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Management Strategies to Improve Employee Retention and Organizational Performance

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Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Fay E. Catlett

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2024

Abstract

Management Strategies to Improve Employee Retention and Organizational Performance

by

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MS, Ashford University, 2015

BS, Ashford University, 2013

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

July 2024

Abstract

Employee turnover is a problem that is pervasive and negatively impacts the productivity of organizations. Business leaders who do not have strategies to combat employee turnover within organizations will incur unbudgeted costs of replacing employees who leave organizations, which affects organizational performance. Grounded in Vroom's motivational theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple-case study was to explore strategies business leaders use to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance. The participants were 5 human resources and business leaders of various organizations who maximized employee retention and organizational performance. Data were collected using semistructured interviews and a review of publicly available documents. Through thematic analysis, five themes were identified: (a) employee development/recognition, (b) restructuring/cost calculation, (c) feedback/training, (e) environment/management style, and (f) diversity/inclusion. A key recommendation is for business leaders to acknowledge employee achievements through company-sponsored monthly employee recognition lunches, which incorporate feedback and training sessions, as this theme was most prominent. The implications for positive social change include potential retention of experienced employees, job stability within communities, economic stability and reputation of organizations, and building of outreach and volunteer programs allowing employees to interact with communities and clients to further enhance organizational brands.

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Dedication

I dedicate this degree to the memory of my mother; she was my biggest cheerleader. Although she passed away in April 2022, her voice continued to echo these encouraging words in my head, “You are capable of accomplishing anything you set in your mind to do.” I would also like to dedicate this accomplishment to my son, Mansa A. Catlett, for being a constant encourager throughout this process and my brother, Paul E. Watford, for allowing me the space and uninterrupted time to work diligently to complete this educational journey.

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I want to acknowledge my committee. To my chair, Dr. Betsy J. Macht, thank you for your mentoring, encouragement, guidance, and perseverance in keeping me focused when I hit that “brick wall” and wanted to quit. To Dr. Peter Anthony, my 2ND chair, thank you for being a part of my journey. Your input was invaluable. I could not have done this without you both! I am grateful for all you have done to help me accomplish this goal.

To my family, thank you for encouraging me to pursue this endeavor and see it through to completion. Your confidence in me and unwavering support helped me to stay focused on the “end game”! I love you all and will be forever thankful for you accompanying me on this journey.

Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	v
List of Figures.....	vi
Section 1: Foundation of the Study.....	1
Background of the Problem	1
Problem and Purpose	2
Population and Sampling	3
Nature of the Study	3
Research Question	4
Interview Questions	4
Conceptual Framework.....	5
Operational Definitions.....	6
Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations.....	7
Assumptions.....	7
Limitations	7
Delimitations.....	8
Significance of the Study	8
A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature	9
Application to the Applied Business Problem	10
Vroom’s Expectancy Theory.....	101
Alternate Theories.....	11

Organizational Costs and Factors Affecting Retention	14
Organizational Costs	14
Employee Satisfaction	16
Employee Retention Factors	17
Employee Intentions to Leave	20
Employee Engagement	21
Employee Turnover.....	22
Voluntary Quits	24
Organizational Culture and Employee Retention	26
Supportive Organizational Culture and Employee Retention.....	28
Leadership and Organizational Culture	30
Leadership and Employee Retention	31
Retention Strategies	32
Leadership Style.....	41
Leadership Actions to Reduce Employee Turnover.....	42
Transition	443
Section 2: The Project.....	466
Purpose Statement.....	466
Role of the Researcher	477
Participants.....	499
Research Method and Design	49

Research Method	49
Research Design.....	51
Data Saturation.....	52
Population and Sampling	53
Ethical Research.....	55
Data Collection Instrument	57
Data Collection Technique	59
Data Organization Technique.....	59
Data Analysis	60
Reliability and Validity	61
Reliability.....	61
Validity.....	62
Transition and Summary	63
Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change	64
Theme 1: Employee Development and Recognition	66
Theme 2: Restructuring and Cost Calculation	70
Theme 3: Feedback and Training.....	76
Theme 4: Environment and Leadership Strategies	82
Theme 5: Diversity and Inclusion.....	85
Applications to Professional Practice	90
Implications for Social Change.....	93

Recommendations for Action	94
Recommendations for Further Research.....	95
Reflections	96
Conclusion	98
References.....	100
Appendix A: Order of Interview	117
Appendix B: Invitation to Participate in the Study.....	118
Appendix C: Voluntary Consent Form.....	120
Appendix D: Interview Questions	122

List of Tables

Table 1. Adams' Equity Theory: Employee Expectations	15
Table 2. Archival Documentation for Data Analysis	72
Table 3. Themes from Interviews.....	73

List of Figures

Figure 1. Alderfer's ERG Theory.....16

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Background of the Problem

Employee turnover is a problem that is prevalent and affects many organizations. Without strategies to combat employee turnover, organizations incur unbudgeted costs of replacing employees who leave organizations. According to Lee et al. (2017), it can cost an organization two times a yearly salary to replace an employee who leaves. Managers who have developed retention strategies decrease turnover costs of organizations.

Loss of talented employees contributes to loss of organizational knowledge. According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS, 2021) employee turnover is increasing. The total turnover rate for 2019 was 45.1%, which increased to 57.3% in 2020 (BLS, 2021). To reduce employee turnover and maintain a stable workforce, managers must (1) diagnose gaps in their organizations' hiring processes, (2) develop strategic plans to help retain employees, (3) conduct and analyze exit interview data, (4) adapt management styles that encourage retention of employees, and (5) develop work environments that foster retention and emphasize work tasks, but are also nurturing (Kaye & Jordan-Evans, 2001). Managers must understand their employees are their greatest assets. To aid in reducing employee turnover, managers must develop strategies that help to retain talented and knowledgeable employees, as well as improve organizational performance.

Problem and Purpose

Managers who do not have strategies to retain experienced employees and prevent voluntary employee turnover increase costs to the organization it can cost the organization upwards of 200% of the annual salary of the separated employee to replace that employee (Lee et al., 2017). The general business problem was that business leaders who do not retain skilled employees may experience diminished business performance. The specific business problem was that some business leaders lack strategies to retain experienced employees in order to improve organizational performance.

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies business leaders used to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance. The study population was business leaders who worked as human resource managers (HRMs) from various locations throughout the U.S. Employee retention could (1) lead to job stability within communities, (2) contribute to economic stability and reputation of organizations, (3) contribute to the economic stability of communities, (4) and building outreach and volunteer programs to interact with communities and clients to further enhance organizational brands. Retaining experienced and skilled employees would contribute to the social sustainability of organizations, resulting in better relationships with clientele and communities, and building strong brand reputations for organizations in order to attract new clients (Longoni & Cagliano, 2016).

Population and Sampling

My proposed study involved interviewing participants and reviewing public and internal documents of HRMs from various organizations throughout the U.S. Participants had a minimum of five years in their position. I selected a total of five participants for my study. Participants were chosen randomly using my professional network and participants' public contact information (LinkedIn, social media, etc.).

Nature of the Study

There are three research study methods: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. I applied the qualitative method for my study. Qualitative research studies involve using nonnumerical data and exploring reasons why a problem exists (Basias & Pollalis, 2018). The qualitative method was appropriate for my multiple case study because I was seeking to understand a business problem. Quantitative research studies involve using mathematics and statistics to test a hypothesis (Basias & Pollalis, 2018). The quantitative method was not appropriate for the proposed multiple case study. I did not seek data to test a hypothesis. Mixed methods research involves using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Mixed methods were not appropriate for my study because I did not conduct quantitative analyses of data.

I applied a multiple case study design for my proposed study. Four qualitative research study designs are ethnography, narrative inquiry, phenomenology, and case study. The ethnographic design involves examining the culture of a group, and researchers immerse themselves in groups to collect data (Carlos, 2018). The

ethnographic design was not appropriate for my proposed study because I was not examining the culture of a group. Narrative inquiry designs involve personal accounts of events as a way of collecting data (Barry, 2016). The narrative inquiry design was not appropriate for my proposed study because it did not depend on personal accounts of events. The phenomenological design involves describing how participants react to the occurrence of an event. This design was not appropriate for my proposed study. The case study design involves examining people, events, and relationships in real situations (Harrison et al., 2017). The case study design method was appropriate for my study.

Research Question

RQ: What strategies do business leaders use to retain experienced employees in order to improve organizational performance?

Interview Questions

Interview questions should address the data the researcher desires to collect using open-ended questions to elicit more information from respondents (Dikko, 2016). I developed the following open-ended interview questions to collect data for my proposed study:

1. What strategies do you use to prevent or reduce voluntary employee turnover?
2. What strategies do you use to motivate employees to remain with the organization?

3. What strategies do you use to decrease the cost to the organization when you experience a high volume of voluntary employee turnover among experienced employees who have been with the organization for five or more years?
4. What is your process for determining the cost impact of employee turnover?
5. How do you reduce costs to your organization when replacing those employees?
6. What strategies have you developed and implemented to reduce turnover of experienced employees with five or more years of experience?
7. How have employees responded to any strategies you have developed and implemented to retain skilled employees and reduce organizational costs?
8. During your interviews with potential new hires, what are your strategies to assess candidates for cultural fit with the organization?
9. What strategies would you suggest to other managers to help them prevent voluntary employee turnover among experienced employees and reduce costs to the organization?
10. What additional information would you like to share about preventing voluntary employee turnover and reducing costs to the organization?

Conceptual Framework

Vroom's theory of motivation was the conceptual framework for my study. Victor Vroom introduced the theory of motivation in 1964. Vroom theorized what motivated people were mindful actions, including all options (Ramlall, 2004; Vroom, 1964). Vroom (1964) emphasized people believe if they produce at a certain level, they can expect to

receive a certain level of reward. Vroom (1964) identified three concepts of his theory: valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. These concepts could help to predict job satisfaction, employee performance, professional choice, and probability of staying in a job. Vroom posited that employees feel a sense of satisfaction when they feel they had been rewarded fairly for their efforts.

Vroom's theory was used to explore motivational factors that organizations used to retain qualified and skilled employees. I used this theory to make suggestions about retention strategies and motivation. This could foster an organizational culture that encourages retention and employee engagement.

Managers must know what employees value and need in terms of training, supervision, and resources and follow through with promises or rewards (Ramalho Luz et al., 2018). If employees feel they do not get rewarded for their efforts, they will seek employment elsewhere (Ramalho Luz et al., 2018). Managers should understand there is a link between employee retention and expectation of rewards (Ramalho Luz et al., 2018). Vroom's expectancy theory was used for exploring strategies managers used to retain experienced employees and reduce organizational costs.

Operational Definitions

Affective commitment: Commitment that is displayed when employees develop an emotional commitment to the organization (Anitha & Begum, 2016).

Continuance commitment: Commitment employees develop when they stay with the organization because they need to do so (Anitha & Begum, 2016).

Normative commitment: Commitment employees develop when they feel obligated to stay with an organization because they must stay (Anitha & Begum, 2016).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are beliefs and truths researchers embrace as true but are not verifiable with solid evidence. Researchers should give reasons for assumptions for reader clarity (Ellis & Levy, 2009). There were four assumptions for my proposed study. The first assumption of my study was I assumed managers did not have strategies to retain skilled employees. The second assumption was I assumed managers did not have strategies to reduce the cost employee turnover creates. The third assumption I assumed participants answered interview questions in a truthful and factual manner. Lastly, I assumed managers lacked the strategies needed to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance.

Limitations

Limitations are errors inherent in the study that could affect validity and reliability of the study (Ellis & Levy, 2009). Limitations are elements of the study that are out of the researcher's control (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). There were two potential limitations in my proposed study.

The first limitation was the sample population consisted only of HR managers with five years' experience. The second limitation was participants may have chosen to answer interview questions in a way that made the employee turnover rate in their office seem

more favorable compared to what is true.

Delimitations

Delimitations are restrictions intentionally placed on the study to set limits (Ellis & Levy, 2009). The restrictions set for my study were the participant group from which I collected data. Restrictions placed on a study help to ensure the objectives of the study are accomplished (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). The restriction of limiting the participant group was placed to ensure the goals of the study were achieved. All participants were HR managers working in various locations throughout the U.S who had five or more years of experience on the job.

Significance of the Study

Managers faced with employee turnover experience increased costs to organizations. Managers must look to decrease employee turnover to increase profits. This proposed study was significant to business organizations because it may provide a standard by which managers may better understand how retaining experienced employees can help reduce costs to organizations. Findings of this study could contribute to social change by presenting leaders with strategies that enhance understanding of strategies to retain skilled employees. By retaining skilled employees, HR managers can help to decrease unbudgeted expenses to replace departed employees, increase profitability of organizations, and provide a consistent continuum of service to clients.

Retaining a skilled workforce adds to the sustainability of organizations and results in skilled workers who work to improve the social wellbeing of communities and

clientele (Longoni & Cagliano, 2016). Stable businesses with skilled workforces lead to local job opportunities and more community resources. A skilled workforce provides (1) consistent and reliable services to customers to readily meet their needs, (2) job stability within communities, (3) economic stability, and (4) outreach and volunteer programs where employees interact with communities and clients to further enhance organizational brands.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

In my proposed study, I explored research on strategies business leaders use to retain experienced employees and improve organizational performance. I conducted an extensive search of scholarly and peer-reviewed articles that addressed employee retention, its effects on organizational performance, and strategies business leaders used to retain experienced employees.

Databases for my search were EBSCOHost, ERIC, ProQuest, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, ABI/INFORM Global, Business Source Complete, SAGE Journals, ResearchGate, and Emerald Insight. Search terms were: (a) *employee retention*, (b) *organizational performance*, (c) *employee turnover*, (d) *employee engagement*, (e) *job embeddedness*, (f) *organizational commitment*, (g) *job/employee satisfaction*, (h) *employee motivation*, and (i) *voluntary quits*. I reviewed a total of 108 sources, including journal articles, seminal literature, dissertations, and government articles. Of those, 85 (81%) were peer-reviewed, and 76 (72%) were published between 2019 and 2024.

Application to the Applied Business Problem

The conceptual framework for my doctoral study was Vroom's theory of motivation. Parijat and Bagga (2014) conducted theoretical descriptive, explanatory, and analytical research using secondary sources focusing on Vroom's expectancy theory. Parijat and Bagga utilized Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation as a content theory of their study. The main objective was to prove the expectancy theory as a valid concept to reduce employee turnover by meeting the employee's individual needs. Parijat and Bagga (2014) posited employees strive to produce or excel in terms of achieving work outcomes to receive rewards from organizations.

Vroom's theory of motivation was used to explore motivational factors that organizations use to retain qualified and skilled employees. I used the theory to make suggestions for retention strategies. This could foster an organizational culture that encourages retention and employee engagement.

Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Vroom explored the relationship between employee performance, rewards, and outcomes. When applied to HR management, leaders using Vroom's theory can expect that if employees make efforts to perform and meet or exceed expectations of the organization, they expect tangible or intangible rewards that satisfy personal needs (Taboli, 2012).

Employee motivation is guided by policies that meet needs of employees through trust in leadership, career development, and challenging work which leads to employee

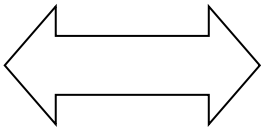
retention (Sandhya & Kumar, 2011; Savolainen et al., 2018). Baker et al. (1989) theorized persons perform work based on the expectancy they receive rewards according to the outcome of their performance and needs.

Taboli (2012) theorized people are motivated to work to gain recognition based on their individual and personal needs. Baker et al. (1989) suggested employees are motivated to perform their best work in expectation of rewards from organizations that satisfy their needs in terms of money, recognition, or advancement within the workplace. Employees expect monetary rewards or rewards in the form of benefits. Rewards offer employees incentives to remain with organizations.

Alternate Theories

I considered focusing on the equity theory developed by Adams in 1963. The theory was based on the premise that employees are not only concerned with receiving rewards for their work but are also concerned that these rewards are fair and equal to the rewards of others within organizations (Huseman et al., 1987). Employees expect equal rewards (output) for equal efforts (input). This theory was largely based on employee perception and comparison of their situation with others, the employee's perception of fair treatment was the main motivation. The use of This theory was not appropriate for my study (see Table 1).

Table 1**Adam's Equity Theory-Employee Expectations**

What I Give	Equity Fairness	What I Get
Input		Output
Time		Pay
Talent		Benefits
Loyalty		Training

Note. Adams Equity Theory Model depicts employee perceptions that if input is given,.

I also considered focusing on Alderfer's ERG theory developed in 1969.

According to Turabik and Baskan (2015), the ERG theory is a shortened version of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and emphasizes that individuals have three basic needs: need for existence (E), which includes all material and basic needs, need for relatedness (R), which includes interpersonal relationships and social needs, and need for growth (G). which includes self-esteem and personal development.

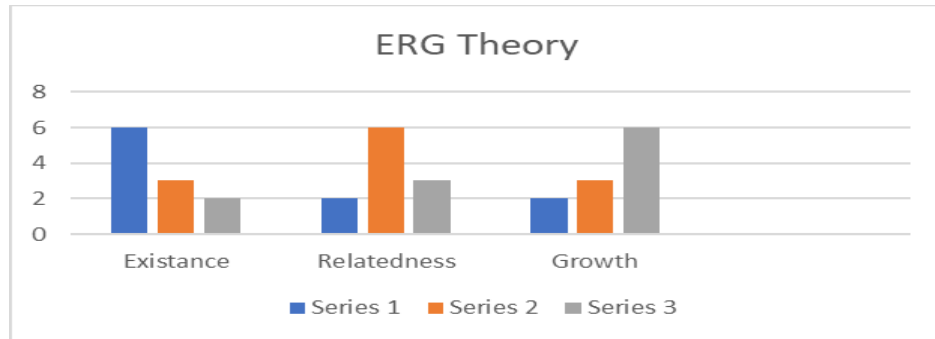
If higher needs are not being met, individuals will seek to satisfy lesser needs, as all three needs are interrelated.

Because this theory emphasized the existence need as the most important need, it differs with the reviewed literature in that researchers saw the need for growth as most

important to retaining employees. Therefore, this theory was not appropriate for my study. Figure 1 depicts Alderfer’s ERG theory.

Figure 1

Alderfer’s ERG Theory



Varying Needs Levels	Series 1	Series 2	Series 3
Existence – Series 1	6	3	2
Relatedness - Series 2	2	6	3
Growth – Series 3	2	3	6

Note. This figure depicts the essence of Alderfer’s ERG Model. When one need is most important, the other needs become less important. The importance of a specific need can change over time.

Organizational Costs and Factors Affecting Retention

Organizational Costs

Organizational costs resulting from employee turnover can be detrimental to the bottom line of companies. Organizations may spend upwards of 200% of annual salaries to replace employees who quit voluntarily (Lee et al., 2017). Retention of experienced employees enables organizations to reduce costs of recruiting and training newly-hired replacement employees (Davis, 2013; Sandhya & Kumar, 2011). By retaining experienced employees, organizations can avoid unbudgeted expenditures which occur when employees leave organizations. Trevor and Piyanontalee (2020) stated employee turnover of any kind, separation (voluntary or involuntary), recruitment and onboarding, and training result in direct costs to organizations. To manage costs of turnover, organizations must work to maintain stable workforces.

Employee turnover results in costs to replace employees and how many times an organization must fill a position (Davis, 2013). Costs of replacing employees is financially detrimental to organizations (Cross et al., 2017; Davis, 2013; Laddha et al., 2012; McCafferty & Hamilton, 2020; Steinmetz et al., 2014). Retaining talented employees is a method that employers can use to reduce replacement costs when employees leave organizations.

Costs of replacing employees who voluntarily leave organizations could result in organizations spending billions of dollars per year to replace them. Davis (2013) postulated employee replacement costs among organizations in the U.S. were estimated

to be \$25 billion per year. Cross et al. (2017) found replacing skilled employees costs organizations 12% of their pretax income, and if turnovers are high, it can cost organizations 40% of their yearly income. Laddha et al. (2012) determined it could cost companies 30 to 50% of annual salaries to replace an entry level employee, 150% of yearly salaries to replace midlevel employees, and 400% to replace top-level employees or employees in specialized fields.

Organizations within the U.S. paid out annual costs which exceeded \$630 billion dollars by 2020 to replace employees who voluntarily leave organizations (McCafferty & Hamilton, 2020). Those costs rose to exceed \$700 billion by 2022 and continue to rise yearly (McCafferty & Hamilton, 2020). Costs of replacing employees who leave organizations along with replacing employees at any level due to turnover is detrimental to any organization financially.

Employee turnover is counterproductive to organizations' financial wellbeing (Craig, 2015; Davis, 2013; Cross et al., 2017; Laddah et al., 2012). Craig (2015) determined replacing employees who leave organizations could lead to costs that exceed \$15,000.00 per employee per year. When employees do not commit to organizations, they are less likely to stay with them (Craig, 2015). Loss of qualified employees due to retirement leaves gaps in organizational knowledge structures (Craig, 2015). This can lead to loss of organizational productivity, organizational finances, and employee talent.

Employers must understand costs of employee turnover and how that impacts organizations in terms of lost productivity, lack of budget for new hires, and lost revenue

(Guilding et al., 2014). Costs of staff turnover include (1) separation costs, (2) recruiting costs, (3) selection of replacement costs, (4) hiring costs, and (5) loss of productivity costs (Guilding et al., 2014). Guilding et al. (2014) claimed operational and HRMs should take accountability for employee turnover. While Guilding et al. (2014) listed several costs involved in employee turnover, Tulgan (2018) argued employee turnover resulted from loss of bench strength, disruption in workflow and employee relationships, diminished morale, (loss of talented employees as the catalyst for the departure of other employees, and loss of return on investment (ROI) on talent investment as costs the organization incurs when employee turnover occurs. Employers encounter unexpected, unbudgeted expenditures when they must deal with the factors of employee turnover and the rehiring of new employees.

Employee Satisfaction

The expectancy theory has three concepts: valence, instrumentality, and expectancy (Vroom, 1964). These concepts could help predict job satisfaction, employee performance, professional choice, and probability of staying in a job. Thomas (2013) showed employee satisfaction, other job opportunities, pay satisfaction, and career advancement are primary factors which result in retaining experienced employees. Loss of experienced employees affects productivity of organizations because it reduces the workforce while increasing the workload of employees who remain (Thomas, 2013). Employees who are not satisfied in their jobs due to increased workloads caused by employee turnover are also likely to leave organizations.

Dalkrani and Dimitriadis (2018) found that employee satisfaction was affected by the characteristics of the job, the work environment, and the job's social attributes, which help build organizational commitment. Dalkrani and Dimitriadis (2018) did not find rewards and promotions as significant attributes affecting employee satisfaction; this finding was in direct conflict with the findings of Thomas (2013) and Valaei and Rezaei (2016). Valaei and Rezaei (2016) further expounded on elements that they determined affected employee satisfaction.

Valaei and Rezaei (2016) conducted a qualitative study and explored nine employee satisfaction aspects of employee satisfaction. The aspects of employee satisfaction explored were (1) supervision, (2) the nature of work, (3) communication, (4) rewards, (5) relationships with co-workers, (6) benefits, (7) pay, (8) promotion, and (9) organizational procedures (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). Like Dalkrani and Dimitriadis (2018), Valaei and Rezaei (2016) supported the findings of Dalkrani and Dimitriadis (2018) that employee satisfaction was affected by the characteristics of the job but also found that the nature of work, communication, relationships with co-workers, benefits, pay, promotion, and organizational procedures were the attributes of the job which also helped build organizational commitment.

Employee Retention Factors

Business leaders must consider the loss of organizational talent, knowledge, and how the loss will affect the organization when experienced employees voluntarily leave. The biggest problem facing organizations is the management and retention of employees

(Das & Baruah, 2013). Previous studies have explored the factors that affect employee retention. The top nine factors which influence employee retention most are job satisfaction, compensation and appreciation, organizational culture/environment, work-life balance, challenge and degree of work performed, opportunities for advancement, relationships with co-workers, communication with workers and managers, and mentoring (Aruna & Anitha, 2015; Das & Baruah, 2013; Oladapo, 2014).

Career development opportunities, autonomy and work style, work environment, and job satisfaction are the factors that most influence the retention of Gen Y employees (Aruna & Anitha, 2015). Deery and Jago (2015) theorize that in some organizations, employees see work-life balance as the premier factor that impacts employee retention. However, Memon et al., (2016) theorized that employees were less likely to leave an organization if the organization invests in the training and development of the employees. By investing in training and development of employees, organizations strengthen employee work engagement, can predict employee intentions to leave the organization by the degree of employee work engagement, and the degree of employee satisfaction with training determines the degree of employee work engagement (Memon et al., 2016).

According to Letchmiah and Thomas (2017), the vital components to retaining skilled employees are the organizational culture and values within the organization, self-actualization, leadership, work-life balance, communication, rewards, and recognition.

When these components are present within the organization, it reinforces employee retention through organizational commitment (Letchmiah & Thomas, 2017).

High levels of organizational commitment result in employees aligning their values with those of the organization. The retention of highly skilled employees is cost-effective for the organization and contributes to the organization's bottom line and productivity (Letchmiah & Thomas, 2017).

Employee retention must begin at the point of recruitment (Oladapo, 2014). For this reason, human resources (H.R.) should be an active, strategic partner with management in the recruitment of employees. H.R. must take the responsibility to attract, hire, develop, and retain top talent, which helps to position the organization to become viable, sustainable, and profitable for the future.

Using the total management technique, which consists of ensuring there is a good fit between the employee and the job, helps the organization retain skilled employees and remain competitive within their market (Craig, 2015). If employers fail to recruit and hire employees who have the skills to perform the job, the employer wastes company resources, increases the potential of high employee turnover, and reduces organizational performance (Craig, 2015). Oladapo (2014), Craig (2015), and Aguenza and Som (2018) saw the work culture and environment as the greatest factor in employee retention.

While Oladapo (2014), Craig (2015), and Aguenza and Som (2018) saw the work culture and environment as the greatest factor in employee retention. Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) also saw several of the same mitigating factors that contributed to employee turnover intention but, like Frederiksen (2017) and Kashyap and Rangnekar (2014), saw employee pay as, job expectations, and external employment opportunities as

the primary contributing factors to employee turnover intention. Employees who are dissatisfied with their job, pay, or organization will seek employment with other organization(s) they feel can meet their needs.

Employee Intentions to Leave

When employees leave an organization, the organization loses more than finances (Piyali et al., 2013). The organization loses talented employees and organizational knowledge. Employees who intend to leave an organization are generally dissatisfied with some aspects of the organization. Piyali et al. (2013) saw dissatisfaction with the job, lack of career opportunities, lack of competitive wages, time spent commuting to and from work, lack of full-time positions, shortage of workers to efficiently perform jobs, and being forced to work mandatory overtime hours over long periods of time; other factors that influence an employee's intentions to leave an organization are lack of autonomy, engagement and commitment, the organizational culture, and compensation and benefits. Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) also saw several factors as issues that contribute to employee intentions to leave an organization: the inconsistency of management, work environment, pay, career promotion, job fit, job expectations, external employment opportunities, and the influence of co-workers. After conducting literature reviews of existing literature, Piyali et al. (2013) and Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) deduce the factors listed above contribute to employee retention. The ever-present theme among all the literature reviewed is employees may choose to leave an organization on

their own but, most of the factors that cause employees to leave an organization are beyond the employee's control.

Employee Engagement

Employee retention is affected by employee engagement, which is an essential element organization's need from their employees to gain or maintain sustainability and achieve the organization's productivity, financial goals, and objectives (Bhuvanaiah & Raya, 2014; Rahman et al., 2020). Bhuvanaiah and Raya (2014) and Rahman et al. (2020) posits that fully engaged employees who are satisfied with their job are likely to remain with an organization long-term whereas, employees who have a low level of engagement or are fully disengaged tend to seek employment elsewhere because they are dissatisfied. To develop, enhance, and strengthen employee engagement, business leaders must incorporate elements focused on employee engagement within their strategies for employee retention.

Levin and Kleiner (1992) suggest employers can enhance employee engagement if they develop and offer financial rewards, develop programs to show appreciation to employees for their hard work, offer programs to help employees improve their health, initiate and sponsor group activities, and promote the concept of team participation. Laddha et al. (2012) conducted a literature review using literature from 1990-2002 to explore employee engagement. Levin and Kleiner (1992) conducted a literature review using data from 1982 and saw employee engagement as a tool to help enhance employee retention. Although Laddha et al. (2012) and Levin and Kleiner (1992) used literature

dating from 1982 to 2002, the literature used showed that employee retention had been an ongoing problem for organizational leaders.

Laddha et al. (2012) determined that employees satisfied with their jobs were more engaged and less likely to leave the company. Laddha et al. (2012) listed nine factors that could contribute to employee retention:

- hiring the right people for the job; employee/job fit
- allow employees to have autonomy, employee empowerment
- show employees they have value within the organization
- show employees they are trusted and respected
- provide training; information, and build knowledge
- give feedback to enhance employee performance
- show recognition for achievements
- keep employee morale elevated

keep organizational culture inviting, so employees enjoy their work

Although some of the strategies of Laddha et al. (2012) differed from the strategies of Levin and Kleiner (1992), implementation of these strategies can help retain employees because it fosters a transparent work culture that encourages employees to be open-minded (Laddha et al., 2012). Strategies which encourage transparency within all areas of the organization help to reduce the likelihood of employee turnover.

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover occurs when employees are dissatisfied with their career, pay,

training, career opportunities, and work-life balance (Frederiksen, 2017; Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2014), Singh (2019). Employee turnover always has underlying reasons which business leaders do not readily see. Frederiksen (2017) and Kashyap and Rangnekar (2014) suggested when the reasons for employee turnover are discovered by management and left unaddressed; the result is the loss of experienced and talented employees.

Employers cannot predict nor develop a plan to reduce the occurrences of voluntary turnover (Zhang, 2016). Zhang (2016) and Levin and Kleiner (1992) suggested countermeasures organizational leaders could use to reduce the incidences of employee turnover. Through the enhancement of (a) job designs, (b) personal observations and use of questionnaires, (c) resolution of employee complaints, and (d) staff development, Zhang (2016) advocates employers could reduce voluntary turnover. Levin and Kleiner (1992) suggested that by offering (a) financial rewards, (b) showing appreciation to employees, (c) offering programs to help employees improve their health, and (d) initiating and sponsoring employee group activities and functions to promote the concept of team will enhance employee engagement and commitment.

Singh (2019) suggested that by presenting employees with (a) freedom to voice workplace discontent to management, (b) open and honest communication with management, (c) flexible non standardized compensation plans which actually reflect the achievements of the employee, (d) leadership that nurtures and offers a positive work environment, (e) training and development opportunities, (f) flexible work/life balance

opportunities, (g) job satisfaction by aligning job expectations with the job description, and (h) conducting effective performance appraisals which help employees to improve their work performance in their weak areas will increase employee retention.

Singh (2019) conducted a literature review of secondary literature to explore employee retention. Losing talented employees causes a loss of experience, organizational knowledge, organizational values, and organizational culture (Singh, 2019). Employees are an important part of an organization and could be the key to the growth and longevity of an organization if they are retained thus, avoiding loss of the organization's resources and human capital.

Singh (2019) listed four reasons employees decide to leave an organization. The reasons employees leave a company are better paying job with another company, strained relationships with management or immediate supervisor, returning to school to pursue higher education, family relocation, and termination (Singh, 2019). Whether employee turnover is voluntary or involuntary, it can be damaging to the organization.

Voluntary Quits

Voluntary quits increased from 2009-2015, costing organizations approximately \$1.53 billion a year, trying to find a remedy to the problem (Finnegan, 2015).

Organizations within the United States can incur annual cost of replacing employees which exceed \$630 billion dollars by the year 2020 Those costs could rise to exceed \$700 billion by the year 2022 and could continue to rise yearly (McCafferty & Hamilton, 2020). These costs often do not include the costs to replace the employee, training,

productivity employee morale, or the loss of organizational knowledge once the employee(s) has left the company (McCafferty & Hamilton, 2020). Voluntary quits are costing organizations in the United States billions of dollars in replacement costs per year.

Voluntary quits do not always impact an organization negatively (Lee et al., 2017). Voluntary quits can positively affect the organization if the employee was not performing his/her work to the expected level but can be detrimental to an organization when committed, engaged, productive, and talented employees leave the organization (Lee et al., 2017). Organizations could incur costs of over \$41,000 in lost productivity and direct costs when a talented employee leaves the organization (Finnegan, 2015). Talented, committed employees who leave an organization take valuable organizational knowledge and effect company operations. Retention of talented employees could save the company thousands of dollars in replacement costs to replace those employees and improve productivity in service delivery through employee retention. However, if those employees are not productive or committed to the organization, the loss to the organization could be less substantial.

Employees separate from organizations when employee needs go unmet (Kossivi et al., 2016; Walia & Daroch, 2017). Kossivi et al. (2016) also saw the lack of meeting employee needs as a major factor in employee retention. Research findings linked :

dissatisfaction with management, lack of work-life balance,

the expectation of the job/duties do not match,
workplace politics,
the inability to utilize their skills to their fullest,
lack of career growth,
promotion opportunities potential

McCafferty and Hamilton (2020) conducted a literature review to explore the concept of voluntary quits among employees in the nursing industry. Although the literature review focused on nurses, it can be adapted to use in any industry. The researchers concluded there were four major factors that contributed to voluntary quits of employees: .

deficiency in training
weak or nonexistent connections with managers
disengagement from the strategies of the organization
no path for career development

To lessen the occurrences of voluntary quits employers should develop a strategy that addresses any deficiencies in training, develop connections with employees, clearly communicates the strategies of the organization to employees, and whenever possible, create paths for career development.

Organizational Culture and Employee Retention

Organizational culture is the environment in which employees perform their work

and influences the operation(s) of an organization and employee retention (Warrick et al., 2016). Organizational culture was found to contribute to the success of retaining qualified employees in two research studies based on peer-reviewed literature from 2017 and 2015 (Warrick, 2017; Warrick et al., 2016). The authors of both studies agreed that organizational culture influences how employees think, feel about their work, and their behavior(s). In a study conducted by Mahadi et al. (2020), the authors found effective employee retention can be achieved by implementing policies and procedures which focus on the many needs of the employees and creates a nurturing organizational culture. Organizational culture affects and shapes how an organization is run and how an organization operates affects the organizational culture. Healthy organizational culture is a direct result of successful leadership.

Culture is the assimilation of employees to the core values, norms, beliefs, behaviors, and those items which employees find essential in the work environment (Chatterjee, 2009). Chatterjee (2009) sought to determine if culture was a determining factor in retaining employees. Chatterjee (2009) examined organizational culture by surveying mid-level and executive-level employees to determine if employee satisfaction was impacted by organizational culture. The survey results yielded the following: 43% of the participants in the survey reported organizational culture was a determining factor in leaving an organization (Chatterjee, 2009).

Like Warrick (2017) and Warrick et al. (2016), Chatterjee (2009) saw organizational culture as a tool that could help develop how employee behaviors are

shaped, shared, and affect the operation of the organization. If employees do not share the core components of the organizational culture (core values, norms, beliefs, behaviors, and those items which employees find important in the work environment), employees will choose to leave the organization in search of opportunities with an organization that offers a culture that is more conducive to meeting their needs. Ramlall (2004) determined the expectancy motivational theory encompassed both psychological and physiological needs.

Employee's psychological and physiological needs are the governing factors of employee behavior(s) (Ramlall, 2004). Three areas where psychological and physiological needs affected behaviors of employees included (1) efforts and performances, (2) performances and rewards, and (3) the outcome (personal goals accomplished) (Taboli, 2012). Employees are motivated to stay with an organization when their psychological and physiological needs are met.

Supportive Organizational Culture and Employee Retention

Organizational culture could impact the decision of employees to remain with a company. The organizational culture within an organization determines employee behavior and commitment, the organization's competence to hire and maintain talented employees, and the ability of an organization to accomplish its vision and goals (Warrick et al., 2016). When there is a strong organizational culture that stresses the importance of employee-to-employee rapport, employees are less likely to leave the organization

(Anitha & Begum, 2016). The culture of an organization is vital to the retention of employees and the success of the company.

A supportive company culture can influence employee retention. To create a culture of retention, leaders must provide a work environment that fosters employee commitment. Anitha and Begum (2016) conducted a literature review and quantitative study to examine how a supportive work environment influences employee retention and how that culture can be a catalyst for employee development. Employees who had affective (emotional obligations) commitment and normative (must stay obligation) commitment to an organization would choose to stay with the organization because they have developed a loyalty to the organization. In contrast, employees who had continuance (staying because they "need to") commitment were likely to remain with the organization until a better employment opportunity presented itself (Anitha & Begum, 2016). Employee retention depends on the organizational culture and the level of commitment the employee has to the organization.

By creating an environment with a supportive organizational culture and implementing a reward, recognition, and respect system, leaders can influence employee retention. Kundu and Lata (2017) studied the effects of a supportive work environment (SWE) on employee retention. Reward, recognition, and respect were the elements of organizational culture that affected employee retention (Kundu & Lata, 2017).

Warrick et al. (2016) posited when employees are hired into a work environment for which they are recruited and properly trained, employees were focused on their job

and more productive. Barber (2023) in her exploration of retention strategies suggests the creation of an effective culture which encompasses employee recognition greatly strengthens the probability of helping to retain employees. When employees work in an environment where they are shown they are valued through rewards and recognition, respected for their contributions to the organization, and receive adequate training, it strengthens their affective and normative commitment to the organization, increasing the likelihood of retention. When employees were rewarded for their work, adequately trained for the job, and dedicated to the vision and values of the organization, employee retention was more likely to occur (Anitha and Begum (2016); Kundu and Lata (2017); and Warrick et al. (2016). An organizational culture that offers employees incentives and appropriate training can result in employees being productive and remaining with the organization because they feel supported by their leader.

Leadership and Organizational Culture

In an organization, leaders set the tone for the culture. Culture is the formation of a set of rules that control the way people interact with one another. In the study conducted by Ertosun and Adiguzel (2018), the researchers' determined leadership was a primary factor that affects an organization's culture.

Leaders communicate the values, processes, and systems that define how the organizational mission is achieved and impacts the behaviors and performance of employees (Ertosun & Adiguzel, 2018). Leaders are responsible for creating and nourishing the culture within the company (Ertosun & Adiguzel, 2018). The way in

which the leadership of an organization communicates the mission and vision of the organization to employees can determine the organizational culture, employee performance, employee satisfaction, and the success of the corporate mission. Thus, when the leadership builds a robust organizational culture that clearly communicates the vision and mission of the organization, leadership can create an environment that encourages employee retention.

Leadership and Employee Retention

Leaders influence employee retention through the relationships they develop with employees. The influence of the leader must address the needs and desires of the employee through a reciprocal relationship with employees (leader-member exchange (LMX)) (Covella et al., 2017). Covella et al. (2017) speculate LMX positively affects employee work engagement when the employee feels there is a psychological contract with the leader, which in turn reduces the possibility of employee turnover intentions. If the employee feels commitment to the job, the chances of the employee leaving the organization are less likely. Thus, the leader can impact the retention of skilled employees, reducing the money spent on recruiting, training, and onboarding new employees.

Leadership contributes significantly to the retention of employees (Letchmiah & Thomas, 2017). Leaders who exhibit personal integrity and business ethics show employees they can trust management (Letchmiah & Thomas, 2017; Savolainen et al.,

2018). If employees do not trust the organization's leadership, they will search for employment with other organizations where they feel they can trust management.

Researchers who have studied the effects of leadership on employee retention reported that leadership has a direct impact on employee intentions to stay with the organization. Harris et al. (2016), like Letchmiah and Thomas (2017) and Savolainen et al. (2018), saw a link between servant leadership, job satisfaction, and employee retention. Employee retention and job satisfaction are enhanced when servant leadership employs the elements of valuing people, developing people, building community, providing leadership, displaying authenticity, and shared leadership (Harris et al., 2016). Therefore, leaders must have strategies which foster the retention of employees.

Retention Strategies

Leaders should develop retention strategies that incorporate networks that foster collaboration among the employees (Cross et al., 2017). Fostering collaborative relationships could improve efficiency within the organization. Leaders should include retention strategies as part of the onboarding process (Cross et al., 2017).

When leaders have retention strategies as part of the onboarding process for new employees and in the ongoing training of skilled employees, the employer increases the person/job fit and the probability of employee retention. Using networks as part of a retention strategy can contribute to employee retention by offering employees an outlet to satisfy their needs for belonging, purpose, and increased productivity by accomplishing their job efficiently, contributing to an organization's success (Cross et al., 2017). As part

of the onboarding process leaders should look for individuals who are a suitable fit with the organization and will help to increase the profitability, productivity, and sustainability of the organization.

Cloutier et al. (2015) posited that leaders could successfully retain employees by developing four essential strategies. Without these vital strategies, organizations could face high employee turnover (Cloutier et al., 2015). Leaders should develop the critical strategies in (a) communication, (b) hiring a diverse workforce, (c) hiring employees whose skills fit the job, and (d) providing development and training systems (Cloutier et al., 2015). While Cloutier et al. (2015) stated four vital strategies needed for employee retention, Laddha et al. (2012) suggested leaders can achieve employee retention in a three-stage process. The three-stage process included (a) knowing the cost associated with employee turnover, (b) know the reasons employees choose to leave, and (c) developing and implementation of retention strategies that will enhance employee retention.

Cloutier et al. (2015) indicated four vital strategies needed for employee retention, Laddha et al. (2012) presented a three-stage process to achieving employee retention, but Craig (2015), like Cross et al. (2017), suggested employee retention should begin starting with the hiring process. When leaders hire employees, whose talents align with the position(s), the possibility of turnover lessens turnover cost becomes reduced, employee retention improves, and organizational productivity increases (Craig, 2015). Craig (2015) stated by narrowing the focus of recruitment on critical positions in the organization and

ensuring employees hired have the skills and knowledge that align with the job requirements and organizational vision, leaders can reduce employee turnover. The leadership needs to focus on the organization's critical positions and make sure employees hired have the skills and knowledge that align with the job requirements and organizational vision; they must also consider the employee's fit with the corporate culture (Craig, 2015). Understanding the employee turnover history to use as a benchmark and calculating the cost of employee turnover will help leaders develop retention strategies that will aid in employee retention and lower costs (Laddha et al., 2012).

Leaders who implement strategies that include a high level of communication ensure a connection with employees and strengthen the possibility of retention (Cloutier et al., 2015). Cloutier et al. (2015) point out effective leader communication shows the significance of transparent and efficient communication between management and employees. Sinha and Sinha (2012) support the findings of Cloutier et al. (2015) on how significant effective communication enhances employee loyalty to an organization when there is a culture of honesty and trust that exists within an organization.

Ramlall (2004) examined motivational theories and how motivation affected employee retention. For employers to remain competitive, it is imperative to retain employees through motivating and exploring employee retention theories. Ramlall (2004) and Wakabi (2016) both agree that employers must retain critical employees. According to Ramlall (2004), critical employees are those employees who use their knowledge to

meet the needs of the organization, strengthen organizational performance, and provide a competitive advantage for the organization in the business market.

By using employee retention strategies to meet the needs of employees, the tendency of employees to stay with the organization is greatly enhanced, and the stability of the organization is strengthened. Ramlall (2004) determined the expectancy motivational theory encompassed both the psychological and physiological needs. Employee's psychological and physiological needs are the governing factors of employee behavior(s) (Ramlall, 2004).

Taboli (2012) saw three areas where psychological and physiological needs affected behaviors of employees through efforts and performances, performances and rewards, and the outcome (personal goals accomplished). Diversity and inclusion seek to promote the fair treatment and participation of all employees within the workplace (Beasley & Beasley 2023). When leaders incorporate the hiring of a diverse workforce, they open opportunities for employees to expand their knowledge base. Expansion of organizational knowledge comes by learning from co-workers from different cultures, age groups, and genders, increasing the possibility of employee retention (Cloutier et al., 2015). Leaders should develop retention strategies that incorporate networks that foster collaboration among the employees (Cross et al., 2017).

Fostering collaborative relationships could improve efficiency within the organization. Leaders should include retention strategies as part of the onboarding process (Cross et al., 2017). Including retention strategies as part of the onboarding

process for new employees and the ongoing training of skilled employees increases the person/job fit and the probability of employee retention. Using networks as part of a retention strategy can contribute to employee retention by offering employees an outlet to satisfy their needs for belonging, purpose, and increased productivity by accomplishing their job efficiently, contributing to an organization's success (Cross et al., 2017).

Cloutier et al. (2015) conducted a literature review and posited that leaders could successfully retain employees by developing four essential strategies. Without these fundamental strategies, organizations could face a high employee turnover rate (Cloutier et al., 2015). Leaders should develop the crucial strategies of (a) communication, (b) hiring a diverse workforce, (c) hiring employees whose skills fit the job, and (d) providing development and training systems (Cloutier et al., 2015).

While Cloutier et al. (2015) stated four strategies needed for employee retention, Laddha et al. (2012) suggested employee retention can be achieved in a three-stage process. Laddha et al.'s three-stage process included: (a) knowing the cost associated with employee turnover, (b) know the reasons employees choose to leave, and (c) developing and implementation of strategies that will enhance employee retention. Both Cloutier et al. (2015) and Laddha et al. (2012) discovered the central concept to the retention of employees was developing strategies that would improve the chances of employee retention.

Cloutier et al. (2015) indicated four vital strategies needed for employee retention, Laddha et al. (2012) presented a three-stage process to achieving employee retention, but

Craig (2015) explored the concept of employee retention and suggested employee retention could be performed starting with the hiring process. When employees' talents are aligned with positions for which they are hired, the possibility of turnover is lessened, turnover costs are reduced, employee retention improves, and organizational productivity increases (Craig, 2015). Understanding the employee turnover history to use as a benchmark and calculating the cost of employee turnover will help leaders develop retention strategies that will aid in employee retention and less cost (Laddha et al., 2012). Craig (2015), Cloutier et al. (2015), and Laddha et al. (2012) agreed that employee retention was essential to the functioning of an organization. Employee retention allows the organization to retain skilled, talented employees, which increases competitiveness. However, Craig (2015) and Laddha et al. agreed that employee retention also reduced unbudgeted costs to the organization.

Leaders who implement strategies that include a high level of communication ensure a connection with employees and strengthen the possibility of retention (Cloutier et al., 2015). Cloutier et al. (2015) points out effective leader communication shows the significance of transparent and efficient communication between management and employees. Sinha and Sinha (2012) conducted a comparative analysis of leadership in engineering organizations. The findings of the research showed that leaders who demonstrated effective communication skills increased employee allegiance. The findings of Sinha and Sinha (2012) supported Cloutier et al. (2015) on how significant effective

communication enhanced employee loyalty to an organization when there is a culture of honesty and trust within an organization.

For employers to remain competitive, it is imperative to retain employees through motivating and exploring employee retention theories. Ramlall (2004) examined motivational theories and how motivation affected employee retention. Wakabi (2016) conducted a quantitative study to examine what motivates employees to stay with an organization. Ramlall (2004) and Wakabi (2016) both agreed that it was essential for employers to retain critical employees. If employers are to reduce employee turnover and the loss of talented employees, employers must develop strategies to motivate employees.

According to Ramlall (2004), critical employees are those employees who use their knowledge to meet the needs of the organization, strengthen organizational performance, and provide a competitive advantage for the organization in the business market. By using employee retention strategies to meet the needs of employees, the tendency of employees to stay with the organization is greatly enhanced, and the stability of the organization is strengthened. Ramlall (2004) determined the expectancy motivational theory encompassed both the psychological and physiological needs of the employees.

Employees' psychological and physiological needs are the governing factors of employee behavior(s) (Ramlall, 2004). Taboli (2012) explored motivational theories and saw three areas where psychological and physiological needs affected behaviors of employees through efforts and performances, performances and rewards, and the

outcome (personal goals accomplished). Like Ramlall (2004) and Wakabi (2016), Taboli (2012) posited employee motivation is an integral part of strategies for retaining employees. When leaders incorporate the hiring of a diverse workforce, they open opportunities for employees to expand their knowledge base. Expansion of organizational knowledge comes by learning from co-workers from different cultures, age groups, and genders, increasing the possibility of employee retention (Cloutier et al., 2015). Cross learning from fellow employees strengthens the organization and the employees' knowledge base (Cloutier et al., 2015). If an employee leaves the organization, another employee will be able to continue to perform the job duties left vacant by the departing employee. When leader strategies include evaluating the qualifications and work history of potential employees for compatibility with the organization, the chances of retention are enhanced (Cloutier et al., 2015).

Training and employee development are components of retention strategies leaders can use to motivate employees to remain with an organization. Leaders who offer training and development opportunities as part of their business strategies for retention inspire employees to stay with the organization (Cloutier et al., 2015). Cloutier et al. (2015) theorized that maintaining training and development programs as part of a retention strategy is crucial to the organization's operation. According to Cloutier et al. (2015), training and development programs can motivate employee retention. When leaders invest in training, developing, and utilizing the talents within the workforce, the probability of encouraging employees to remain with the organization improves.

Retaining essential, talented employees is financially beneficial to an organization. If organizations are to remain competitive within their market, they must maintain their essential employees (Wakabi, 2016). Essential employees have talents and organizational knowledge the organization loses if the employees leave the organization (Wakabi, 2016). Like Cloutier et al. (2015) and Cross et al. (2017), Wakabi (2016) found, because of this research, the most crucial action for leaders is to develop strategies that foster employee retention and avoid unbudgeted expenditures associated with replacing staff. Retention of essential, talented employees strengthens the knowledge base of the workforce within the organization, reduces the incidences of having to expend organizational funds that are not allocated for the replacement of employees who have left the organization.

Promoting a work environment that nurtures employee engagement helps organizations retain employees. Wakabi (2016) theorized that leaders must create a work environment that encourages employee engagement, promoting long-term retention of employees. Leaders must create an organizational environment that encourages employees to stay even when presented with outside employment opportunities. Wakabi (2016), like Cloutier et al. (2015), saw communication as an integral part of leadership strategy. Employee recognition and feedback were other leadership strategies which Wakabi (2016) asserted aided in employee retention. Although methods developed for employee retention may be successful, Wakabi (2016) saw leadership style as the

most effective retention factor. When leaders are effective communicators, employees are more receptive to the open style of leadership.

Leadership Style

Leadership style has a direct impact on employee retention. Sulamuthu and Yusof (2018) conducted a literature review to explore the effects of transformational leadership as motivation for employees to stay with the organization. Puni et al. (2016) conducted a literature review to examine how leadership styles, employee turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behaviors are related. Leadership style directly affects employee intentions to remain with the organization as the leader sets the organizational environment according to how they lead.

Transformational leaders practice a style of leadership that is inclusive of employee input. Sulamuthu and Yusof (2018) and Sun and Wang (2017) posited that for transformational leaders to be influential, they must exhibit a thorough understanding of the organization's vision and can inspire employees to strive to achieve the organizational vision. Puni et al. (2016) examined the effects of two leadership styles, autocratic and democratic. Both autocratic and democratic leadership styles influence employee retention which can be positive or negative for the organization.

The democratic leadership style was found to foster employee retention and job satisfaction through group and leader participation where the employee has input in the organization's processes; the autocratic leadership style was a primary catalyst in employee turnover (Puni et al., 2016). The inclusive, participatory leadership styles can

contribute to employees' retention and job satisfaction; thus, leaders who adopt and practice an inclusive, participatory style of leadership increase the probability of employee retention within their organization. Therefore, leaders who practice the democratic style of leadership are more likely to retain valuable, talented employees. Leadership style is not the only mitigating factor that affects employees' choices and intentions to stay with the company. A leader's decisions can positively or negatively affect an employee's decision to remain with the organization. Cerutti et al. (2020) conducted a quantitative survey of employees to measure how leadership decisions impacted employee retention.

Decision-making for leaders is not just an emotional response to situations but is a rational response, learned out of habit, and used when confronted with a problem that requires a sound decision (Cerutti et al., 2020). A leader's decisions can impact employee commitment to the organization in several ways. Leaders tend to make decisions regarding the organization using one of five decision styles: rational, intuitive, dependent, evitative, and spontaneous (Cerutti et al., 2020). Along with adopting a leadership style that has a positive impact on employee retention, leaders should take actions which help to reduce employee turnover.

Leadership Actions to Reduce Employee Turnover

Leadership style is important to the retention of employees. However, leaders must be proactive using behaviors which aid in the reduction of employee turnover.

Lyons and Bandura (2021) conducted a literature review identifying actions leaders can

cultivate and implement to strengthen the retention of employees. Leaders who adapt a style which includes implementing ongoing, intervening procedures that favor employee retention can reduce the incidences of employee turnover, loss of organizational knowledge, loss of productivity, and loss of mentors (Lyons & Bandura, 2021). In addition, Lyons and Bandura (2021) found the following themes for strategies to reduce employee turnover:

- timely recognition and appropriate feedback
- engage employees in career management and planning
- provide ongoing training to keep the employee's skills updated
- ensure employees are prepared for change
- incorporate rewards other than monetary
- avoid use of authoritarian behaviors

Leaders must develop and display actions that support and encourage employees to remain with the organization. Developing a succession plan that will enhance the likelihood of keeping employees engaged and encourage employee retention is an action strategy that leaders can implement which does not focus on immediate monetary rewards.

Succession planning is the act of developing strategies to prepare employees for advancement within the organization (Thibault Landry et al., 2017). Succession planning can decrease employee turnover by providing a way for organizations to plan to fill critical positions from among the ranks of talented, engaged employees rather than hiring

from outside the organization (Thibault Landry et al., 2017). Like Lyons and Bandura (2021), Thibault Landry et al. (2017) agreed employees are motivated by more than monetary rewards. When employees are given the opportunity to improve their standing through advancement within the organization, they will tend to remain engaged with the organization and less likely to leave the organization.

Transition

In this section, I discussed the background of the problem, nature of the research, conceptual framework, operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study. The purpose of my proposed study was to examine strategies business leaders use to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance.

My review of existing literature revealed the issue of employee retention is a problem for organizations nationally and globally. Managers, directors, and CEOs need strategies to help organizations retain skilled and qualified employees. If organizations keep skilled employees, they can reduce expenditures of unbudgeted funds to replace employees who leave organizations. Researchers differed in terms of primary reasons for employee turnover. However, job satisfaction was the primary reason for employees leaving organizations.

In Section 2, I discuss my role as the researcher, eligibility of participants in the study, and methods to gain access to participants. This section includes information about the nature of the study as well as the research method and design. Section 2 includes

information concerning participants and sample size, data collection instrument and technique, data organization technique, data analysis, and validity and reliability of the study.

In Section 3, focus on presentation of findings. I discuss the application of research to professional practice and implications for social change.

Section 2: The Project

Employee turnover is a dilemma which affects organizations in various ways . Employee turnover affects organizational functioning, productivity, employee job satisfaction, and the organization's financial status (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Between December 2018 and December 2019, employee quits totaled 3.5 million nationwide (BLS, 2019). This can cost organizations more than 200% of employee yearly salaries to replace departed employees (Lee et al., 2017).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies business leaders use to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance. The study population included managers and business leaders with a minimum of five years of experience. Participants were HRMs within my professional network who had public contact information on LinkedIn and social media.. Participants were drawn from various organizations throughout the U.S. Implications for social change include job and economic stability and building of outreach and volunteer programs so employees can interact with communities and clients to further enhance organizational brands. Retaining experienced, skilled employees could yield increased productivity, improvement in quality of work performed by employees, increased employee commitment and decrease in voluntary and involuntary quits, fewer employee problems, and financial savings and increases to profits.

Role of the Researcher

The focus of my proposed study was employee retention within various organizations within the U.S. The role of the researcher is to collect data and report that data objectively without personal bias (Yates & Leggett, 2016). As the researcher, I had the role of data collector. I had to remain detached and open-minded when collecting data so I did not interject my own biases when interacting with participants and data. Steps for qualitative data collection include collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data (Yates & Leggett, 2016). As the researcher, I had to present and interpret data, so it represented views of participants and not my opinions.

I collected data through phone interviews and analyzed public and internal documents that were provided by the organization via the organization's website. Before facilitating the discussions, I used an interview guide to ensure I conducted interviews consistently with all participants, followed a comprehensive set of procedures, asked participants permission to record interviews, transcribed interviews, and analyzed and interpreted data based on conversations. Jørgensen et al., (2016) proposed the researcher could reduce the amount of research bias by using a detailed set of procedures when conducting interviews with participants. Before conducting interviews, I distributed a list of procedures to participants and adhered to those procedures.

I was an employee of an HR organization. During my employment, I observed frequent voluntary employee turnover within the organization. I did not have a relationship with participants as they were chosen randomly by sampling HRMs from

various organizations throughout the U.S. I chose 10 participants so if participants were known to me, I still had enough to choose from to meet data saturation and avoid personal bias. As the researcher, I had the potential to interject my personal bias into data. I mitigated my own biases by focusing on data and responses from participants. A bias I had to manage was that I had observed turnover, and heard employees voice reasons for turnover in an office where I was formerly employed.

Protecting the rights of study participants is of utmost importance. It is of equal importance to preserve the privacy of participants. As researcher, I upheld the rights of participants. I collected data while preserving anonymity of participants.

According to the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1979), researchers must follow the rules which govern the ethical codes of research. Ethical procedures involve respect for participants, kindness, and treating all participants equally and fairly (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1978). As the researcher, I followed the ethical codes of research as described in the Belmont Report. I respected participants by allowing them to answer interview questions independently without interjecting my opinions or biases. I made sure participants were aware of every aspect of the study. I treated all participants fairly and let them know they were at liberty to withdraw participation from the study at any time. Lastly, I used the preliminary ethics feedback service offered by Walden University during the University Research Review process.

Participants

I used purposeful sampling when identifying possible participants for my study. The choice of participants for a qualitative study must be purposeful (Giacomini et al., 2000). Participants for my research consisted of HR directors and managers in various organizations throughout the U.S. with a minimum of five years in their positions. I purposefully selected participants to represent various socioeconomic settings. Participants were HRMs within my professional network.

The strategy for gaining access to the participants was to email letters and a copy of the consent form to those HRMs and business managers targeted to participate in the study. These letters explained the reason for contact, the nature of my research, and asked for their participation in my research. I asked each participant to respond to me with an email stating “I consent” as their consent to participate. I then reached out to each participant by phone to establish a rapport with them and answer any questions they may have had about the study. Once the email response was received from the participant, a telephone interview was scheduled with each participant to conduct data collection. The participants were notified via email of the date and time of their telephone interview.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

I used the qualitative research method for my proposed study. Qualitative research studies are studies that use non-numerical data and explore the why of a problem (Basias & Pollalis, 2018). The qualitative method was appropriate for my multiple case study

because I was seeking to understand the *why* portion of my business problem to understand behaviors and actions of individuals from their lived experience, knowledge, and perspective (Rosenthal, 2016).

Quantitative research studies present data collected in mathematical, statistical, or percentage forms and test a hypothesis (Basias & Pollalis, 2018). The quantitative method was not appropriate for the proposed multiple case study. I was not seeking data to test a hypothesis.

Mixed method research studies involve the use of surveys and interviews. Mixed method research uses both quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting data, uses mathematical, statistical, percentage forms, and tests a hypothesis while the quantitative portion tells the narrative of the research (Halcomb & Hickman, 2015). The mixed method was not appropriate for my proposed study because the quantitative portion of the mixed method study uses mathematical and statistical data, tests a hypothesis, and tells the narrative of the research.

According to Jamshed (2014), interviewing and observation are two methods of collecting data for qualitative research. I conducted in-depth telephone interviews, using open-ended questions, to collect data from my research participants. Comprehensive interviews using open-ended questions are designed to allow the sample population to share information from their point of view (Rosenthal, 2016). Employing the qualitative research method aided me in recognizing issues with organizational strategies and employee turnover that will result in detailed outcomes over time (Bansal et al., 2018).

My study was a multiple case study because I was seeking to explore change, development, and transformation as it relates to employee turnover. I further sought to collect enough data until there was no new information available based on the data collected and the study results could be reproduced.

Research Design

I used a qualitative multiple case study design for my proposed study. The case study design examines people, events, and relationships in a realistic situation (Harrison et al., 2017). In my proposed study, I explored the strategies used to prevent or reduce voluntary employee turnover and decrease organizational costs.

Using the multiple case study design allowed me, as the researcher, to explore the *how* and *why* of a phenomenon (Harrison et al., 2017). Yates and Leggett (2016), like Harrison et al. (2017), described the case study as a tool to explore, explain, or describe an existing phenomenon occurring in the real-world. Yin (2017) agreed that the case study is an in-depth analysis that focuses on *why* choices were made, *how* those choices were employed, and presents the results. When conducting a case study, the researcher assesses an occurrence in the environment where the event occurs to gain a better understanding and a more profound knowledge of the experience and to achieve data saturation.

Quantitative research studies present data collected in mathematical, statistical, or percentage forms and test a hypothesis (Basias & Pollalis, 2018). The quantitative

method is not appropriate for the proposed multiple case study. I did not seek data to test a hypothesis.

Mixed method research studies involve the use of surveys and interviews. Mixed method research uses both quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting data, uses mathematical, statistical, percentage forms, and tests a hypothesis while the quantitative portion tells the narrative of the research (Halcomb & Hickman, 2015). The mixed method was not appropriate for my proposed study because the quantitative portion of the mixed method study uses mathematical and statistical data, tests a hypothesis, and tells the narrative of the research.

Data Saturation

Data saturation is the act of obtaining enough data so others can reproduce the same results of the study, find new information, and reach the limit where no more coding is possible (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Saunders et al., 2018). In my study, I achieved data saturation for my research to be considered as reliable, valid, or replicated by others. I achieved data saturation by choosing my participant group from ten HRMs and business managers. Participants were chosen randomly from the HRMs within my professional network and the participants public contact information (LinkedIn, social media, etc.) (Garfield, nd.). If data saturation was not reached using the first five participants, the participation of individuals from the second group of participants would be necessary.

Data saturation is accomplished when the researcher has collected enough data that others can reproduce the same results of the study as the researcher (Fusch & Ness,

2015). I collected enough data to achieve data saturation. I collected quality data and gathered enough data to test the validity and reliability of the research. I identified a total of 10 participants who meet the defined criteria. If data saturation was not reached using the first five participants, the participation of individuals from the second group of participants would be necessary.

Population and Sampling

The purposeful selection of managers with a minimum of five years' experience in the field of human resources (HR) met the participant criteria I established for my study. I randomly selected participants who had varying amounts time (five or more years) working within the field of HR to analyze a variety of data for my study. I selected 10 HRMs and business managers as participants for my study. Participants were chosen randomly from the HRMs within my professional network and the participants public contact information (LinkedIn, social media, etc.) (Garfield, nd.).

The qualitative case study approach was appropriate for my proposed study because I was seeking to understand what strategies business leaders used to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance. An interview protocol (Appendix A) was used to gather data from the ten participants. A well-structured interview protocol can aide the researcher in obtaining rich data (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). The reason for selecting ten participants is to make sure there is adequate data for the study and data saturation is achieved (Fusch & Ness, 2015). If data saturation was not

achieved from the sampling of HRMs, other HRMs that met the participant criteria would be sought out.

The participants were contacted via email and social media outlets, to solicit participation in the study. Once participants agreed to take part in the study, a detailed letter explaining the purpose of the study along with a copy of the consent form was emailed to those HRMs targeted to participate. I asked each participant to review the letter and consent form before agreeing to participate. Agreement by the participant to participate in my research study was documented in the form of an email response and was sufficient to show agreement and cooperation (Garfield, n.d.).

Once a response was received from the participants, a Zoom interview was scheduled with each participant to conduct data collection. The participant received an email detailing the date and time of the interview. Organizational documents and public websites were reviewed to obtain data for my study. The participant was given the contact information of the researcher should the participant have any further questions or wish to withdraw from the study. Participants were asked for interview dates and times that worked best with their schedule and were scheduled accordingly. If the interview date and time was not available, the participant was asked to choose another date and time. Prior to the start of the interview, the participants were informed their name and office would be kept confidential. Participants were asked for permission to record the interview. One hour was set aside for the interview with each participant. At the end of each interview the participant was thanked for their time, their participation in the study

and informed they would receive a copy of their interview to review and verify the accuracy of the interview after transcription was completed.

Ethical Research

When conducting research, it was imperative I, as the researcher, followed the rules of ethical research. Ethical researchers must (1) exhibit ethical behavior that does not harm the participant, (2) treats the participant in a fair and respectful manner, (3) shows the researcher is knowledgeable, (4) the data collected is valid, (4) the authenticity of the research findings is trustworthy and credible (Reid et al., 2018). Ethical research focuses on the protection of the research participants by ensuring the participants can withdraw from the study if requested, and protecting the identity of the participant, and (3) disseminating truthful reporting of the research results (Arifin, 2018). I adhered to the tenets of ethical research to ensure my research was valid and trustworthy and protected the participants in my study. Qualitative studies explore and examine the *why* and *how* of a problem while protecting the rights and privacy of the research participants by making sure participants are fully informed of all aspects of the research, understand the reason for the study, and consent to participate anonymously and voluntarily (Arifin, 2018). Researchers conducting a qualitative study must show they are willing to protect the rights and privacy of the study participants by exhibiting ethical research.

Walden University requires that researchers exhibit ethical research with the use of the voluntary informed consent form to protect the rights of study participants. As part of interview etiquette, a written procedure will be established (see Appendix A). All study

participants were asked to respond to the voluntary consent form by emailing “I consent” after reading the form. The voluntary informed consent form is used to explain the nature of and possible effects of the study (Mumford, 2018). The voluntary informed consent form also protects the participant and organization by ensuring ethical standards are used to protect the anonymity of both the participants and organization where the participants are employed (Mumford, 2018). Maintaining participant anonymity helps to protect the identity of the participant (Taylor, 2015). Participants were referred to by number (Participant #1, Participant #2, etc.) and to further ensure the validity of the data collected. Identifying the participants by coding labels helped to further protect their identity. Participants were assigned this coding to identify the data collected from each participant.

Presenting study participants with the voluntary consent form allowed the participant to make the choice to participate or decline to participate in the study. No incentives were offered for participation in the study and participants could choose to withdraw their participation at any time without negative effects. Participants were asked to inform the researcher if they chose to withdraw their consent. If participants agreed to take part in the study, an invitation with a scheduled Zoom appointment was delivered via an email (see Appendix B and Appendix C).

Before data collection can begin, the researcher must obtain the approval of the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Walden University, 2016). The IRB will check the researcher’s work to confirm the study adheres to ethical standards

(Walden University, 2016). When approval was received from the IRB, I was given an IRB approval number after which data collection can begin. All data collected for the study were be stored for a period of five years on an external hard drive and locked within a safe to further protect the participants and the organization. At the end of the five-year period, the data will be erased. Upon completion of the study, the final document will be assigned a Walden IRB approval number. The IRB approval number for my study is 07-26-22-0745519.

Data Collection Instrument

As the researcher I was the data collection instrument. Data was collected using the semistructured interview, organizational documents, and public websites were reviewed to obtain data for my study (Garfield, n.d.). The qualitative research method, case study design employing the use of the semistructured interview, organizational documents, and public websites was used to collect data from participants. The interview questions measured participant perceptions of management strategies and the effects of employee turnover on organizational performance. Each participant was asked the same set of interview questions to ensure reliability of the data. Open-ended questions were used during the interviews. The use of open-ended questions allows the researcher to ask probing questions (Majid et al., 2017; Weller et al, 2018). Asking probing questions is a way to elicit information from the participant which might provide rich data and detailed information (Majid et al., 2017). The use of open ended questions allowed the

participants to speak freely and elaborate on their knowledge of strategies used to reduce employee turnover.

The interviews were conducted using the Zoom application as the interview medium. Using the Zoom application allowed me, as the researcher, to observe the participants body language and to document and record the participant responses thus, ensuring the reliability (consistency) and validity (truthfulness) of the study while reducing researcher bias (Mohajan, 2017; Archibald et al., 2019). Once the data was collected, it was transcribed verbatim, and analysis of the data was conducted using a spreadsheet to track and determine similarities, themes, and differences in the data. NVivo software was to be used to analyze the data and to auto code the interview by source structure, style or a word query and determine the findings (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). However, due to the software constantly freezing and shutting down, a manual analysis of the data was conducted using an Excel spreadsheet. A copy of the interview questions can be found in Appendix D.

To enhance reliability and validity of the data I employed member checking. A summary of the transcribed interview was given to each participant to review and check for accuracy (McGrath et al., 2019). Member checking is the act of allowing the participant to review the written summary of the interview to check the accuracy of the transcription. (McGrath et al., 2019). By performing the member checking procedure with the participant, the researcher checked the authenticity of the data collected.

Data Collection Technique

Data was collected using semistructured interviews where participants were asked to respond to questions formulated to answer the research question and by using organizational documents and public websites reviewed to obtain data for my study. Prior to data collection, an email letter was drafted and sent to the study participant to request permission to conduct the study to gather data. The criteria for the study participants were they must have five or more years' experience in their position. When participant approval was received, an invitation and voluntary consent form was emailed to each of the participants (see Appendix E). All interviews were conducted via a Zoom meeting. The interviews were recorded and documented.

Data Organization Technique

Data organization consisted of the researcher having a set plan and organizational system for identifying the data collected for the purpose of answering the research question. Data organization requires the researcher to seek out, identify, and categorize data collected from study participants (Williams & Moser, 2019). Once the data was categorized, a main folder was created and titled DBA study. Subfolders were created for each participant interview and labeled according to participants coded identity to protect the identity of the participant (ex. P1 for participant 1, P2 for participant 2, etc.). The identity of any participant taking part in this study was protected. The identity of the participant, details which might identify the participant, such as location, name of organization, etc., were not disclosed. Participant information was not used for any

purpose other than this research and was kept confidential. All participants were assigned a code such as P1, P2, etc. so participant names were not disclosed. According to Wilson et al. (2018), it is of utmost importance that participant identity and confidentiality be protected. To further protect participant anonymity, a spreadsheet was created in excel for each participant to keep track of the data collected. The subfolders contained the spreadsheet, the audio and transcribed data from the interview, any communications from participants, the consent form, and the member checking data. All non-electronic data was converted to electronic data. The raw data was kept on a USB drive for easy access and backed up to a removable hard drive. The USB drive and the removable hard drive are in separate locked locations. The data will be stored for a period of five years after completion of the study, then destroyed.

Data Analysis

The data collected from participants was to be analyzed using NVivo software. Qualitative data analysis brings order and clarification to the data collected from participant interviews (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). However, due to the software constantly freezing and shutting down, a manual analysis of the data was conducted using an Excel spreadsheet. Data was coded manually using an Excel spreadsheet and organized by themes, words, phrases, etc., found within the audio recordings transcribed from participant interviews. Coding helps to discover the relationship between the data to increase the understanding of the research phenomenon (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). Coding of data also provided a map that I was able to follow to group the data by themes, words,

and occurrences. Coding provides a means of continuing review and comparison of the data to determine the correlations and differences between the data (Linneberg, & Korsgaard, 2019; Williams & Moser, 2019). Data must be organized to show the connections between the data and to aid the researcher in grasping the true meaning of the data and the phenomenon (Williams & Moser, 2019). The data collected from participant interviews was coded using reoccurring themes, words, and phrases found throughout the participant interviews and organized to show any related relationships or differences. To further analyze the data collected, I used data triangulation to understand the data that was collected. Triangulation of data gives the researcher a deeper understanding of the phenomena and enhances the validity and reliability of the study by focusing on the data (Cypress, 2018a). The use of data triangulation provided a method for analyzing the study data that helps to increase the validity and reliability of the study results.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability is a component of qualitative research that is vital to the research. Reliability in qualitative research refers to the repeatability of the research and being able to replicate the results of the research conducted to produce the same results (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). Because the results of qualitative research are not based on statistical findings, the researcher must check the trustworthiness of the data collection process and the data collected. The process for ensuring reliability is for the researcher to keep

documented, detailed notes, ensure recordings are accurately transcribed, and document non-verbal communication of the study participant (Roberts & Priest, 2006). By ensuring the findings and results of the research can be repeated and produce the same results under different circumstances shows the dependability of the research. Another way to check the dependability of the research is to perform member checking. Member checking is the act of having the participant review the transcribed copy of their interview to review the contents for accuracy (Candela, 2019). There are several methods to check and ensure the dependability of my research. I used member checking to check the dependability of my research. I presented each member with a summary of their interview to ensure I had understood and transcribed their responses correctly. Another method I used to check the dependability of my research is through data saturation. Data saturation was accomplished when enough data has been collected, analyzed, and no new information is discovered from the data collected (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I collected and analyzed enough data to achieve data saturation. Once no new information was found, I reached data saturation thus, strengthening the dependability of my research.

Validity

Validity in qualitative research refers to the accuracy and credibility of the research. Validity of the research is determined through several methods. Two of those methods are:

- member checking

- data triangulation

data saturation

Member checking gives the researcher a system to confirm the data collected from each participant is presented accurately and eliminates the possibility of researcher bias or misquoting the participant (Candela, 2019). Data triangulation refers to the researcher using multiple sources to gather data to study human phenomena using interviews and comparing the consistencies within the data (Cypress, 2017; Cypress, 2018; Majid et al., 2017). I used member checking and data triangulation to validate the credibility of my study. By conducting member checking data triangulation and reaching data saturation, this helped to ensure the confirmability of my study. To further ensure the confirmability of my research I thoroughly outlined the steps I had taken to reach my conclusion, re-checked documents, validated the content of the interviews was correct, and drew correlations between the data collected so other researchers could reproduce the study and achieve the same results.

Transition and Summary

In this section, I discussed my role as the researcher, eligibility of participants, and methods to gain access to participants. I addressed the nature of the study as well as the research method and design. Section 2 included information concerning participants, the data collection instrument and technique, data organization technique, data analysis, and validity and reliability of the study.

In Section 3, I address findings of my proposed study. I discuss applications of research to professional practice and implications for social change. Lastly, I give recommendations for action and further research.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies business leaders used to retain experienced employees in order to improve organizational performance. The research question was: What strategies do business leaders use to retain experienced employees in order to improve organizational performance? Section 3 includes findings, results, and implications of my study. I present findings, applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action and research, reflections, and a conclusion.

Five business managers within the U.S. agreed to participate in this case study. Data analysis entailed using thematic analysis in Excel, mapping of themes, and methodological triangulation. Data were collected from semistructured interviews as well as a review of publicly available data from organizational reports and news releases. I reviewed six public documents of organizations where four of five participants were employed.

P4 and P5 were employed within the same organization. No public documents were found for the organization where P2 was employed (see Table 2).

Table 2*Archival Documentation for Data Analysis*

Organizational Code	Documentation
Org 1	Diversity in leadership
Org 1	Tips for understanding company culture
Org 1	Diversity and inclusion impact review
Org 2	No public documents available
Org 3	Organizational homepage
Org4	2021 Annual report
Org 4	2022 Annual report

Note: Depiction of organizational codes associated with organizational documentation

I recognized five major themes that emerged from collected data. The five themes were employee development and recognition, restructuring and cost calculation, feedback and training, environment and leadership, and diversity and inclusion (see Table 3).

Table 3*Themes from Interviews*

Themes	Participants				
	1	2	3	4	5
Employee development and recognition	X	X	X	X	X
Restructuring and cost calculation	X	X		X	X
Feedback and training	X	X	X	X	X
Environment and leadership strategies	X	X	X	X	X
Diversity and inclusion	X	X	X	--	--

Note: Depiction of participant agreement throughout themes

Theme 1: Employee Development and Recognition

The first theme to emerge from data was employee development and recognition. All participants and literature corroborated that employee development and recognition was important for retention of employees. P1 stated “We want people to be feel like they're included, and they're treated fairly and equitably.” P2 recognized “any contribution [to the organization] should be rewarded.” P3 stated “we would look for opportunities where we could train people. In addition to coaching and training them ourselves, we would have other managers or supervisors do some of the coaching and training to get feedback from other people.” P4 stated “one of the things we do is provide flexibility with the use of flex schedules that allows the workers or employees to kind of even out their work and then their real life, to create a work/life balance.” P5 emphasized

the importance of building rapport with employees and said, “I think building rapport with your employees is a vital part of making them feel as though they’re important and they’re seen outside of just being there to get done with the productivity of the job.”

I reviewed documents found on the website for Org1. This document was posted in October 2023. I also reviewed documents on the website for Org3. This document was posted in 2023. I was able to use these documents during data triangulation for P1 and P3’s interviews. There were no public documents that were available for Org2. Org4 did not address employee development.

Org1 emphasized the importance of employee development and recognition. P1 said:

Diversity and inclusion has been at the heart of our prescription for success. We thrive in our welcoming, inclusive culture where everyone can actively contribute and be heard. When you have a successful mentorship, it feels serendipitous, like there’s this unique synergy between mentor and mentee that can’t be forced.

P1 emphasized, “making sure people have mentors is important or when they first start, making sure they have a buddy that can help them figure out the system, and that there is diversity, equity and inclusion.”

According to P3, Org3 recognized “building an inclusive, engaged company culture results in empowered employees that reflect a wide range of approaches and perspectives. Those perspectives lead to new ideas. New ideas lead to innovation and

excellence.” P3 stated at Org3, “we would allow for creativity, we tried to provide enrichment opportunities for people.”

In addition, all participants agreed that to further motivate employees to remain with organizations, employee appreciation programs and retention bonuses should be effective. P1 stated organizations should “put things in place proactively. There are retention bonuses and things like that you can put in place proactively to keep the talent that you want to keep.”

According to P1, Org1 recognized they “must provide an inclusive work environment where each person must be considered as an individual and recognize their (employees) diversity, dignity, and merit. Compensation must be fair and adequate and working conditions clean, orderly, and safe.”

P2 stated:

Few things that we have really kept into account is number one the wellbeing, mental wellbeing, and physical wellbeing for employees as an organization. The second thing I would say is that, even though we do not sell ourselves as organizations that are competitive in terms of compensation, we do have a good benefit plan for our staff. P2 stated, “we believe that any contribution should be rewarded.”

According to P3, Org3 “allowed for creativity. We tried to provide enrichment opportunities for people.” In public documents reviewed for Org3, the organization stated “We recognize that building an inclusive, engaged company culture results in

empowering employees that reflect a wide range of approaches and perspectives. We offer organizational development which includes engagement, performance, promotions, and pay equity.”

P4 and P5 both work at Org4. P4 stated “the use of flex time is one of those strategies. Then our recognition and showing appreciation to make everybody feel important.” I like to use positive reinforcement. So, when someone does something I like to make sure they are recognized, not just personally but within the team. I feel as though when people see that they are recognized for the great work they are doing, they will continue to do work that is positive and productive for the organization”. P5 stated, “I like to use immediate positive reinforcement. So, when someone does something, I like to make sure they're recognized, not just personally but within the team..” In the publicly reviewed documents for Org4, it was stated “the nationwide staffing shortage tested the resilience of our organization”. Org4 went on to state “as they (the employees) continue to persevere, these bonuses will help recruit much needed reinforcements and reward current employees for their dedicated service to the children and families of State X”. The findings in Theme 1 aligned with the literature that employee development and recognition are motivators to retaining employees. Training and employee development are components of retention strategies leaders can use to motivate employees to remain with an organization. Leaders who offer training and development opportunities as part of their business strategies for retention inspire employees to stay with the organization (Cloutier et al., 2015). Employee recognition and feedback were other leadership

strategies which Wakabi (2016) asserted aided in employee retention. Employee development and recognition are investments which organizations make in their employees. All the employee development techniques mentioned in the literature align with responses received from all study participants.

Theme 1, employee development and recognition, links to the conceptual framework, Vroom's theory of motivation, by stressing the importance of factors that motivate employees. Vroom posited that employees feel a sense of appreciation when rewarded fairly for their contributions. Employees expect rewards compensatory for the tasks they perform and the production they put forth. All participants agreed that it is essential for employees to feel appreciated for their contributions to the organization.

Theme 2: Restructuring and Cost Calculation

The second theme to emerge was restructuring and cost calculation. All of the five study participants gave ways their organizations cut costs when having to replace employees who had voluntarily left their organizations. None of the literature reviewed spoke directly to restructuring and cost calculation to help control organizational costs or as being important to the retention of employees. P1 stated "You can promote up internally. Cross training people ahead of time so that when or if somebody does leave. Then, the other piece to look at automation. How do you streamline roles? How do you automate things so that maybe you can eliminate the role?". P1 went on to state "If a person leaves, especially within that five or more-year piece, you may as well take their salary, take their bonus, and multiply it by four cost figures. Sometimes we keep rolls

open and take three months to fill it so that we have three months slack from a zero cost. Evaluate the position; you reallocate work so that maybe somebody else internally takes on some of those responsibilities, and you hire at a lower level. Automation would be another option.”. P2 stated “I am very much interested in the people analytics aspect of it and the different metrics that we have to put in place. When we don't have those metrics in place, we are not able to identify exactly what is a rate of investment, ROI of each position, the attrition rate, the quality of employee like candidates that we are bringing into the organization”. P2 also stated how the organization saves cost on hiring, “We have a huge talent pool of interns who come into IFW, and we run a 3-month internship program. It is very intensive, where interns learn about the organization and what we do, we educate them, we train them. We’ve been able to develop database for, training, quick, 10 minutes or 15 minutes of videos of different technical trainings that students need in order to succeed and be at a research scale, or be at analytical skill, or be it something to do with how to use the software platforms. So, that has enabled us to overcome the cost of external training that we would need. So, utilizing your internal resources, to develop that knowledge base so that you're able to save cost for the company to hire a new person and then get the training sessions and new training sessions for them to be successful in their role.” P2 further stated “We have a huge talent pool of interns who come into IFW, and we run a three-month internship program. It is very intensive, where interns learn about the organization and what we do, we educate them, we train them. We’ve been able to develop database for, training, quick, 10 minutes or 15 minutes of videos of different

technical trainings that students need in order to succeed and be at a research scale, or be at analytical skill, or be it something to do with how to use the software platforms. So, that has enabled us to overcome the cost of external training that we would need. So, utilizing your internal resources, to develop that knowledge base so that you're able to save cost for the company to hire a new person and then get the training sessions and new training sessions for them to be successful in their role.”

P3 stated “The work was distributed among existing employees and other parts written into description of new hire position which had already been approved with the previous year’s budget plan. We had an onboarding program. A plan was developed to reduce this cost to our organization. So, individuals in our division who enjoyed training and were good coaches that we used a lot when we brought in new people were sent to become trainers of that information. Part of the manager’s role was to do a financial plan for the upcoming fiscal year. It was essential to look for opportunities to reduce cost. If we had a place where we were using a temporary person, we could take our person and put them in a spot where we had the temporary person and eliminate that overhead. We also looked for opportunities to move resources or projects to an area where funding was increased for a specific project and another may have a small piece of work that ties into an area but didn’t receive additional funding to deliver.” P3 went on to state “In some instances, there was not enough growth in a job. So, a strategy we took was to look at other work that we could incorporate into that particular role that would allow the person to feel enhanced. Another strategy that we had; we would ask employees what it is they

were looking for that would put you in a position that you'd be willing to stay with us two to three years? They would give us that input and collectively, we could come up with how we could take that input and intertwine it with the company need. We would determine what could be eliminated and perhaps be a cost savings to the company and would also benefit the employee by reducing their workload, particularly things identified as mundane. This would come out a win for the organization by eliminating overtime, the need to outsource and the need to fill a position”.

P4 stated “One of the things that we do is try to make sure that we're allocating the right resource to the right job. You know, the right person, making sure that the person is a good fit so that we won't have as much turnover. We use a calculation to figure out what it costs to train and to onboard that employee, as opposed to what we would have to pay out if you lost them.” P5 stated, “as far as reducing costs the best that I can do at the level that I am in regarding employees is to try and meet the employees where they are to keep them from wanting to go elsewhere. I also know that when a person is put in a situation or something that's causing them stress, they will leave their place of employment before they continue to have that type of stress in their life. So, with that I will just find someone who is a better fit for the task at hand, pay attention to my employees, and meet them where they are.” P5 had no comment concerning the cost calculations because this responsibility did not fall within her job parameters.

I reviewed documents found on the website for Org1. These documents were posted in October 2023. I also reviewed documents found on the website for Org3. This

document was posted in 2023. I was able to use these documents in data triangulation for P1 and P3's interviews. However, the public documents reviewed for Org1, Org3 nor Org4 addressed cost calculations. There were no public documents available for Org2. The public documents reviewed for Org4 did not speak to restructuring.

In the publicly available documents for Org1, the organization emphasizes the importance of employee well-being, "Mental health and well-being programs and resources, including the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) & CARE (Confidential, Accessible, Responsive, Engaged) Services to help employees navigate situations and obtain the support needed to thrive amidst the events life presents". P1 emphasized that "We put in place things like employee referral programs where the cost to fill and find a person is a lot cheaper than working with an agency. We also have a college recruiting program, bringing in fresh, new bachelor's, Master's, and PHD level people, and you're grooming them for the higher-level positions."

In the publicly available documents for Org3, the organization recognizes the importance of recruitment, retention, and advancement as ways of retaining employees; "We actively work to ensure that programs and practices are equitable and that all employees have the opportunity to learn, grow, and engage. The Company has equitable recruitment, retention and advancement policies and practices, and our talent reflects the diversity of the labor market at all levels of the Company."

In further review of the data, I noticed P3's stance on reallocation and cost calculation differed from the other four participants. P3 does cost calculation with a

focus on elimination by reducing the head count. This was contrary to the position of the other four participants who focused on retaining employees by focusing on making sure the person is a good fit for the job and the organization.

The findings in Theme 2 aligned with the literature that organizational restructuring and cost calculations are vital to the fiscal health of an organization and retention of employees. The retention of experienced employees is a method that enables the organization to reduce the costs of recruiting and training newly hired replacement employees (Davis 2013; Sandhya & Kumar, 2011). According to Davis (2013), in a qualitative study he conducted, he theorized that employee replacement costs in the United States were estimated to be \$25 billion a year. Guilding et al. (2014) saw employee turnover as a cost factor that should be included in the long-range accounting of an organization. According to P3, Org3 understood the need to control costs within the organization as P3 stated, “Part of the manager’s role was to do a financial plan for the upcoming fiscal year. It was essential to look for opportunities to reduce cost.” All the restructuring and cost calculation techniques mentioned in the literature align with responses received from four of the five study participants. As previously stated, cost calculation was not a part of P5’s job duties.

Theme 2, restructuring and cost calculation, links to the conceptual framework of, Vroom’s Theory of Motivation, by stressing the importance of the employer adhering to the transactional contract made with employees which focuses on the economic aspect of employees. All participants agreed that it is essential for organizations to uphold their

transactional contract with employees by paying a fair wage, focusing on making sure the person hired to perform a job is a good fit for the job and the organization, and by clarifying the role to make sure staff are aligned and understand what their job duties entail. Making sure the employee/job fit is legitimate helps to reduce the probability of employee turnover. Vroom stated that employees feel a sense of appreciation when rewarded fairly for their contribution to an organization. However, Vroom does not consider the workload, an employee's knowledge of the job, whether the employee/job fit is equitable, or if the transactional contract between the employee and the organization is being honored.

Theme 3: Feedback and Training

The third theme to emerge from the data was feedback and training. All study participants and the literature reviewed corroborated that training is important to the retention of employees but the literature did not speak directly to the use of feedback. P1 stated some ways Org1 would conduct some training, "You would have a buddy, or a mentor that would show you the way. At a five-year mark, sponsorship could be used. It's not for everybody. It's for the people that are high performing, high potential. Sponsorship is one like executive education. Shadowing people, like you're a manager, let's have you shadow a vice president for a while, just to see if that's something that you would want to do in a future. And succession planning, you know, figuring out you're here, your skills are this. Having conversations with people about not just the future next year, but the future with the company. We see potential for this." P1 also stated, "Cross

training: so, cross training people ahead of time so that when, if somebody does leave.”

On feedback, P1 stated “My belief is to always be transparent with people. They want more development. It all depends on if you're in alignment and openly talking about what you want and what you don't want. Having conversations with people about not just the future next year, but the future with the company.”

P2’s response to training was as follows “As I stated earlier, we run a three-month internship program. It is very intensive, where interns learn about the organization and what we do, we educate them, we train them. My go to persons are those people, because we've already invested in the training.” On feedback, P2 stated “I am a huge advocate of stay interviews; I do feel that they really tell you what's working and what needs to be worked on. My point is always to seek points of feedback, do the surveys, and then incorporate the feedback that we receive to formulate strategies that enable us to sustain these improvements for the longer term.”

P3 stated, “When I went into the room to work alongside my team, they asked why I did that I stated, I want to know what you're doing, because that's how I can help you. That was the best opportunity for me to allow individuals to utilize their strengths, have support from peers to help work through weak areas in a positive, and supportive manner and build a strong team.” When addressing the area of feedback, P3 did not address feedback directly but spoke to the need for employees to feel a sense of being a valuable part of the organization. P3 stated “The strategies implemented, as mentioned in the previous answer, were to acknowledge the employee’s individual strengths and utilize

them, so they used their strengths. By showing the employees they were valued, the employees knew they were respected for their contributions to the organization.

Employee morale and interactions improved, and it was easy to get the employees to buy into the change. But the employee is also getting some self-gratification from the contributions they are making to the organization.”

P4’s responses to training and feedback were as follows “We do refresher training and different things like that. We do all sorts of employee recognition, like employee of the quarter where we can provide tangible gifts to our employees, just to let them know that they're appreciated in the work that they're doing, and their work does not go unnoticed. I think that kind of builds up morale. Like P3, P4 did not speak directly to feedback but did emphasize the importance of making employees feel valued. P4 stated “It has caused some of the people who were known for job hopping to kind of stay with our agency longer than they had with previous agencies. So, you know, I think people like to feel like they are valued.”

P5 did not speak directly to training as Org4 has a standard training program in place. However, P5 stated how she worked to enhance the skills of the employees within her department through observation and communication. P5 stated “I reposition people. I can tell when people are bored or feel like they have outgrown the area in which they are in and they're looking for more growth by just conversations that I have with my employees. I work to reposition them into places where it could put them in more places of leadership and leadership positions or assign them other duties that they would not

have otherwise had in order to continue to help them grow.” P5 went on to state “For the most part, they (employees) have responded well to the reconditioning or putting them in more places to grow. Once I place them in those positions where they see that they can lead a team and things like that, I feel like it gives them the encouragement to go out and apply for those other positions to put themselves in a better space and to finally try something new.”

I reviewed documents found on the website for Org1. These documents were posted in October 2023. I reviewed documents found on the website for Org3. This document was posted in 2023. I reviewed documents found on the website for Org 4. These documents were posted in 2022 and 2023. I was able to use these documents in data triangulation for P1, P3, P4, and P5’s interviews. However, the public documents reviewed for Org1, Org3 and Org4 did not address the area of feedback. There were no public documents available for Org2.

In the publicly available documents for Org1, the organization emphasizes the importance of having well trained employees “We’re always looking for people with talent, drive, and desire to make a meaningful impact on the future of health. We take many steps to ensure our hiring process is fair and transparent, centered on learning your skills and qualifications—and ultimately, how you could use them to be successful in the new role. Creating college scholarships at historically Black colleges to promote interest in science, technology, engineering, math, manufacturing and design career paths (and increase the number of women in those fields, too). Training managers on how to role-

model inclusive behaviors. Continuing to grow a workplace where everyone belongs. When you have a successful mentorship, it often feels serendipitous, like there's this unique synergy between mentor and mentee that can't be forced." Org3 emphasized the importance of making employees feel valued "We want an inclusive and connected workforce achieved through feeling valued and able to authentically participate. We actively work to ensure that programs and practices are equitable and that all employees have opportunity to learn, grow and engage." P3 had also stated , "...acknowledge the employee's individual strengths and utilize them, so they used their strengths. By showing the employees they were valued, the employees knew they were respected for their contributions to the organization." This statement aligned with the statement in the public document reviewed for Org3.

In the publicly available documents for Org4, the organization recognizes the importance of training "The Department utilizes our Learning Management System (LMS), the Learning Education Training System (LETS) to track all DHR staff training. Training is tracked in LETS by individual staff person and archives by course name, status (complete/incomplete), date of completion, total time of course, score (if applicable), credits (if applicable) and certificate (if applicable)." The documents from Org4 further revealed this information about the organization "The office used a blended learning approach for county staff in FY 2022, with training provided in person and virtually. This ensured the timely completion of training, while allowing flexibility for staff throughout the state."

The findings in Theme 3 aligned with the literature that states training and feedback components are necessary to help reduce employee turnover. By investing in training and development of employees, organizations strengthen employee work engagement, can predict employee intentions to leave the organization by the degree of employee work engagement, and the degree of employee satisfaction with training determines the degree of work engagement (Memon et al., 2016). Further, McCafferty and Hamilton (2020), stated deficiency in training is one of the contributing factors to voluntary quits. Training and development programs can motivate employee retention (Cloutier et al. 2015). Training is one of the strategies leaders can use to motivate employees to remain with an organization. All participant acknowledged that training is important to the retention of employees.

Feedback (communication), be it verbal or through deeds, is another strategy which can be used to motivate employees to remain with an organization. Laddha et al. (2012), stated giving feedback to employees will help enhance employee performance. Wakabi (2016) and Cloutier et al. (2015), both acknowledged communication (feedback) with employees as an essential strategy which could aid in the retention of employees. When leaders use effective communication, they can contribute to employee retention through enhancing employee loyalty to the organization. All study participants agreed feedback in any form is a useful tool to use in retaining employees.

According to Vroom's theory of motivation, what motivates people are mindful actions (Ramlall, 2004; Vroom, 1964). Providing training and feedback to employees can

help to motivate employees to remain with an organization as they are mindful actions put forth by the organization or leader. If an employee is motivated and content with the rewards they receive for the work they put forth, the employee is likely to remain with an organization because the employee feels a sense of satisfaction.

Theme 4: Environment and Leadership Strategies

The fourth theme to emerge from the data was environment and leadership. All study participants and most of the literature reviewed supported that environment and leadership are important to the retention of employees. P1 stated “It's very important to build a relationship and building relationships will keep those people there, the seasoned ones. It'll keep them there, and the people who are just coming on, they'll see there is a welcoming environment.” P2 stated “Be close to your employees in terms of taking feedback, receiving feedback, give them the environment where they feel their psychological safety, feel they are safe, they have a voice, they can share opinions, and they're welcome.” P3 stated “I had one manager that I suggested to him what he needed to do was to listen to the people in his organization. People value being heard and they value being heard honestly. Embellish your organization so the atmosphere is more warm, friendly, and inviting, so that the more senior members are working with your newer members, and they are not looked at as mom and dad to your organization.” P4 stated “I would say the same thing: offer flexible work schedules, if possible. Plan training and development programs so that they will be effective and organize team-building activities with your staff.” P5 stated “You have to manage people, you have to

know how to manage people, and when you're managing people, that means you have to know how to build rapport with them. It's very important to build a relationship and building relationships will keep those people there, the seasoned ones. It'll keep them there, and the people who are just coming on, they'll see there is a welcoming environment.” P5 went on to state “So one of the things you have to do when you're in a position of management is change with the times. You have to be flexible, you have to know you can't be a stickler for an old way, and you have to always remain flexible with the times. I think if you remain flexible with the times, continue to build a rapport with your people, then, people will be seen and overall it will cause people to stay at jobs longer. Once you get people to a place where they're happy in their positions or they're happy with the organization it reduces the cost overall.”

I reviewed documents found on the website for Org1. This document was posted in October 2023. I also reviewed documents found on the website for Org3. This document was posted in 2023. I was able to use these documents in data triangulation for P1 and P3's interviews. There were no public documents available for Org2. There was nothing noted in the documents reviewed for Org4 pertaining to environment and management style.

In documents reviewed for Org1, Org1 understands the importance of leadership setting the tone for the environment and culture of the organization. “Leaders play a key role in company culture. For starters, they should lead by example, modeling behaviors and expectations for everyone. And in order to be trusted, that means trusting others in

return. We must provide highly capable leaders and their actions must be just and ethical.” It was further stated in this document “We must provide an inclusive work environment where each person must be considered as an individual.” In the documents reviewed for Org3, Org3 is committed to a positive company culture (environment). “At Org 3 we’re committed to cultivating a workplace and an ecosystem that reflects the diversity of the global organizations that we serve. We recognize that building an inclusive, engaged company culture results in empowered employees that reflect a wide range of approaches and perspectives.”

The findings in Theme 4 aligned with the literature that states environment and management style can contribute to the reduction employee turnover. Aguenza and Som (2018), Oladapo (2014), and Craig (2015) all saw the work culture as the greatest factor in employee retention. However, Warrick(2017), Warrick et al. (2016), and Chatterjee (2009) all saw organizational culture as a tool that could help develop how employee behaviors are shaped, shared, and affect the operation of the organization. According to Kundu and Lata (2017), reward, recognition, and respect were the elements of organizational culture that affected employee retention. A supportive company culture can influence employee retention. Leaders must provide a work environment that fosters employee commitment to create a culture of retention.

Leaders influence employee retention through the relationships they develop with employees. The influence of the leaders must address the needs and desires of the employee through reciprocity (leader-member exchange (LMX)) (Covella et al., 2017).

Letchmiah and Thomas (2017) and Savolainen et al. (2018) agreed that leaders who exhibited personal integrity and business ethics show employees they can trust the management of the organization. Employees will choose to stay with an organization if their needs are being met. However, if employees feel leaders of the organization are not trustworthy, employees will choose to leave the organization in search of better working conditions where management can be trusted.

Theme 4 correlates with the framework in that environment and leadership are motivational factors for employees. If employees feel they do not get rewarded for their efforts, they will seek employment elsewhere (Ramalho Luz et al., 2018). According to Vrooms theory of motivation, people exhibit behaviors that will increase their rewards or benefits thus, creating a productive work environment in anticipation of said reward. Leaders are responsible for creating and nourishing the culture within the company (Ertosun & Adiguzel, 2018). When the leadership of an organization builds an organizational culture that clearly communicates the vision and mission of the organization, leadership can create an environment that encourages employee retention. Leaders influence retention through the relationships they develop with employees as was expressed by all participants.

Theme 5: Diversity and Inclusion

The fifth theme to emerge from the data was diversity and inclusion P1, P2, and P3 spoke directly to diversity and inclusion within their organizations. P4 and P5 did not speak to diversity and inclusion within their organization. The publicly reviewed

documents for Org1 and Org3 expressed the importance of diversity and inclusion within their organizations. The publicly reviewed documents reviewed for Org4 revealed skewed employee demographics.

P1 stated “Star is where we ask somebody to describe a situation and explain the tactics or actions that they took, and then talk about the results that they achieved. Then we had a diverse set of people interviewing people. So, we made sure in the US that we had a male, a female, you know, gender diversity and ethnic diversity. We trained people up on how to interview. We didn't want people who were in the interview process that didn't know how to interview people. A lot of it was just asking questions about the values.” P2 stated “I think that we speak our strength in diversity and we try to incorporate that strategy into our recruitment as well. I am a diversity equity inclusion advocate. I am really passionate about the subject and I try to incorporate best practices, which align with our mission and there's so many things the mission can do to help enable progress. And of course, with diversity comes culture and different languages.” P3 stated “I listened for people who talked about inclusiveness of others. I also listened for language that spoke to diversity. I would have other people from my team to interview people that I interviewed and then we put our heads together, and we would come out with who was the person that was best for our team

I reviewed documents found on the website for Org1. This document was posted in October 2023. I also reviewed documents found on the website for Org3. This document was posted in 2023. I was able to use these documents in data triangulation for

P1's and P3's interviews. There were no public documents available for Org2. I reviewed documents found on the website for Org4 and noted what was documented about diversity and inclusion within this organization. These documents were posted in 2021 and 2022.

In documents reviewed for Org1, Org1 understands the importance of diversity and inclusion. " We must provide an inclusive work environment where each person must be considered as an individual." It was further stated in this document how Org1 intentionally seeks out different ethnicities and women to become a part of their organization. "We take many steps to ensure our hiring process is fair and transparent, centered on learning your skills and qualifications—and ultimately, how you could use them to be successful in the new role. Creating college scholarships at historically Black colleges to promote interest in science, technology, engineering, math, manufacturing and design careerpaths (and increase the number of women in those fields, too)."

In the documents reviewed for Org3, Org3 is committed to having an organization that is both diverse and inclusive. "At Org 3 we're committed to cultivating a workplace and an ecosystem that reflects the diversity of the global organizations that we serve. We recognize that building an inclusive, engaged company culture results in empowered employees that reflect a wide range of approaches and perspectives." The document further revealed how committed Org3 is to diversity and inclusion "Org 3 was named a Top Diversity Employer by DiversityJobs.com a select group of employers that have

shown consistent dedication to recruiting and hiring from all diversity groups. As employees of Org 3, we:

Exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion and equity during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other company-sponsored and participative events

Participate and complete diversity awareness training and other educational programs to continually build knowledge

Documents for Org 4 revealed that there is not much diversity or inclusion in their hiring process. Org 4's documentation states "employee hiring includes FT, PT, and PT retired. Hiring of black employees is equal to white employees, but very small percentages of hiring for Native American, Hispanic and others". Judging from this statement, Org 4 has skewed employee demographics which do not show diversity in their hiring practice although they serve a diverse clientele in this public agency.

The findings in Theme five aligned with the literature in that Cloutier et al. (2015) posited when leaders incorporated the hiring of a diverse workforce, the leaders opened opportunities for employees to expand their knowledge base. Cloutier et al. (2015) further stated in their study that expansion of organizational knowledge comes by learning from co-workers from different cultures, age groups, and genders increased the possibility of employee retention. P1, P2, and P3 all showed an understanding of how vital it is for an organization to practice diversity and inclusion. The literature reviewed for both Org1 and Org3 shows both organizations are committed to fostering organizations that embrace

diversity and inclusion as part of their mission and value statements. Theme five correlates with the framework in that diversity and inclusion are not simply limited to ethnicity. Beasley and Beasley (2023) conducted a study on expectancy theory, diversity and the nonprofit board using Vroom's expectancy theory as their point of reference. Diversity and inclusion seek to promote the fair treatment and participation of all employees within the workplace (Beasley & Beasley 2023). Expansion of organizational knowledge comes by learning from co-workers from different cultures, age groups, and genders, increasing the possibility of employee retention (Cloutier et al., 2015). Beasley and Beasley (2023) theorized that expectancy was a person's belief that by joining an organization the outcome would result in fulfillment of their expectations. According to Vroom's theory of motivation, what motivates people are mindful actions. People perform work based on the expectancy they will receive rewards according to the outcome of their performance and needs (Baker et al., 1989). When organizations make a conscious effort to create a diverse and inclusive workforce, the results could produce an organizational culture that provides enrichment and fulfillment of the expectations of its employees thus increasing the retention of experienced employees.

Applications to Professional Practice

Identifying ways to improve employee retention to improve organizational performance is essential to the sustainability of an organization. With data collected from participants, the strategies discovered in this study could contribute to the reduction of employee turnover thus improving organizational performance. The five themes that

emerged from the data collected could serve as guidelines for organizations to develop and implement strategies to aid in the retention of experienced employees and to the improvement of organizational performance.

The first strategy, employee development and recognition, focuses on how important it is for employees to receive continued employee development and recognition for their contributions to the organization. Memon et al., (2016) theorized that employees were less likely to leave an organization if the organization invests in the training and development of the employees. By investing in training and development of employees, organizations strengthen employee work engagement, can predict employee intentions to leave the organization by the degree of employee work engagement, and the degree of employee satisfaction with training determines the degree of employee work engagement (Memon et al., 2016). Employee development helps to strengthen the employee/organization engagement.

Recognition of employee contributions to the organization is another important factor to reducing employee turnover. Barber (2023) also saw the creation of an effective culture which encompasses employee recognition strengthens the probability of helping to retain employees. Reward, recognition, and respect were the elements of organizational culture that affected employee retention (Kundu & Lata, 2017). Having a strong strategy that offers ongoing employee development and implementing a system of employee recognition can help leaders to influence employee retention.

The second strategy, restructuring and cost calculations, emphasizes the importance of retaining experienced employees which would enhance the financial wellbeing of the organization. Understanding the employee turnover history to use as a benchmark and calculating the cost of employee turnover will help leaders develop retention strategies that will aid in employee retention and lower costs (Laddha et al., 2012). Turnover of type has a direct effect on organizational costs (Trevor & Piyanontalee, 2020). Managers who develop strategies to improve the retention of experienced employees can also improve the areas of lost organizational profits, employee productivity and job contentment, and the way in which the organization functions.

The third strategy, feedback and training, highlights the importance of communication and the continued enhancement of employee skills. Laddha et al. (2012) determined that employees satisfied with their jobs were more engaged and less likely to leave the company. According to Laddha et al. (2012), providing training, information, and building employee knowledge along with giving feedback to enhance employee performance are among the factors that could contribute to employee retention. Wakabi (2016) and Cloutier et al. (2015), both acknowledged communication (feedback) with employees as an essential strategy which could aid in the retention of employees. All participants agreed that a strategy to address feedback and training was integral to employee retention.

The fourth strategy, environment and leadership strategies, are major contributing factors to employee retention. Oladapo (2014), Craig (2015), and Aguenza and Som (2018) saw the work culture and environment as the greatest factor in employee retention. Leaders who exhibit personal integrity and business ethics show employees they can trust management (Letchmiah & Thomas, 2017; Savolainen et al., 2018). Leadership contributes significantly to the retention of employees (Letchmiah & Thomas, 2017). Therefore, leaders must have strategies which foster a positive work environment and trust in management to enhance the retention of employees.

The fifth strategy, diversity and inclusion, are closely related to the fourth theme of environment and leadership strategies. When leaders incorporate the hiring of a diverse workforce, they open opportunities for employees to expand their knowledge base. Expansion of organizational knowledge comes by learning from co-workers from different cultures, age groups, and genders, increasing the possibility of employee retention (Cloutier et al., 2015). Cross learning from fellow employees strengthens the organization and the employees' knowledge base (Cloutier et al., 2015). Barber (2023) emphasizes the importance of diversity, equity, belonging and inclusion within an organization and how diversity of thought creates original ideas which could be beneficial to the organization. Creating an environment that accepts employee differences and the knowledge that different employees bring to the organization strengthens the workforce.

The five themes presented represent critical areas where leadership can improve retention of experienced employees. Retention strategies, if implemented in these areas, could improve organizational performance. By developing and implementing strategies which address these five areas, organizations can improve the quality of their workforce and productivity.

Implications for Social Change

Concentrating efforts on the five strategies which emerged from the data could result in an organization retaining experienced employees and improving organizational performance. Implementation of these strategies could present leaders with approaches that enhance their understanding of policies that help to retain skilled employees. By retaining skilled employees, managers could further help to decrease the unbudgeted expense of replacing departed employee(s) and increase the profitability and performance of the organization. Clients depend on organizations to provide continuous uninterrupted services and retention of an experienced workforce could present the following implications for social change: (1) job stability within the community, (2) contributions to economic stability and reputation of the organization, (3) contributions to the economic stability of the community, and (4) the building of outreach and volunteer programs which allow employees to interact with the community and clients to further enhance the organizational brand.

Recommendations for Action

The strategies developed through the analysis of the data collected show that HR and business managers are aware that systems must be put in place if they are to retain experienced employees and improve the performance of their organizations. These strategies were developed based on the experiences and responses of the five participants who took part in the study.

In accordance with the five strategies which emerged from the data, HR and business managers should develop and implement a system which encompasses these strategies:

employee development/recognition

restructuring/cost calculation

feedback/training

environment/management style

diversity/inclusion.

Further recommendation is for organizations to develop, implement, and adopt a system which incorporates the five strategies into their company mission and value statements and live up to them. I further recommend HR and business leaders take note of the findings of this study and embrace these strategies which could aid in the retention of not only experienced employees but employees in general and enhance organizational performance. Understanding the importance of putting these strategies into practice can motivate experienced employees to remain with the organization, reduce unbudgeted

expenses incurred when replacing departing employees, and increase the maximum performance of an organization. The HR and business managers who participated in this study will be notified if my study is published and furnished a copy should they request one. The results of this study can be presented in lectures, managerial training sessions, or conference presentations.

Recommendations for Further Research

My purpose for conducting this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies business leaders use to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance. The study findings increased my awareness of strategies managers could use to retain experienced employees and improve the performance of their organization. Other researchers could repeat this study and adjust the scope to include a larger population of managers with more years of experience.

The one limitation of this qualitative multiple case study was the sample size. I recruited HR and business managers from a population in various locations with a minimum of five years' experience in their given fields which affected the scope of my findings. Further research could broaden the number of participants and their years of service to provide additional insight. My recommendation for future studies would be to increase the number of participants and the years of service in their given fields. Increasing both the number of participants and the years of service could present a broader range of strategies that could be implemented to retain experienced employees and improve organizational performance.

The second limitation of this qualitative multiple case study was managers could choose to answer questions in a way that made the employee turnover rate in their organization more favorable than what was true. My recommendation for future research would be to obtain organizational documentation reflecting the actual turnover rate of a given period from the participant's organization to support the claims of the participant. Having supporting documentation from the organization(s) would bolster the reliability and validity of the findings.

Reflections

The completion of the Doctor of Business Administration Program here at Walden University has been a long grueling journey. However, the journey has been rewarding and worth every step I have taken. The guidance and feedback I received from my chairperson was not always easily accepted but was valuable and necessary for my growth and perseverance to successfully complete this journey.

It has always been my belief that the key to keeping an experienced workforce was for managers to treat the employees with respect, reward employees for their contributions to the organization, provide a culture that was welcoming and not stressful while providing management that was supportive, plan for unexpected turnovers, and hire a workforce that reflected the community and clients served by the organization.

The main purpose of this multiple case study was to explore strategies business leaders use to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance. My multiple case study required collection of data from five HR and business managers using

semistructured interviews and documents that were publicly available from the participant's organizations.

I spent 20 years in public service employment and had experienced the best and worst of organizational management. Therefore, while conducting interviews with the participants, I allowed them to speak freely when answering the interview questions. I would only interrupt the interview if I needed clarification on what was said or to ask follow-up questions. Allowing the participants to speak uninterrupted during the interview helped me to avoid interjecting personal comments, which would introduce my biases based on my personal experiences.

My overall experience gained from conducting this study is that it affirmed my belief of how vital it is for HR and business managers to develop and implement strategies that have elements that focus on (1) employee development and recognition, (2) restructuring and cost calculations in the event of unexpected turnover, (3) offering feedback and training, (4) creating an organizational environment that motivates employees and offers a management style that is ethical and supportive, and (5) working to create a workforce that is diverse in nature and inclusive of all employees. The strategies will help to increase the retention of experienced employees and improve the productivity of the organization. I have also learned that not all managers focus on production but focus on procedures which result in the retention of their most valuable asset, experienced employees, and way to make their organizations more productive and sustainable for the long term.

Conclusion

I used the qualitative multiple case study method to explore strategies business leaders used to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance. Retention of experienced employees is more likely to occur when employees are motivated by having their needs met. According to Mahadi et al. (2020), an effective employee retention plan establishes and nurtures a company culture which addresses the diverse needs of its employees. This could be done by developing strategies which address the five themes identified in my research data.

I used Vroom's theory of motivation as my framework. The methods used to conduct my research were:

1. semistructured interviews, using open-ended questions, with five HR and business managers from different areas within the United States
2. input from the literature reviewed and documentation from each organization that was publicly available
3. I attempted to use NVivo to perform the data analysis, however, due to the program constantly freezing and shutting down, I performed a manual data analysis using Microsoft excel software

Five themes were identified from the data and with these findings I recommended that HR and business managers develop strategies which address (employee development/recognition, restructuring/cost calculation, feedback/training, environment/management style, and diversity/inclusion. Developing and implementing

these strategies can improve the retention of experienced employees and improve organizational performance.

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Appendix A: Order of Interview

The purpose of this interview is to collect data for research study. The focus of the study is management strategies and the effects of employee turnover on organizational performance. Do you have any questions or concerns before we start the interview? If there are no questions or concerns, we will begin the interview.

1. Introduction of myself to participants
2. Cover the contents of the consent form with participants and answer any questions and address concerns of the participants as they relate to the study
3. Ensure participants have signed and returned the consent-email copy of the signed consent form to the participant
4. Inform participant the interview is voluntary, they can withdraw at any time, and their identity will be kept confidential
5. Inform participants interview will be recorded and start recorder
6. Begin interview by asking first question and proceed through interview until all 10 interview questions are answered; asking follow-up questions when needed
7. Inform participant they will receive a copy of the written transcript after data is transcribed/member checking to ensure reliability and validity of the data
8. Thank participants for their time, assistance, and cooperation
9. Remind participants of researcher's contact information for any concerns or follow-up questions

Appendix B: Invitation to Participate in the Study

Dear Ms./Mrs./Mr. XXXX

My name is Fay Catlett. I am a graduate student attending Walden University. I am working towards the completion of a doctoral degree in business administration (DBA). I am conducting research on Management Strategies and the Effects of Employee Turnover on Organizational Performance. This qualitative multiple case study will explore strategies business leaders use to retain experienced employees to improve organizational performance. I am looking for leaders who have five years' experience in their position, have strategies for reducing employee turnover, and how employee turnover affected the organizational performance.

It is my belief that leaders with no less than five years in their position can contribute valuable information for this research. Included in this email is a voluntary consent form which follows the informed consent procedure and explains the premise of the study. This information is provided to aid you in making your decision regarding your participation in the study. Included in this email is a consent form detailing the scope of the study. Please read the consent form in its entirety and if you agree to participate, sign the consent form, scan it, and email it back to the email address provided. Once the study is completed, a summary of the results and findings will be shared with the participants, supervising scholars, and the sponsor organization.

If you are interested in participating in my study, please contact me at fay.catlett@waldenu.edu. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Fay E. Catlett, Walden University DBA Student

Appendix C: Voluntary Consent Form

Business Leader Interview Consent Form for DBA Case Study

You are invited to take part in a leader interview for a business case study that I am conducting as part of my Doctor of Business Administration Research at your organization.

Interview Procedures:

If you agree to be part of this study, you will be invited to take part in audio-recorded interviews about the organization's operations and problem-solving. Opportunities for clarifying statements will be available (via a process called member checking).

Transcriptions of business leader interviews will be analyzed as part of the case study, along with any archival data, reports, and documents that the organization's leadership deems fit to share.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this study would not pose any risks beyond those of typical daily life. This case study's aim is to provide data and insights that could be valuable to other leaders and organizations.

Privacy:

Interview recordings and full transcripts will be shared with each interviewee,

upon request. Redacted transcripts with names or sensitive information removed may be shared with my university faculty and my peer advisors. Any reports, presentations, or publications related to this study will share general patterns from the data, without sharing the identities of individual participants or partner organizations. The interview transcripts will be kept for at least five years, as required by my university.

Contacts and Questions:

If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Gjellstad. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 612-312-1210. Walden University's ethics approval number for this study is 07-26-22-0745519.

Please share any questions or concerns you might have at this time. If you agree to be interviewed as described above, please reply to this email with the words, "I consent."

Appendix D: Interview Questions

The interview questions are structured to elicit answers for the purpose of answering the research question. The interview questions are listed below.

1. What strategies do you use to prevent or reduce voluntary employee turnover?
2. What strategies do you use to motivate employees to remain with the organization?
3. What strategies do you use to decrease the cost to the organization when you experience a high volume of voluntary employee turnover amongst experienced employees who have been with the organization for five or more years?
4. What is your process for determining the cost impact of employee turnover?
5. How do you reduce the costs to your organization when replacing those employees?
6. What strategies have you developed and implemented to reduce turnover of experienced employees with five or more years of experience?
7. How have employees responded to any strategies you have developed and implemented to retain skilled employees and reduce organizational costs?
8. During your interviews with potential new hires, what are your strategies to assess the candidate(s) for cultural and job fit with the organization?
9. What strategies would you suggest to other managers to help them prevent

voluntary employee turnover among experienced employees and to reduce the costs to the organization?

10. What additional information would you like to share about preventing voluntary employee turnover and reducing the cost to the organization?