering employees to lead themselves. I encourage them to be creative, resourceful, and that everyone can be a leader within this organization.

Yakut and Kara (2022) noted the importance of employee empowerment in creating organizational support and improved employee retention.

Intrinsic and extrinsic rewards also play a role in organizational culture in terms of work environment. Robertson (2021) noted the role of rewards and recognition in work environment and social work setting. P3 stated "it is about positive reinforcement, when someone does a good job, recognize it. We participate in quarterly merit badges, which employees can nominate each other." P2 also noted the importance of "celebrating employees and their contributions." My findings confirm the importance of organization communication, organizational support, and intrinsic and extrinsic rewards as part of organizational culture and a strategy to improve employee retention.

Correlation to the Literature

Organizational culture plays a significant role in employment retention. Robertson (2021) noted the importance of organizational leadership and communication and supervisor concern for employees. Moreover, Yue et al. (2022) highlighted the role of organizational leadership communication and how communication with organizational members improves employee retention. Organizational leaders allowing employees to communicate with them can improve employee retention. Findings from my study demonstrate that organizational communication improves employee retention.

Employee recognition is also a strategy that improves employee retention. Dale et al. (2018) noted the importance of supervisor concern for employees and recognition for work performed, which improves organizational culture and employee retention. Additionally, Robertson (2021) noted the importance of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards as a means of enhancing job and organizational satisfaction. Williamson et al. (2022) noted the importance of professional recognition as a means of improving employee retention. Findings from the current study confirm that employee recognition is crucial for improving organizational culture and employee retention.

Lastly, employee empowerment is part of enhancing organizational culture, which is a strategy to improve employee retention. Weis and Rosendale (2019) noted the importance of employee empowerment in improving employee retention. Moore and Hanson (2021) noted that empowering employees to lead within the organization enhances leader effectiveness, organizational culture, and productivity. Findings from my study align with the literature, which indicated that empowering employees enhances organizational culture and improves employee retention.

Correlation to Conceptual Framework

Organizational culture is a crucial component of P-O fit and ensuring organizations improve retention. Chowdhury et al. (2021) noted the influence of organizational culture on individual employee decisions, which include decisions to remain with organizations, and the importance of organizational culture in the continuous alignment of individuals and organizations. Moreover, Katsikea et al. (2015) noted that organizational culture, which includes organizational communication, empowerment, and

rewards, is a deciding factor in both P-O fit and employees' decisions to remain within their respective organizations.

Theme 3: Enable Employee Development

Developing employees is a strategy that improves employee retention. Through coaching and development, employees have opportunities to achieve continuous professional growth within their organization. All current participants stated that the organization provides training and development programs to employees, as well as continuous coaching to employees. Coaching refers to leaders guiding employees and empowering them toward continuous professional growth. P4 said "I teach people how to create more self-awareness, like a lot of what I do is coaching people, coaching people to go beyond where they see their limitations." P2 stated "it's about coaching people and helping them solve their problems and develop." Coaching and developing employees is a potential strategy to improve employee retention.

The theme of employee development emerged from participants' responses. Jayathilake et al. (2021) noted the importance of organizational leadership in coaching and integrating employees' talents into the organizations systems, and if organizations successfully match talent with roles, organizations can improve employee retention. P3 stated "we have expanded roles to ensure employees can perform the roles that they are passionate about." Findings from my study confirm that coaching and development is a strategy that improves employee retention.

Correlation to the Literature

Organizations that provide access to coaching experience improved employee retention. Lyons and Bandura (2021) highlighted that organizations that provide access to internal coaching and support programs experience greater innovation and growth. Also, Corbin (2020) highlighted the importance of continuous internal support as a means of improving employee retention. Additionally, Cernatescu et al. (2021) noted that continuous access to organization and growth opportunities improves employee retention. Findings from my study align with the research that access to internal coaching and development is a strategy to improve employee retention.

In addition to coaching, allowing employees to grow by expanding roles to develop skill sets is a strategy to improve employee retention. Andrews and Mohammed (2020) noted the importance of providing greater upward mobility and opportunities for employees to continue to grow as a strategy to improve employee retention. Sainju et al. (2021) also noted that providing opportunities for individuals to grow their careers is a strategy that improves employee retention. Findings from my study align with research and demonstrate that expanding roles to allow employees to develop is a strategy that improves employee retention.

Correlation to the Conceptual Framework

P-O fit was introduced by Argyris (1957) to explain the importance of alignment of individuals with organizations. Myer et al. (2016) noted that when individuals complement or make whole an organization, organizations perform better. Moreover, Aslan et al. (2021) noted that organizational culture, employee development, and P-O fit

increase job satisfaction and improve employee retention. One of the main factors of organizational support is coaching and development, and Yusliza et al. (2020) noted the role of organizational support in improving employee retention.

Achieving improved employee retention requires organizational support and training development programs. When individuals are empowered to make whole an organization, complimentary fit occurs, which is a strategy to improve employee retention (Pasko et al., 2020). By offering training and development and organizational support, organizations can ensure proper P-O fit and improve employee retention.

Theme 4: Maintain High Levels of Employee Satisfaction

When individuals are satisfied with their job and organization, they are more likely to remain with their organizations, thereby improving employee retention. It is indicated through existing research that increasing job satisfaction, also increases organizational commitment and improves employee retention. Without increasing job satisfaction, organizations cannot improve employee retention.

Increasing job satisfaction is a strategy that improves employee retention. Pratami et al. (2022) noted that increasing job satisfaction does improve employee retention. P2 stated “we do an employee satisfaction survey twice a year, we really take a look at that and put a great deal of thought on how to make the areas of improvement that people talked about.” In addition, P1 and P3 discussed at length the employee satisfaction survey and how the organization works diligently to improve the areas identified in the employee satisfaction survey. Lastly, internal retention documentations demonstrate that

not only does the selected organization exhibit high levels of employee satisfaction, but also has low employee turnover.

Including employees in organizational improvement and decision-making process also increases job satisfaction. Artz et al. (2022) noted that when organizations provide mechanisms for employees to have a voice in the growth of the organization, employees are more satisfied with their organizations. P1 and P2 both noted that their organizations offer monetary rewards for submitting improvement ideas, and greater monetary incentives if their ideas have a positive impact on the organization. Findings from the participants in my study confirm that improving job satisfaction is a strategy to improve employee retention.

Correlation to the Literature

Increasing job satisfaction is a strategy that improves employee retention. Job satisfaction is also linked to compensation and benefits, organizational support and development, and organizational culture (Byza et al., 2019). Second, Bin Shamalin (2016) noted that job satisfaction is directly linked to employee turnover, and further noted that the higher employees are satisfied with both their organization and jobs, the less likely they are to leave their organization. Without high levels of job satisfaction, organizations will experience high levels of employee turnover. The literature aligns with findings from my study that participants responses demonstrate that high levels of satisfaction is a strategy that improves employee retention.

Correlation to the Conceptual Framework

When individual values are aligned with organizational values, employees are more satisfied with their jobs and less likely to leave their organizations. Aslan et al. (2021) noted that P-O fit is directly linked to both job satisfaction and employee retention. Additionally, Tsai and Yen (2020) further noted that job satisfaction is linked with both P-O fit alignment and improved employee retention. The more that individuals are aligned with their organizations, the more individuals are satisfied with their jobs, and the less likely individuals are to leave their organizations.

Applications to Professional Practice

Identifying strategies to improve employee retention is crucial to increasing both organizational sustainability and productivity. The strategies identified in this study included: (a) Employ competitive benefits and compensation; (b) Foster an innovative and engaging organizational culture; (c) Enable employee training and development; and (d) Maintain high levels of job satisfaction. The participants admitted that their organization experiences are lower than industry employee turnover because of the results, which increases organizational productivity and sustainability, which is in line with previous research conducted by Olubiyi et al. (2019). The findings from this study could enable nonprofit organizations to improve employee retention which increases productivity and organizational sustainability.

This study may provide strategies to organizational leaders seeking to improve their employee retention. The results of this study will be published in ProQuest so that future leaders can implement strategies that the participants used in their organization to

improve employee retention. Additionally, future researchers can use this study to expand on this research to provide additional strategies to improve employee retention and other industries. The interviewed managers identified competitive benefits, innovative and engaging organizational culture, employee training and development, and high job satisfaction as strategies to improve employee retention.

The initial recommendation is for managers to review their employee satisfaction surveys and identify ways to improve organizational benefits. Next, organizational managers should seek ways to provide an engaging organizational culture. Also, organizational managers should look at and improve means to develop their employees. Lastly, organizational managers should seek to improve job satisfaction within their organizations. Thus, the findings from this study could help organizational managers to formulate strategies to improve employee retention.

Implications for Social Change

The results from this study may contribute to positive social change in terms of improvements to individuals, communities, organizations, and societies. Nonprofit organizations provide vital services to underprivileged communities. According to Currie et al. (2022), nonprofit organizations compete for public service contracts, donors, sponsors, clients, employees, revenue, and volunteers. In 2020, the average nonprofit turnover rate was 43.1% which is higher than other industries. (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). As shown by the results of my study, implementing strategies identified assists nonprofit organizations in sustaining competitive advantage.

The study findings contribute social change by allowing nonprofit organizational leaders to implement successful employee retention strategies. By understanding how to improve employee retention, nonprofits can allocate the resources spent on replacing employees to provide essential services to underprivileged communities. Additionally, nonprofits could potentially increase service levels and provide additional benefits to disadvantaged and special populations. By increasing services underprivileged communities and special populations could have greater access to critical services.

In addition, employees who have higher compensation and benefits, benefit from a higher standard of living. Barrero et al. (2021) noted that when employees live and work in the same community with above average compensation and benefits, employees can provide significant benefits to the local economy. Therefore, nonprofit organizations could provide greater advantage to local communities.

Recommendations for Action

Nonprofit organization managers seeking to both retain employees and reduce turnover costs should evaluate their current benefit and compensation, organization culture, employee development programs, and job satisfaction. Studies like Olubiyi et al. (2019) show the importance of organizational culture, and job satisfaction as means of improving employee retention. Adopting successful strategies is a key factor in improving employee retention. Nonprofit organizations' financial resources are often limited, and reducing turnover costs will enhance nonprofit organizational leaders to focus resources elsewhere (Marcela et al., 2021). Implementing successful retention

strategies will enable nonprofit organizational leaders to lower retention costs and expand essential services.

My recommendation to nonprofit organizational leaders to monitor job satisfaction, enhance employee development programs, evaluate compensation and benefit programs, and review organizational culture and support. This study's findings have demonstrated the importance of improving employee retention for nonprofit organizations. According to existing literature nonprofit organizations can implement successful employee retention strategies to provide essential goods and services to socially disadvantaged communities (Currie et al., 2022). Nonprofit organizational leaders could benefit on additional training on strategies to improve employee retention.

By implementing effective strategies to improve employee retention, nonprofit organizations can lower employee turnover costs and increase services to their communities. I intend to publish the findings from this study in ProQuest and other academic journals and disseminate the results to nonprofit organizations to enable them to improve employee retention. Nonprofit organization managers should review the findings of this study and consider implementing strategies to improve employee retention.

Recommendations for Further Research

In this study, I explored strategies to improve retention from four managers within a single nonprofit organization in the southern United States. Research has demonstrated the importance of reducing employee retention (Olubiyi et al., 2019). This study was limited to a qualitative single case study involving four nonprofit managers in a single

nonprofit organization. Future research should include other research methods such as mixed-methods and quantitative. Additionally, future research should explore different research methods as well.

There were two limitations in this study. First was using only two data collection techniques which were semistructured interviews and review of internal employee retention documents. Second, was that participants may not answer the questions truthfully, which could lead to bias in responses. According to Jack et al. (2019), future research could both expand the sample and reinforce the results of this study. Additional research could adopt other data collection techniques that did not rely solely on both semistructured interviews and retention document reviews. Second, future research should reduce bias by expanding the sample to include multiple organizations, and a larger participant sample.

Reflections

I explored strategies that nonprofit organizational managers used to improve employee retention. Writing this research was by far the most challenging undertaking in my academic career. I wrote this research despite working two full time and one part time job, relocating to an entirely new city, and being hospitalized; ultimately, I rose to the challenge of completing this doctoral study.

I received limitless support and advice from former and current teachers, advisors, committee members, and committee chair who assisted me through my doctoral journey. I was already familiar with remaining independent of bias as my professional career requires an unbiased approach to research. I am knowledgeable in quantitative analysis

and statistics. I received significant support through my committee and coursework on qualitative research. The amount of knowledge I have gained during my studies has also assisted me in my career. The amount of knowledge I learned about strategies to improve employee retention has assisted me and my leadership style. For example, I now know how to more positively impact the team that I lead.

Conclusion

High employee turnover can put a strain on already scarce financial resources for nonprofit organizations, limiting their ability to provide essential services. Nonprofit organizations must continue to provide essential services to underprivileged and special communities. To remain sustainable and competitive for scarce resources nonprofits must continue to retain employees.

I interviewed four managers within a single nonprofit organization to answer my research question. From the responses, four themes emerged during data collection. The themes were: (a) employ competitive benefits and compensation, (b) innovative and engaging organizational culture, (c) enable employee development, and (d) maintain high levels of job satisfaction. This study demonstrated and identified four themes, which were strategies that improve employee retention. The implementation of successful strategies could reduce employee retention costs for nonprofit organizations and expand essential services to both special and underprivileged communities.

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	<p>which will last 30 minutes for you to verify that I transcribed data accurately. This data includes interpretation of data from interview responses that was recorded during the semistructured interview.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Note: At all times, watch for non-verbal cues.</i>• <i>Note: Ask any follow-up questions as needed.</i>• Ask the following eight questions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What strategies do you use in your day-to-day operations to improve employee retention?2. What strategies have helped you the most to reduce employee turnover?3. What strategies have you implemented to be least effective when reducing employee turnover?4. When you started your business, what factors drove you to implement the strategies to reduce employee turnover?5. What method(s) do you find work best to improve overall retention within your organization?6. How have your employees responded to your employee retention strategies?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Follow-up Question: How did you measure the effectiveness of the strategies implemented?7. How has employee turnover affected the organization, based on your experience?8. What additional information would you like to share about the strategies you use to reduce voluntary employee turnover?
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wrap up the interview by thanking the participant for their time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This concludes the interview; do you have any questions for me? If so- answer, if not: I thank you sincerely for taking the time to meet with me today and participate in the interview.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schedule a follow-up member checking interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The follow up interview will take place on XXX date and XXX time and should last only thirty minutes. Should you need to reschedule, please let me know.