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Strategies to Reduce Employee Turnover in Small Retail Businesses

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MBA, Wayland Baptist University, 2011

BSOE, Wayland Baptist University, 2009

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Employee turnover is high in small retail business, compelling business leaders to implement strategies that successfully reduce employee turnover. The conceptual framework guiding this study was the Herzberg 2-factor theory because the theory identifies factors that influence job satisfaction and employee turnover. The study population was retail owners and managers from small businesses in the retail industry in San Antonio, Texas who had demonstrated successful strategies to reduce employee turnover. A focus group was conducted with 4 retail managers, and semistructured interviews were conducted with 2 small retail owners, all of whom were recruited via purposeful criterion-based sampling. Yin's 5-step process for data analysis of compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding resulted in themes of continuous learning in the workplace, communication, and valuing employees. These leaders provided continuous learning in the workplace, which demonstrated their value of their employees. Communication was a key concept discussed by all participants, as it built credibility with leaders and employees, increased productivity, and reduced turnover. The study has value to the practice of business because results may benefit industry growth by increasing retail leaders' knowledge levels about employee turnover. The findings may affect positive social change as leaders apply strategies useful for reducing employee turnover as lower turnover rates might reduce unemployment, stabilize communities, and improve the human and social conditions outside the workplace.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to God, who gave me the courage to accomplish this doctoral degree. I also dedicate this doctoral study to my two beautiful daughters, Paulettia Suzanna Pryce-Muhammad and Paula Suzette Tiffany Moore. This doctoral study is a dedication to my grandsons, Imaan Aakil Muhammad and Michael Francis, Jr., and my granddaughter, Vielka Harrigan. Imaan, Michael and Vielka, *shoot for the sky* and remember you can overcome any of life's obstacles. I also dedicate this doctoral study to my siblings, Vanessa Tonge, Caslyn Edwards, Craig Wilson, and Cecele Edwards. I also dedicate this doctoral study to my niece, Celine Edwards, and nephews, Devon Whyte, Jr., Dewey Tonge, Devrin Tonge, DeQuante´ Tonge, and DeVonte´ Tonge.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate my doctoral study to the memory of my mother, Sylvia Wilson Edwards (Meme), who couldn't see my doctoral study to the end. My memories of her at an early age of my life are her teaching me to read, spell, and write, which had inspired me to keep moving forward to complete my dream. This milestone represents a first for my family.

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I also thank Ibrahim Muhammad, Edith Richards, and Jessica and Paola Guerrero for your unending support, friendship, and continual motivation believing that I can change my dream to reality. A special thanks to Joseph Wilson and Troy King for their motivations. To Jean Jackson who believes I can "shoot for the stars where there is no limitation." I also extend my gratitude to Gloria 'Sister Glo' David, who molded me to face life's obstacles traveling life's path equipped with Philippians 4:8: "finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." To all of my past supporters and for those I have the honor of having in the present, thank you all. I learned from each one of you, and with God's grace, our paths together allowed me to discover my inner strength. Thanks again and may God bless each of you.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Employee turnover poses significant issues for retail leaders (Larkin, Brasel, & Pines, 2013). Griffin, Hogan, and Lambert (2014) noted that turnover affects a company's bottom line. Employee turnover leads to losses in productivity, costs to recruit new employees, and the need to train new employees (Griffin et al., 2014). Leaders encounter challenges when attempting to decrease the rate of employee turnover (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). Vardaman et al. (2014) viewed the absence of strategies to manage employee turnover within any organization as problematic. Halebic and Nivin (2012) studied small businesses in San Antonio, Texas and noted that the challenges of managing employee turnover are significant problems for small businesses in the retail industry.

Small businesses represent the large majority of companies in the United States (Yang, 2012). In San Antonio, small businesses represent 97% of firms and retail establishments are among the largest industry employers (Halebic & Nivin, 2012). Retail commerce includes consumer-oriented businesses requiring skilled, talented employees; merchandisers in the retail industry sell goods such as toys, electronics, clothes, household products, books, game rentals, foods, pharmaceutical products, and pets (Calcagno & Sobel, 2014). Within the small retail business industry, leaders lack strategies to reduce the loss of skilled, talented employees (Alasadi & Al Sabbagh, 2015; Tang, Liu, Oh, & Weitz, 2014). Exploring the factors related to turnover might provide leaders with information that may aid in reducing the problem.

Background of the Problem

Scholars from the 20th century, including Douglas (1918) and Lescohier (1919), conducted early studies on employee turnover. Douglas found employees suffered great economic losses from high turnover rates. Lescohier found that costs associated with employee turnover stemmed from reduced productivity. Interest in this topic continued into the 21st century, leading to additional studies; Maertz (2012) reaffirmed the substantial consequences of turnover, including costs of recruiting and training new employees and lower productivity.

The statisticians at the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS) provide and track employee numbers and fluctuations of employee turnover rates in the retail labor force. There were 957,240 retail employees in the United States in 2012 (USBLS, 2013). Statisticians at the USBLS monitor employee turnover in the retail industry monthly and annually. In September 2012, they reported a retail labor force turnover rate of 2.8% for April, representing more than 400,000 employees (USBLS, 2013). In the small business retail industry, the turnover rate is higher and a challenge faced by small business owners (Halebic & Nivin, 2012).

Retail leaders must manage turnover effectively to minimize the adverse effects on organizations and the economy. Keeling, McGoldrick, and Sadhu (2013) found the estimated cost of replacing lower paid retail employees was $3,637.00 per person. Employee turnover can lead to losses in efficiency and can negatively affect financial performance (Gupta & Shaw, 2014).

Problem Statement

Employee turnover is a challenging problem for small business leaders and results in substantial financial losses to retail organizations (Chang, Wang, & Huang, 2013). Small retail businesses in San Antonio, Texas experience difficulties competing with their larger counterparts for labor resources, resulting in higher employee turnover in smaller firms (Halebic & Nivin, 2012) and a cost of $3,637.00 to replace each employee (Keeling et al., 2013). The general business problem is that employee turnover negatively affects some small businesses in the retail industry, resulting in lower organizational productivity and profitability. The specific business problem is that some leaders of small retail businesses lack strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the strategies leaders of small retail businesses use to reduce the problem of employee turnover. The population was six owners and managers in small retail businesses in San Antonio, Texas who used strategies that led to reduced employee turnover. The results of this study may improve small business retail leaders' understanding about the research problem and may lead to the development, and application of strategies to reduce turnover and generate financial savings for their organizations. The findings from the study might contribute to positive social change if leaders apply successful strategies to reduce employee turnover rates, leading to reductions in unemployment, stabilization of communities, and improvements to the human and social conditions outside the workplace.

Nature of the Study

The nature of this doctoral study was a qualitative multiple case study. I used this method to collect, analyze, and interpret data from small business retail owners and managers, based on descriptions of their real-world experiences about how to reduce the problem of employee turnover. The qualitative method is appropriate for a study when a researcher seeks to identify participants' concerns, experiences, and needs (Allen, 2015), interpret and gain insights (Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, & Robertson, 2013), test findings in real-world environments (Gill, 2014), evaluate a problem within a given context (Allen, 2015), and validate beliefs and practices (Nyberg, Moliterno, Hale, & Lepak, 2014). I rejected the quantitative research method. Quantitative researchers examine the relationships among variables (Pearce, Christian, Smith, & Vance, 2014; Reio & Shuck, 2014). Quantitative inquiries require researchers to use specific approaches to sample, collect, and analyze data numerically (Groeneveld, Tummers, Bronkhorst, Ashikali, & van Thiel, 2015; Nyberg et al., 2014). I rejected mixed-method research because the approach includes both qualitative and quantitative methodological elements. Mixed methodology was not feasible in this current study because of cost considerations, time, and limited skills to execute both methods simultaneously.

I chose a multiple case study design for this exploration. Yin (2013) noted that case study design represents an in-depth investigation to understand a phenomenon through multiple sources of information. These types of studies involve the identification of operational links over time (Yin, 2013). In case studies, researchers seek to understand answers to *what* and *how* questions about the phenomenon to draw conclusions from the

data (Yin, 2014). Other qualitative research designs that I considered and rejected for this study included phenomenology and ethnography. Sandelowski (2014a) noted the phenomenological design is useful for exploring participants' lived experiences to determine how they make sense of their lives; phenomenology applies to the essence of unique experiences (Khan, 2014; Mittal et al., 2013). I rejected the phenomenological design because the study did not pertain to the essence of participants' lived experiences. Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas, and Van de Ven (2013) noted that ethnographers explore unique groups of participants in natural settings over prolonged periods to understand cultural interactions such as rituals, signs, symbols, and practices. I rejected an ethnographic study because I would not be exploring cultural traits of a group of participants and did not intend to share in immersive processes. A narrative design systematically explores recollections and stories of participants (Sandelowski, 2014a). Narrative design did not fit the purpose of this study.

Research Question

In this study, I sought to answer the overarching research question: What strategies do leaders of small retail businesses use to reduce the problem of employee turnover?

Interview Questions

The interview questions designed for this study represented a guide for eliciting participants' responses. The intent was to collect data through semistructured interviews with small business retail owners in San Antonio, Texas who successfully reduced

turnover and data from an online synchronous focus group with managers. The guiding
interview questions for business owners were as follows:

1. What are your experiences with employee turnover?

2. What strategies have you used to reduce employee turnover?

3. What strategies worked best to reduce the problem of employee turnover?

4. How do you know that these strategies worked best?

5. What indicators did you use to make sure that these strategies worked?

6. What strategies were not beneficial in retaining retail personnel?

7. What barriers prohibit employee turnover strategies from being successful?

8. What additional comments would you like to add relating to reducing
   turnover?

Focus Group Questions

The guiding online focus group questions for managers were as follows:

1. What are your experiences with employee turnover?

2. What strategies have you and the business owner used to reduce employee
   turnover?

3. What strategies worked best to reduce the problem of employee turnover?

4. How do you know that these strategies worked best?

5. What indicators did you use to make sure that these strategies worked?

6. What strategies were not beneficial in retaining retail personnel?

7. What barriers prohibit employee turnover strategies from being successful?

8. What additional comments would you like to add relating to reducing turnover?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework guiding this study was the Herzberg (1959) two-factor theory, also known as the motivation-hygiene theory. The review of the literature included additional details about the supporting theory of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs and Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory as the opposing theory. Herzberg developed the two-factor theory to identify the factors that influenced job satisfaction, retention, employee turnover, and job dissatisfaction. Schaffner, Schiefele, and Ulferts (2013) connected employee retention with increased productivity. Schaffner et al. found employee dissatisfaction stemmed from unacceptable working conditions. The two-factor theory aligned with this exploration of the management strategies that promote the retention of employees.

I chose the two-factor theory for this study to explore the influential components of employee turnover that small business leaders in the retail industry may apply. In the original study, Herzberg (1959) developed the theory to understand the reasons why employees became dissatisfied or satisfied with their jobs. Applying motivation-hygiene theory to studies helps leaders understand the psychological and organizational factors associated with turnover (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). As applied to this study, I expected the two-factor theory to pertain to retail leaders' strategies for reducing employee turnover.

Operational Definitions

Employee recruitment: The process of employee recruitment includes attracting and screening qualified candidates, reviewing interviewees' credentials, and selecting new hires for organizations (Kam & Meyer, 2015).

Employee turnover: This term refers to the voluntary or involuntary separation of employees leaving their current place of employment (Kam & Meyer, 2015).

Job dissatisfaction: Job dissatisfaction occurs when employees experience displeasures with their jobs (Kam & Meyer, 2015).

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction refers to an employee's sense of satisfaction and gratification within their job and job environments (Kam & Meyer, 2015).

Organizational culture: An organizational culture encompasses the set of values, visions, norms, working language, systems, symbols, beliefs, behaviors, and habits found within an organization (Lukas, Whitwell, & Heide, 2013).

Productivity: The efficiency of a person's performance on the job or the efficiency of an entire organization is considered productivity (Cording, Harrison, Hoskisson, & Jonsen, 2014).

Retail industry: In the retail industry, merchants specialize in sales of specific goods to consumers (Tang et al., 2014).

Small business: There are inconsistencies in the definition of a small business. Halebic and Nivin (2012) defined a small business as a firm with fewer than 100 employees. For the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study, a small business was one with no more than 90 employees.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

There were several assumptions in this study, including the assumption that small business retail owners' and managers' responses would be honest and forthright and that data would represent accurate in-depth descriptions of strategies based on their perspectives and experiences. The main delimitation in this study was the geographical location of the population, restricted to San Antonio, Texas. A limitation of this study was the ability of the participants to provide thorough, honest answers to the questions about employee turnover and successful retention strategies in their companies.

Assumptions

Assumptions are ideas researchers believe to be true but may not be able to validate (Henderson, Kimmelman, Fergusson, Grimshaw, & Hackam, 2013; Lips-Wiersma & Mills 2014). Kirkwood and Price (2013) and Pilcher and Cortazzi (2016) noted assumptions were fundamental to a researcher's ability to produce ethical research through unbiased reporting. One assumption for this study was that the method, design, sampling, data collection, and analysis were suitable for answering the research question. I gathered and analyzed data from semistructured interviews, journal notes, and a focus group to triangulate data to address the research question. Another assumption was that two small business retail owners would voluntarily participate in interviews, four managers would voluntarily participate in an online focus group for the study, and that these individuals were the most appropriate stakeholders in the businesses to provide the most meaningful information about employee turnover.

Limitations

Brutus, Aguinis, and Wassmer (2013), Henderson (2014), and Yeatman, Trinitapoli, and Hayford (2013) noted limitations are possible weaknesses of the study that remain beyond the researcher's control. The activities related to this study occurred within the city limits of San Antonio, Texas, because of the accessibility to participants without additional travel time. I depended on the voluntary participation of individuals who self-identified as small business retail owners and managers who applied successful strategies for reducing turnover; opportunities to verify the qualifications of participants depended on the documentation and honesty of the explanations they provided. The related limitation was that including members of two different Chamber of Commerce organizations and managers of Trustoria US Professional organizations within San Antonio could lead to a deeper understanding of the strategies leaders used to reduce the problem of employee turnover in the area, but might result in limited transferability to other settings.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the characteristics limiting the scope and boundaries of a study (Crossman & Kazdin, 2016). Delimitations relate to data, participants, and the geographical area (Brutus et al., 2013). The study included two retail owners and four managers from multiple small businesses in the retail industry who successfully developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover, but who might not have represented all retail owners and managers in San Antonio, Texas. Only retail owners in small businesses who were members of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce

and Alamo Heights Chamber of Commerce and retail managers in small businesses who were members of Trustoria US Professional with 90 or fewer employees and who successfully developed strategies to reduce employee turnover in San Antonio, Texas were eligible to participate in this study. The description of the geographical area in this study was an indicator of the similarity of the area to others in the United States, but the transferability of the study findings are subject to the prudent judgement of others, based on the detailed descriptions provided in the final report (Anney, 2014; Boblin et al., 2013).

Significance of the Study

The study has value to the practice of business because results may benefit industry growth by increasing the knowledge of retail leaders about the employee turnover that could lead to periods of financial difficulties. The significance of the study stems from its contribution to the body of existing literature about employee retention and turnover reduction within small businesses in the retail industry. Leaders might decrease employee turnover and prevent losses to employee productivity by implementing and developing retention strategies within their organizations (Schaffner et al., 2013). The application of strategies useful for managing employee turnover might improve profitability. Developing and implementing successful retention strategies could reduce attrition rates. The findings from the study might enhance strategies that retail owners and managers of small businesses use to reduce the problem of employee turnover.

Contribution to Business Practice

The contributions to business leaders, Texas Retailer Association, and the retail industries at large are improved understanding about employee turnover and strategies to help reduce the problem. Reducing the problem of unexpected staffing changes may improve organizational effectiveness, as suggested by Delmar, McKelvie, and Wennberg (2013). The results may lead to the development of strategic options that might generate financial savings for organizations. The results of this study help fill gaps in the literature about what strategies retail leaders can use to reduce employee turnover and increase employee retention to promote productivity and growth. Although the problem of employee turnover exists for a large number of small businesses in San Antonio, Texas, gaps exist in the published literature about strategies small business retail leaders could use to increase retention and minimize employee turnover (Halebic & Nivin, 2012; Krug, Wright, & Kroll, 2014).

Implications for Social Change

This qualitative case study might help leaders understand the problem and solutions, leading to implementation of strategies to decrease turnover and increase productivity. The implications for positive social change include the potential for leaders to apply strategies useful for reducing employee turnover rates. Lower turnover rates might reduce unemployment, stabilize communities, and improve the human and social conditions outside the workplace.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The emphasis of this doctoral study was to explore successfully developed strategies small business retail leaders applied to reduce the problem of employee turnover. This section includes a critical analysis and synthesis of the available literature, including books and peer-reviewed journals. The thematic organization of the review beings with discussions of the theory framing this study, leading to topics related to the research problem and known strategies that emerged from the vast body of existing literature. The theoretical discussions include overviews of Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory, Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, and Vroom's (1964) expectancy theories. The topics in this study include employee retention challenges, the known causes of employee turnover, diversity in the workforce, and organizational commitment. Review of the literature pertains to organizational culture, employee age, organizational change, leadership, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and workplace stress.

In this literature review, available professional and academic literature provided foundational information about employee turnover. The following databases were the sources of peer-reviewed articles and electronic books: ABI/INFORM Global, Business Source Complete, ProQuest Central, and Eric. Keywords and phrases used to locate relevant literature included *employee recruitment, employee retention, employee turnover, job dissatisfaction, job dissatisfiers*, *job satisfaction, job satisfiers, leadership, motivation-hygiene, organizational culture,* and *organizational constraints*.

The literature review includes 187 references from peer-reviewed articles, of which 98% had publication dates within 5 years of the projected completion of this study.

I continued searching for articles until completion of the study. Available literature provides background information on the topic from various perspectives. In this study, the most prominent related topics to employee turnover included organizational commitment (Tayfur, Bayhan-Karapinar, & Metin Camgoz, 2013), job stress (Kim, Han, & Kim, 2015; Syrek, Apostel, & Antoni, 2013), employee behavior (von Hippel, Kalokerinos, & Henry, 2013), and job satisfaction (Delmar et al., 2013; Pomirleanu & Mariadoss, 2015; Ren, Bolino, Shaffer, & Kraimer, 2013; Smith, Stokes, & Wilson, 2014; Warrick, 2014). Leaders across all industries considered employee turnover a longstanding concern (Cohen, Blake, & Goodman, 2015; Collins, McKinnies, Matthews, & Collins, 2015; Delmar et al., 2013).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory was foundational to this study. Herzberg's theory, also known as a two-factor theory, is useful for explorations of business problems related to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Milyavskaya, Philippe, & Koestner, 2013). Herzberg advocated, when studying the motivation-hygiene theory, that certain factors in the workplace lead to job satisfaction; these factors are different from those that lead to dissatisfaction. Additional research involving the theory continued over the decades that followed Herzberg's original work.

Herzberg's original work began in the late 1950s and the theoretical model has continued to stimulate research internationally (DeNisi, Wilson, & Biteman, 2014). Herzberg (1959) asserted intrinsic motivational factors were foundational to understanding employee behavior. Herzberg noted that intrinsic factors arose when

employees were satisfied with their jobs. Conversely, hygiene factors related to employees' dissatisfactions with work or working conditions. Using the two-factor theory, McGlynn, Griffin, Donahue, and Fitzpatrick (2012) conducted a study about motivation and job satisfaction and differentiated between intrinsic rewards experienced by the employees when performing the work and extrinsic rewards external to the work. McGlynn et al. also noted intrinsic rewards were motivators of employee behaviors and extrinsic rewards averted dissatisfaction.

The two-factor theory aligned with this exploration of the management strategies that promote the retention of employees. Schaffner et al. (2013) described motivation as a dynamic process causing arousal or the persistence of voluntary actions that direct people to accomplish basic needs, reap rewards, and become fully satisfied. Schaffner et al. reported employee turnover is low when employees experience satisfaction with their work. Dissatisfaction and unmet needs, according to Gerhart and Fang (2014), create tension and stimulate emotional drivers that can cause a person to seek a particular goal. According to Gerhart and Fang, achieving the new goal satisfies the previously unmet need.

Herzberg (1959) investigated the effect of job redesign on motivation. According to Herzberg, motivators existed when employees had satisfying experiences that were intrinsic to the job itself. Herzberg argued that eliminating the causes of dissatisfaction by attending to hygiene factors would not result in increased satisfaction among workers; instead, satisfaction would occur when leaders used motivators. Herzberg's theory was useful in this study to understand the reasons why employees become dissatisfied or

satisfied with their jobs. Ncube and Samuel (2014) used the Herzberg's dual-factor theory in their research and found a connection between motivation and job satisfaction.

Herzberg (1959) developed the two-factor theory to identify the factors that influenced job satisfaction, retention, employee turnover, and job dissatisfaction. Gupta and Shaw (2014) later showed how, with adequate levels of motivation, leaders increased employee retention. Schaffner et al. (2013) connected employee retention with increased productivity. Gupta and Shaw found employees who had concerns about limited promotion and growth opportunities had low satisfaction with their employers and their jobs and higher intentions to quit the industry. Conversely, Schaffner et al. found employee dissatisfaction stemmed from unacceptable working conditions. The two-factor theory aligned with this exploration of the management strategies that promote the retention of employees.

Herzberg developed motivation-hygiene theory in 1959 after analyzing data collected from 203 workers. Herzberg noted that participants described their life experiences encompassing satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their jobs. Herzberg claimed these opposing elements existed independently. Following the original developments of the theory, research continued and many scholars, such as those described in detail below, expanded the application of the theory in business settings.

Herzberg (1959) proposed that leaders foster the elements resulting from vertical job loading. Vertical job loading elements are (a) responsibility, (b) personal achievement, (c) recognition, (d) internal recognition, (e) growth and learning, and (f) advancement. According to Herzberg, job satisfiers are intrinsic motivational factors,

including positive attitudes toward work; job dissatisfiers or hygiene factors are negative attitudes. Motivation, as later defined by Gupta and Shaw (2014), is an individual's enthusiasm to apply high levels of effort to accomplish organizational goals. Dissatisfied needs, as defined by Gerhart and Fang (2014), create tension and stimulate emotional drivers within a person. Gerhart and Fang found these drivers cause a person to seek a particular goal to satisfy a need.

Ryan and Ebbert (2013) noted Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory repeatedly applied in employee turnover research. Ryan and Ebbert found that employees are not content with low pay. Similarly, Gerhart and Fang (2014) explored and referenced factors influencing employee turnover by using the two-factor theory. Gerhart and Fang described salary as all types of compensation employees receive for performing their jobs; the authors found that factors such as high levels of motivation, dissatisfaction, and pay increase employee turnover.

The focus of motivation-hygiene theorists was how employers could meet the needs of employees. According to Milyavskaya et al. (2013), promotions and pay increases were useful for raising employee satisfaction levels, while absenteeism stemmed from job dissatisfaction and job satisfaction diminished absenteeism. Milyavskaya et al. found that noncompetitive benefits packages and low pay were common causes of high turnover rates. According to Milyavskaya et al., employees working in low paying jobs tended to have few or limited benefits and tended to leave employers if, within the same industry, other employers offered higher pay rates.

Motivation-hygiene theory incorporated the concept of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction that affected productivity and job attitudes in organizations (Stein, 2014). Job satisfaction negatively correlated with turnover; in other words, when job satisfaction went up, turnover was lower (Frey, Bayón, & Totzek, 2013; Hauff, Richter, & Tressin, 2015; Pomirleanu & Mariadoss, 2015; Yang, Treadway, & Stepina 2013). Ryan and Ebbert (2013) also found that reducing factors in the environment that hinder intrinsic satisfaction increases retention and encourages tenure. Working conditions referred to the physical environment where employees performed their jobs (Herzberg, 1959). Hancock, Allen, Bosco, McDaniel, and Pierce (2013) confirmed leaders were aware that employee turnover diminished organizational effectiveness, highlighting leadership behavior in the work enrvironment related to employee turnover and job satisfaction. Frey et al. (2013) found an improved work environment motivated employees, reduced stress, and increased productivity.

Herzberg (1959) asserted that leaders could promote high employee retention, increase job satisfaction, lower the turnover rate, reduce job dissatisfaction, and increase productivity, if employers meet the needs of the employees. Herzberg noted that employees remained loyal and stayed when employees perceived employment to be productive; however, Herzberg claimed that hygiene factors caused employees to be dissatisfied or not dissatisfied and influenced employees' decisions to leave their jobs voluntarily. Herzberg stated that different processes influence an employee's decision to quit his or her place of employment. Other processes influence an employee's motivation to remain with the organization (retention) and job satisfaction. Frey et al. (2013) noted

that if employers met employees' needs, then high retention occurred. Frey et al. found that job satisfaction led to diminished absenteeism and productivity resulted. Unmet needs led employees to leave (turnover) or lowered their motivation to stay with the organization (retention).

The hygiene factors, noted by Herzberg (1959), influenced employees' motivation to leave their job but not their motivation to continue to work with the organization. According to Herzberg, the opposite of job satisfaction was not job dissatisfaction; rather, the result was a lack of job satisfaction. Based on the two-factor theory, Gupta and Shaw (2014) determined motivated employees were satisfied and employee satisfaction decreased voluntary termination. Gupta and Shaw found that turnover increased among employees who had high levels of dissatisfaction. Similarly, Zhang, Punnett, and Gore (2014) noted that, when employees expressed satisfaction with their work, intention to quit was low. Zhang et al. found that employees who were dissatisfied with their working conditions reported a strong intention to quit.

Herzberg (1959) described five intrinsic motivating factors that could cause satisfaction and five extrinsic hygiene factors that related to dissatisfaction. The motivating factors are recognition, achievement, the work itself, the opportunity for advancement, and responsibility. The hygiene factors are salary, relationships with supervisors, supervision quality, company policies and administrative practices, and relationships with peers. Table 1 includes the two categories of elements in Herzberg's two-factor theory.

Table 1

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Intrinsic/Motivator Factors (Job Satisfaction)	Extrinsic/Hygiene Factors (Job Dissatisfaction)
Recognition	Salary
Achievement	Relationship with supervisor
Work itself	Supervision
Opportunity for advancement	Company policy & administration practices
Responsibility	Relationship with peers

Note. Adapted from *The Motivation to Work*, by F. Herzberg, B. Mausner, and B. B. Snyderman, 1959, New York, NY: John Wiley, p. 44-50.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

The supporting theory for this study was Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow developed the hierarchy of needs theory in 1943 from data collected from 1% of the healthiest college students. Maslow suggested motivation was goal-based and occurred after individuals met physiological and basic needs. Maslow found that the need for safety and security followed the need for love and belongingness, building toward the need for self-esteem.

Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs relates to various components of job satisfaction. Thomas (2014) found Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory provided the foundation for understanding job satisfaction. Maslow stated that a person must satisfy all previous levels of need before progressing to the next level, to maintain satisfaction. Before motivation can occur, a person must satisfy psychological, safety, love or

belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization needs (Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015; Thomas, 2014).

Job satisfaction theories—Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory of motivation and Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs—are useful for researchers who seek explanations for employee satisfaction. The components of the two theories differ on how they convey job satisfaction. While Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory are useful for determining factors that influence satisfied and dissatisfied employees, Herzberg's two-factor theory allows the factors to exist in parallel and independent of the other, unlike Maslow's theory (Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, Labat, 2015).

Thibodeaux et al. (2015) explored Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory in their studies. The two-factor theory, according to Thibodeaux et al., provides descriptions of job factors satisfying or dissatisfying to employees. Thibodeaux et al. described the two-factor model as when employees occupy challenging but enjoyable jobs that allow employees to achieve success. Similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs model, Thibodeaux et al. noted that Herzberg believed that people were involved with two types of needs. Shahid and Azhar (2013) studied the Maslow model and noted additional needs, such as basic needs that sustaining life, including clothing, food, and shelter. Taormina and Gao (2013) also studied the Maslow model and noted that needs such as those for safety, belongingness and affiliation, esteem, and self-actualization cannot be satisfied until each prior need on the hierarchy model is met.

Although Thomas (2014) described extrinsic satisfaction as the pay, recognition, rewards, tasks, promotions, working conditions, and job security, Thomas defined intrinsic satisfaction as the reflection of a sense of achievement and self-actualization from performing a job. Maslow (1943) described self-actualization as what a person could or must become. Self-actualization was a person's need to fulfill dreams at the highest sense of his or her being (Maslow, 1943). Although Thomas found that good remuneration is a strategy that organizations can adopt to increase organizational productivity, according to the drive for self-actualization, remuneration may not be enough to sustain an employee's satisfaction.

Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory was the opposing theory for this study. According to the Vroom expectancy theory, employee behavior results from conscious choices to minimize pain and to increase pleasure. Vroom posited that an employee's job performance depends on experiences, personality, and knowledge. Vroom described *valence* as the manifestation of employees' values that motivate actions. Vroom noted that employees placed value on money (intrinsic satisfaction) because employees developed reward systems to satisfy needs and to foster a productive workplace. Vroom posited employees placed value on promotions, money, and intrinsic satisfaction; leaders may give rewards to satisfy the needs related to the various values of the employees. Expectancy theory has been used in past research to explore employee motivation and retention factors of employee turnover (Chang, Hsu, & Wu, 2015; Gould-Williams et al., 2014; Beynon, Jones, Pickernell, & Packham, 2015). Chang et al.

(2015) found that rewards can be extrinsic or intrinsic and are the most extensively accepted forms of motivation.

The motivation theories of Vroom (1964), Herzberg (1959), and Maslow (1943) pertain to job satisfaction. Herzberg's two-factor theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, and Vroom's expectancy theory are methods to understand motivation. According to Vroom's theory, employees are motivated when they expect their actions to be rewarded. Contrary to Herzberg and Maslow, Vroom did not focus his attention on needs, but on outcomes of human behavior. Additionally, while Herzberg and Maslow focused their attentions on the relationship between the needs and how to fulfill them, Vroom focused on the results from motivation and performance. Vroom concluded that, for an employee to be motivated, there must be an element of psychological importance (Thomas, 2014). According to Herzberg, intrinsic factors pertain to the nature of the work itself, such as recognition, achievement, opportunity for advancement, and responsibility. These needs can be compared to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Thomas, 2014).

Retention Challenges

A challenge for any leader is to retain talented and valuable employees. In the retail industry, the turnover rate is higher and a challenge faced by small business owners (Halebic & Nivin, 2012). Hancock et al. (2013) noted factors associated with retention included monetary satisfaction, opportunities for advancement, and employer to employee relationship. Turnover results in additional costs to the organization and can influence productivity (Keeling et al., 2013). Hancock et al. noted employee turnover was

a concern for business leaders who face the costs of employees leaving and the resultant effect on productivity. Employee turnover is ubiquitous in organizations (Hancock et al., 2013; Patel & Conklin, 2012; Samson, 2013). The continuous nature of employee turnover is a challenge for leaders who focus on the retention of highly valued and talented employees (George, 2015; Hancock et al., 2013). Effective screening methods for selecting qualified candidates in the employee recruitment process reduce turnover (Kam & Meyer, 2015). Gupta and Shaw (2014) claimed problems included loss of productivity, reduction in organizational size, the fluctuating job market, and reduction in quality of products and services.

Gupta and Shaw (2014) noted employee turnover leads to losses in organizational efficiency that result in suboptimal financial performance. An increase in turnover can affect the economic productivity of the organization (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). Excessive turnover debilitates a business's core processes and results in a slowing of the organization; Gupta and Shaw reported slowing of the supply chain reduced leaders' abilities to meet product demand. Gupta and Shaw also noted factors that might increase employee retention, such as performance incentives that align employees' goals with the goals of an organization. Leaders performing the roles of coaches or mentors could help employees, through incentives, reach or attain expectations for individual and organizational performance (Fisher, 2014; Gupta & Shaw, 2014; Kliegl & Weaver, 2014). Hancock et al. (2013) reported that some turnover is essential and beneficial to the economic productivity of the organization.

Demsky, Ellis, and Fritz (2014) and Fuwa (2014) found that work-family conflict altered employees' behaviors in the workplace; tardiness, absenteeism, and organizational commitment were examples of these behaviors. Existing conflicts between family and work changed employees' perceptions of the quality of both family life and work life (Friedman, & Westring, 2015; Hancke et al., 2014; Purvanova, 2014; Wayne, Casper, Matthews, & Allen, 2013; Webster & Beehr, 2013). Work and family conflicts negatively influenced productivity at the workplace (Deery, & Jago, 2015; Galea, Houkes, & De Rijk, 2014; Nohe & Sonntag, 2014). Offering flexible work hours reduce work-family conflict (Deery, & Jago, 2015).

High levels of voluntary turnover often occur when employees do not have satisfying experiences within their organizations. Herzberg (1959) noted that, for employees to experience job satisfaction, motivators must be present and the hygiene factors help to prevent employees from becoming dissatisfied. Baqutayan, Ariffin, and Raji (2015) noted that, within Maslow's hierarchy of needs model, reaching levels of satisfaction motivates employees. Heavey, Holwerda, and Hausknecht (2013) studied the causes and consequences of employee turnover and claimed high turnover rates were related to pay, inadequate performance appraisals, and job dissatisfaction among employees. Heavey et al. noted that employee turnover gave leaders opportunities to hire better-qualified employees. Heavey et al. noted that leaders should value new employees' engagements in providing coaching, mentoring, and training for new hires.

Many factors pertain to a low retention rate of retail industries employees (Grissom, Viano, & Selin, 2015; Xu, Zhong, & Wang, 2013). Among these factors are

workplace environment, low rate of pay, and lack of training (Hancock et al., 2013). According to Hancock et al. (2013), lack of training was a known factor of employee turnover. Hancock et al. reported the absence of training influenced employees' decisions to quit when employees could not perform job duties. Hancock et al. suggested that although factors such as low pay might affect employee retention rates, advancement and recognition for achievement could counter those effects. Similarly, Mertil and Brill (2015) conducted a case study about leaders in a healthcare organization. Mertil and Brill noted that retaining employees remains an ongoing challenge within any organization. Using Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory model, these authors found that training programs within the workplace support employees, result in decreases in employee turnover, and increase retention of employees.

Tang et al. (2014) showed employees had negative perceptions of retail jobs, which included low pay and no room for career advancement. According to Xu et al. (2013), the application of motivators helps employees achieve better performance, but may not entirely avert job dissatisfaction caused by the work environment. Factors that develop enthusiasm among employees decrease turnover rates and increase an employee's performance and organizational productivity (Baqutayan et al., 2015). These insights are consistent with Vroom's (1964) theory that encompasses the idea that motivation depends on employees' expectations. Brawley and Pury (2016) found employees' motivational levels depend on their expectations for advancement and recognition for achievement.

Small businesses compete with larger companies for labor resources. According to Halebic and Nivin (2012), competition for human resources by the small businesses in San Antonio becomes more difficult because of the disparities in compensation, resulting in higher employee turnover. Halebic and Nivin reported small businesses that offered benefits in the San Antonio area had a 26.2% lower chance of an employee voluntarily leaving in a given year; added benefits led to a lower change of employees leaving voluntarily.

As noted by Perko, Kinnunen, and Feldt (2014), building interpersonal relationships between employees and the supervisors had positive effects on retention. Perko et al. found relationships between subordinates and leaders were fundamental to satisfying, healthy, and productive work environments. Retention decreased when employees' dissatisfactions with the working conditions increased (Carlson, Hunter, Ferguson, & Whitten, 2014; Zhang et al., 2014).

Jansen and Samuel (2014) reported on retention issues among middle-level leaders. Based on results from a survey tool to assess intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Jansen and Samuel recommended that organizations should combine both extrinsic and intrinsic factors as goal achievement strategies for middle-level leaders. Jansen and Samuel suggested that, for these leaders to fulfill their roles, they must be motivated and understand the two-factor theory as proposed by Herzberg. Jansen and Samuel noted that middle-level leaders' primary responsibilities are to motivate employees toward the achievement of organizational goals, productivity, and profit generation. Jansen and Samuel found that job satisfaction leads to organizational success.

Known Causes of Employee Turnover

Factors associated with employee turnover include lack of training, poor working conditions, and ineffective leadership (Beattie et al., 2014; Karatepe, 2013; Mulki, Caemmerer, & Heggde, 2015; Sawa & Swift, 2013; Vispute, 2013). The increase in the turnover rate pose a retention threat for leaders because of the high replacement and training costs, loss of productivity and efficiency, and lower profitability (Singhapakdi, Lee, Sirgy, & Senasu, 2015; Tse, Huang, & Lam, 2013). Skilled employees are indispensable to organizations; Karatepe (2013) argued the cost of replacing talented employees remained problematic. Schur et al. (2014) studied the factors associated with the costs of employee turnover. Examples of replacement costs included recruitment and training new employees, hiring inducements, orientations, employment agency fees, and the costs of maintaining unskilled employees who filled the gaps left by lost employees. Examples of separation costs are teamwork disruptions, overtime payments to current employees, losses of valuable skill-sets, and payments of accrued vacation time. Table 2 depicts the replacement and separation costs of voluntary turnover.

Table 2

Replacement and Separation Costs of Voluntary Turnover

Replacement Costs	Separation Costs
Recruitment	Teamwork Disruptions
Training	Overtime Payment to Current Employees
Hiring Inducements	Loss of Valuable Skill-sets
Orientation	Payment of Accrued Vacation Time
Employment Agency Fees	

Note. Adapted from "A Comparative Review of Nurse Turnover Rates and Costs Across Countries," by C. M. Duffield, M. A. Roche, C. Homer, J. Buchan, and S. Dimitrelis, 2014, *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 70*, p. 2705.

Hom, Mitchell, Lee, and Griffeth (2012) noted the annual costs of employee turnover varied widely across different industries and organizations within the same industry. Examples of annual costs include replacement costs, recruitment costs, and training costs, placing increased demands on the human resources divisions of organizations. Hom et al. found the problem to be a global concern, attesting to the costly nature of turnover, its effect on the work environment, and its effects on quality and safety. According to Hom et al., the loss of trained staff caused reduced job satisfaction, loss of expertise, loss of work experience, and the loss of positive relationships between employees and between employees and customers. Employee turnover is a significant problem facing retail leaders, leading to reduced economic growth and a shortage of valuable and talented employees (Halebic & Nivin, 2012). Hom et al. emphasized the importance of leaders' active pursuits of understanding of their subordinates' reasons for voluntarily quitting jobs.

Companies invested in retention programs preserve staffing levels of individuals with skills and experiences, rather than reinvesting in the recruitment of new employees (Kovner, Brewer, Fatehi, & Jun, 2014). Kovner et al. (2014) found reduced investment in recruitment strategies was a cost-saving strategy for the companies. Kovner et al. verified that replacing employees increased the costs of recruitment, advertising, and training; the annual costs of replacing new employees ranged from $10,098 to $88,000 for the healthcare workforce. The costs related to turnover included decreased productivity and profitability (Kovner et al., 2014). Reduced investment in recruiting provided an opportunity for the company leaders to reinvest in employees rather than continue investing in the hiring and training.

Diversity in the Workforce

Diversity in the workforce creates productivity and helps to strengthen the company's bottom line (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013). Nkomo and Hoobler (2014) defined diversity as the unique characteristics different individuals bring into the workplace. The unique characteristics include age, race, gender, education background, work experience, family status, physical appearance, nationality, religious beliefs, and disability status.

The connection between workplace diversity and employee turnover is an issue addressed and debated by scholars. Chrobot-Mason and Aramovich (2013) found workplace diversity increases turnover rates when compared to workplaces with nondiverse staffing. Workplace diversity tended to isolate minority employees. Chrobot-Mason and Aramovich attributed employee isolation to differences in demographic

attributes. Chrobot-Mason and Aramovich showed that leaders perceived diversity training and mentoring programs added value to their organizations. Leaders could use diversity in the workplace to decrease employee attrition (Nkomo & Hoobler, 2014).

Effective leaders could combine workplace diversity and organizational climate to reduce employee turnover. Chrobot-Mason and Aramovich (2013) examined the relationship between employees' perceptions of diversity and intents to leave. Although Chrobot-Mason and Aramovich concluded that an employee's initiative had a positive effect on organizational performance, they also determined when employees perceived equal opportunities and fair treatment, intent to leave decreased.

Organizational Commitment

Differing definitions of organizational commitment are in the literature. Lam and Liu (2014) asserted the definition for organizational commitment was multidimensional, including the degree of orientation, value commitment, and employees' loyalties to the organization. Lam and Liu categorized three types of commitment: affective, normative, and continuance commitment.

An affective commitment is an employees' intention to stay with an organization based on an emotional attachment (Asgharian, Anvari, Ahmad, & Tehrani, 2015; Lam & Liu, 2014; Lu & Gursoy, 2016). Affective commitment factors include (a) achieving and meeting goals, (b) maintaining organizational membership, and (c) accepting the organization's goals and values (Wang, Weng, McElroy, Ashkanasy, & Lievens, 2014). Brockner, Senior, and Welch (2014) noted the affective commitment is the fundamental basis of shared values among employees in organizations.

Yucel, McMillan, and Richard (2014) defined normative commitment as committing to an organization based on ideology or a sense of obligation. Normative commitment is an employee's sense of responsibility to a place of employment (Yucel et al., 2014). Normative commitment is a simplified set of loyalty and duty values with a perceived sense of moral obligation to an organization (Yucel et al., 2014). Employees with normative commitment, who are able to cope with problems and adapt to the workplace environment, might have lower intentions to quit (Gellatly, Cowden, & Cummings, 2014; Katsikea, Theodosiou, & Morgan, 2015).

Continuance commitment occurrs when employees stay with the organization and contribute to its success (Gellatly et al., 2014; Sani, 2013; Sow, Anthony, & Berete, 2015). Continuance commitment includes factors, such as benefits received from the employer that are unique to a particular organization (Brockner et al., 2014). Employees who share continuance commitment with their employer have difficulties leaving the organization (Gellatly et al., 2014).

Cognitive-continuance is an aspect of the commitment to the organization that involves management consideration of the profits and costs associated with employees leaving their jobs (Garland, Hogan, Kelley, Kim, & Lambert, 2013). Costs to employees associated with leaving included the loss of relationships, organizational connections, and unwanted retirements. Garland et al. referred to continuance commitment as employees' perceptions of the consequences involved with moving from one employer to another. This type of commitment binds employees to their

organizations (Garland et al., 2013; Rathi, & Lee, 2015; Rodell, Breitsohl, Schröder, & Keating, 2016).

Garnes and Mathisen (2013) noted relationships between organizational commitment and work characteristics, such as organizational size, work assignment, social support, and job satisfaction. Garnes and Mathisen explored organizational commitment among long-term care staff and found employees' job satisfaction is influential on employees' commitment to the organization. The authors noted that committed, satisfied workers showed support and loyalty to their organizations and claimed committed employees contributed to the organization wholeheartedly (Garnes & Mathisen, 2013).

Garnes and Mathisen (2013) noted social involvement associated positively with commitment. Leaders empower employees by increasing responsibilities (Garnes & Mathisen, 2013). Empowered employees work with discretionary autonomy, experienced a sense of power in organizations, and apply desirable actions to improve organizational outcomes (Wayne et al., 2013). Empowered employees demonstrated increased organizational commitment to new employees that led to more social involvement in the organization (Garnes & Mathisen, 2013).

Organizational commitment is the employee's emotional bond to the organization (Wayne et al., 2013). Hogan, Lambert, and Griffin (2013) noted lacking organizational commitments related to subsequent increases in turnover rates. A study conducted by Marique, Stinglhamber, Desmette, Caesens, and De Zanet (2013) confirmed the relationship between organizational commitment and behavior in the workplace. When

employees had a commitment to the organization, employees supported the success of the organization. Wayne et al. (2013) noted that inadequate performance appraisals affected the organization negatively and increased intention to quit proportionately.

Retaining valuable and productive workers can lead to organizational success. Shahid and Azhar (2013) noted employee commitment is an important factor for leaders to retain employees and increase productivity. Shahid and Azhar explored employee commitment to find the factors that influenced job satisfaction. Shahid and Azhar found that employee and employer relationships fostered trust and employee commitment.

Colbert, Barrick, and Bradley (2014) noted an increase in organizational commitment resulted in stability for the organization and countered the costly effect of voluntary turnover. Tayfur et al. (2013) claimed that high organizational commitment related negatively to voluntary turnover. Tayfur et al. noted that when employees decided that leaving an organization would be disadvantageous these same employees displayed an affective commitment to the organization. Garnes and Mathisen (2013) reported that committed employees showed loyalty and support to the organization, which aided in decreasing high turnover rates. These findings are consistent with Vroom's expectancy theory, as noted by Purvis, Zagenczyk, and McCray (2015), who explained that employees make choices based on their expectations.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture encompasses the actions, behaviors, habits, and values found in the workplace (Giles & Yates, 2014; Harrison & Gordon, 2014; Lukas et al., 2013). Lam and Liu (2014) described organizational culture as the collective behaviors

as well as attitudes of people. The organizational culture includes the shared values, visions, symbols, and beliefs of the organization that promote an employee's understanding of the functions of the organization (Gerhart & Fang, 2014). Workplace performance increased when employees considered organizational culture more important than national culture and organizational culture affects employees' performance, interactions with peers, and retention (Selden & Sowa, 2015).

Organziational culture also pertains to workforce diversity. Joshua and Taylor-Abdulai (2014) discussed the effect of workplace diversity and its implication on performance and showed ineffectively managed diverse workforces were problememmatic for organizations. Werner, Kuiate, Noland, and Francia (2015) found organizations with a strong organizational culture managed and retained their human resources and workplace diversity effectively.

Lam and Liu (2014) noted organizational culture influences organizational commitment. Lam and Liu found a significant relationship between behavior in the workforce and organizational commitment. Lam and Liu indicated organizational culture related to a high level of performance and commitment. An organizational culture with leaders who reward employees for work quality related to less difficulty with retention; researchers also noted when leaders failed to acknowledge high achievers, employee attrition increased (Ertürk & Vurgun, 2014; Self & Self, 2014). Lam and Liu noted that leaders stifle morale in the workplace when they fail to acknowledge employees' exemplary work and those who work hard to achieve targets. Under such circumstances,

high achievers may choose to look elsewhere for employment with organizations that reinforce and raise employees' commitment levels (Lam & Liu, 2014).

Reinvesting in employees creates a strong organizational culture (Lukas et al., 2013). Shier, Khodyakov, Cohen, Zimmerman, and Saliba (2014) confirmed high turnover rates affected the core aspects of organizations, while investing in current employees created a strong organizational culture. Kovner et al. (2014) found high turnover rates were problematic to any organization and posed a negative effect on the organizational culture. San Antonio leaders of small retail businesses should invest in retention programs to create a strong organizational culture which can lead to organizational climate and workplace diversity conducive to reduced employee turnover.

Employees' Ages

Okun, Yeung, and Brown (2013) found the affective commitment positively correlated with employee age. Okun et al. claimed employees 55 or older had strong obligations (normative commitments) to their organizations. Okun et al. stated age was an important antecedent of organizational commitment. Okun et al. also noted age was the primary indicator of employee turnover. An employee's age or stage of life affected how he or she thought and acted. Okun et al. found young employees between the ages of 18 and 35 were highly motivated and energetic but often over-ambitious and reckless. Chang et al. (2013) noted younger employees were more likely to arrive at work early, remain focused, and were ready to achieve the highest goals possible.

Ouimet and Zarutskie (2014) found a higher employee turnover among younger employees than older employees. Younger employees, according to Ouimet and

Zarutskie, are uncertain of their abilities and more likely to explore several organizations in search of new opportunities. Okun et al. (2013) noted younger employees wanted new challenges, promotions, and higher pay. Younger employees tended not to remain in one organization and left organizations sooner in pursuit of other opportunities. Chang et al. (2013) noted leaders could mitigate the attrition of younger employees through contractual binding; contractual employment resulted in job tenure.

Okun et al. (2013) claimed employees aged 35 to 55 have different perspectives of their jobs that younger and older workers. Employees in between 35 and 55 were relatively stable, focused, and loyal to their organizations (Gibson & Sodeman, 2014; Okun et al., 2013). Okun et al. noted younger employees (35 and under) were more likely to move to new jobs than employees aged 35 to 55, when poor working conditions existed.

Workers older than 55 believe they are valued because of the experiences they offered their employers (Okun et al., 2013). Older age groups tend to be knowledgeable, experienced, and skilled at performing tasks (Wolfson, Cavanagh, & Kraiger, 2014). Older workers often possess the valuable internal knowledge they might confidently transfer to the younger employees, thereby helping organizational leaders retain organizational knowledge (Eastman, Iyer, Liao-Troth, Williams, & Griffin, 2014; Wolfson et al., 2014).

Retirement is also an important factor related to employee turnover. Hancock et al. (2013) found that the relationship between age and turnover remained controversial across industries. Hancock et al. showed how older employees' turnover intentions

differed from turnover intentions of younger employees who worked for the same

employer. Griffin et al. (2014) noted older employees (55+) often intend to stay in the

workforce rather than retiring early. There were several factors associated with this

group's intent to stay; for example, pay satisfaction, job location, job satisfaction, and

benefits were factors supporting the employees plans to stay (Gilles, Burnand, &

Peytremann-Bridevaux, 2014; Kim, & Fernandez, 2015).

Organizational Change

Change in the business environment is a natural and inescapable part of

operations all leaders experience; leaders must adapt to or embrace change to ensure

organizational survival (Griffin et al., 2014). Political and industry forces, geography,

technology, and innovation could transform a business environment. Organizational

change occurs when leaders employ business strategies to modify the company's market

position (Thompson, Shea, Sikora, Perrewé, & Ferris, 2013).

Business leaders, adapting to cultural transformations, could decrease employee

turnover. When employees failed to adapt to cultural transformations, the result was an

increase in the rates of turnover (Thompson et al., 2013). Griffin et al. (2014) also found

age had a significant relationship to various factors associated with change, such as

employees' responses to organizational changes (Griffin et al., 2014). Sonenshein,

Dutton, Grant, Spreitzer, and Sutcliffe (2013) found younger employees resigned because

of a lack of development in organizational change.

When employees perceived organizational changes as positive, those employees

became motivated to remain working for the organization and loyalty increased. Griffin

et al. (2014) noted when employees perceived positive changes, they were more likely to

support the organization; if leaders disappoint the workforce, then loss of employees

occurred. Similarly, when employees viewed changes negatively, rifts occurred in the

organization that stimulated resistance. When business leaders decide to raise the number

of working hours or the workload without an increase in compensation, employees did

not view this as progress, and turnover increased (Griffin et al., 2014).

Leadership related to the success of organizational change. Leadership was a

valuable resource within any organization (Deichmann, & Stam, 2015; Dinh et al., 2014).

A leader's role in the organization is to structure ways to implement change by managing

attitudes and behavior of employees working together (Griffin et al., 2014). van den

Heuvel, Demerouti, Bakker, and Schaufeli (2013) noted leadership qualities were

essential for successful organizational change.

Leadership

Leadership remains a broad topic of continued interest with many definitions

(Dinh et al., 2014). Colbert, Judge, Choi, and Wang (2012) claimed researchers did not

have a clear or consistent definition of leadership, although broadly leadership is a set of

functions used to set the tone for organizations. Boehe (2016) noted that Fiedler molded

and developed the least preferred coworker contingency model in 1967 that focused on

the relationship between traits and the effectiveness of leadership. Boehe noted that in the

study conduct by Fiedler, the most favorable situations for leaders were when leaders had

quality working relationships with followers. Markham (2012) supported contingency

theory by emphasizing the external and internal components of successful leadership.

Researchers' interests shifted to defining leadership theories, with emphasis on the transformational leadership theory (Markham, 2012).

Transformational leaders are capable of inspiring and connecting with followers by developing relationships focused on respect, trust, growth, achievement, admiration, and confidence-building (Agnihotri & Krush, 2015; Ambrose, Schminke, & Mayer 2013; Antonakis & House, 2014; Byrne et al., 2014; Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014; Effelsberg, Solga, & Gurt, 2014; Groves, 2014; Poole, 2016). These interpersonal relationships increased organizational performance (Braun, Peus, Weisweiler, & Frey, 2013). Greasley and Bocârnea (2014) determined that across different industries, a link exists between leadership and job satisfaction. Effective leadership could transform the profitability of an organization and promote job satisfaction among workers.

Leaders could improve work environments when leaders have authorities to address employees' concerns (Bryant & Allen, 2013; Leory, Anseel, Gardner, & Sels, 2015). Craig, Allen, Reid, Riemenschneider, and Armstrong (2013) highlighted factors in employee turnover that leaders influence, including organizational commitment, job involvement, and job satisfaction. Leaders ensure the needs of their employees (Hamdani, Valcea, & Buckley, 2014).

The work environment was an important factor in employee turnover studies. Barsade and O'Neill (2014) noted, in the absence of certain workplace features (health and safety provisions, proper lightings, or furniture), employees tended to leave the organization. Barsade and O'Neill concluded leaders must make concerted efforts to improve the work environment to control turnover rates and issues associated with the

problem. When leaders strived to build healthy relationships with their employees, turnover rates decreased (Hamdani et al., 2014).

Arthur and Hardy (2014) conducted a study with the field-based quasi-experimental design to examine the effectiveness of transformational leadership intervention in remediating poor performance. Arthur and Hardy found quality leadership had a positive effect that led to a reduction in turnover rates. This study provided evidence that transformational leadership could buffer negative environmental effects increasing employee turnover rate. Hamdani et al. (2014) offered another perspective, claiming when leaders were exemplary, subordinates' turnover rates lowered significantly.

Job Satisfaction

Macintosh and Krush (2014) and Singhapakdi et al. (2014) claimed job satisfaction is significant to organizations and leaders' behaviors contribute to the employees' experiences. However, differing definitions of job satisfaction were present in the literature. Kam and Meyer (2015) described job satisfaction as an employee's gratification from a job. Experiencing a satisfying emotional response from of one's job is job satisfaction (Kemp, Kopp, & Kemp, 2013). Job satisfaction depends on different internal and external organizational factors; leadership, organizational climate, pay, and working conditions affected satisfaction (Hancock et al., 2013).

Researchers demonstrated the presence of job satisfaction in the workplace had a significant effect on the employees (Ali et al., 2014). Millán, Hessels, Thurik, and Aguado (2013) found less turnover rates in organizations with satisfied employees. The

absence of job satisfaction was also a factor related to employee turnover (Barrick, Mount, & Li, 2013; Kumar, Dass, & Topaloglu, 2014; Listl, Galloway, Mossey, & Marcenes, 2015; Melsom, 2014; Tabaj, Pastirk, Bitenc, & Masten, 2015). Ali et al. (2014) noted that satisfied employees were likely to have higher levels of commitment to the organization.

Satisfied employees amplified organizational performance (Ali et al., 2014). Swider and Zimmerman (2014) conducted a study on the effects of prior performance on future withdrawal. These authors indicated a direct connection between job satisfaction and organizational performance. Satisfaction related to organizational success and profitability (Ali et al., 2014; Appelbaum, Karasek, Lapointe, & Quelch, 2015), because satisfied employees increased organizational profitability (Singhapakdi et al., 2015). Wang, Tsai, and Tsai (2014) indicated employees who express dissatisfaction with their jobs had higher turnover rates.

Ali et al. (2014) noted several researchers explored the relationship between employee job satisfaction and leadership. Researchers explored the effect of leadership styles on job satisfaction in service-oriented, healthcare, and education settings (Anseel, Beatty, Shen, Lievens, & Sackett, 2015; Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald, & Nguyen-Quang, 2015; Milman, & Dickson, 2014). Leaders could create a working environment that would have a positive influence on job satisfaction (Ali et al., 2014; Reinsch & Gardner, 2014).

Ali et al. (2014) found there were certain styles of leadership that could increase employees' job satisfaction. Arthur and Hardy (2014) noted transformational leadership

style decreased employee stress. Byrne et al. (2014) found transformational leaders encouraged employees to surpass expectations. The essential element connecting employee job satisfaction and leadership, according to Arthur and Hardy, was self-efficacy; transformational leaders encouraged self-efficacy by empowering employees. Ali et al. noted leadership was about helping employees to maximize their potential; the authors claimed transformational leaders help employees apply their highest capabilities to reach goals within their organizations. Ali et al. noted effective leaders had to ensure good communication skills and define goals.

Turnover Intention

Employee turnover could occur in various ways. Two categories of employee turnover are involuntary and voluntary (Larkin et al., 2013). Voluntary turnover occurs when employees choose to leave the organization (Spell, Eby, & Vandenberg, 2014; Vujicic, Jovicic, Lalic, Gagic, & Cvejanov, 2014). Involuntary turnover occurs when leaders ask the employees to leave the organization (Larkin et al., 2013). Typically, terminations are parts of downsizing initiatives and a particular employee may be a poor fit within the workplace. Involuntary turnover occurs when leaders determine the necessity of terminating employees (Larkin et al., 2013). Leaders have little control over involuntary turnover, especially when the decision to let an employee go is part of a reorganization of the workforce (Larkin et al., 2013; Vujicic et al., 2014).

Vardaman et al. (2014) viewed intent to quit as the predictors of turnover. Involuntary and voluntary turnover, as well as intent to quit, are costly for organizations. Direct costs to the organizations include reduced productivity from

suboptimal morale and the costs of testing, recruiting, training, and selecting new employees (Larkin et al., 2013). An employee's decision to pursue voluntary turnover may include multiple factors, such as the length of time the employee worked for the company, the incentives offered, and the organizational culture (Larkin et al., 2013; Wang, Zhao, & Thornhill, 2015). When employees determined that working at a particular company was no longer worth the time or effort, these employees left the company in search of new employment (Larkin et al., 2013).

The relationship between turnover intention and job satisfaction was relevant to research in organizational behavior (Hancock et al., 2013; Kim & Park, 2014). Sosik, Chun, Blair, and Fitzgerald (2014) showed employees' personality traits had an effect on turnover intentions. Employees with low emotional constancy had the intention to quit their jobs. Sosik et al. found employees who had low job satisfaction also had higher intentions to quit their jobs than those with high satisfaction levels. Larkin et al. (2013) and Spell et al. (2014) found associations between leadership, job dissatisfaction, stress, lack of organizational commitment, poor working environment, education level, retention, organizational culture, and employee turnover.

Kowalski and Kelley (2013) conducted a study about shortages of nursing faculty. Kowalski and Kelly found shortages of employees led leaders to recruit new employees, thereby increasing high replacement costs. Kowalski and Kelley found that a shortage of employees following voluntary turnover remains a universal problem. Employee turnover was a concern of interest for all leaders seeking to identify the main determinants and to

develop strategies to decrease employees' intention to quit the organization or industry (Hancock et al., 2013; Pourshaban, Basurto-Dávila, & Shih, 2015).

Leaders who had long-term goals to retain employees promoted healthy relationships, employee commitment, organizational values, visions, and missions to achieve organizational productivity and efficiency (Hamdani et al., 2014). Leaders who sought ways to retain employees helped educate subordinates about the organizational vision and mission (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). Leaders continued to lack comprehensive understanding about the reasons employees voluntarily quit their jobs (Lukas et al., 2013).

Workplace Stress

Stress is a part of everyday life. Gilmartin (2013) defined stress as a reaction to demanding situations such as pressure, emotional strain, tension, and discomfort in the workplace. Gilmartin noted stressors such as competition and time constraints were beneficial and valuable to performance in the workplace. Gilmartin noted stressors such as workplace injuries, emotional responses to stress, such as decreases in job satisfaction, can lead to a loss of employees and have a negative influence on performance in the workplace. Gilmartin found workplace stress reduced organizational performance and increased absenteeism. Gilmartin found improved work environment reduce stress.

Workplace stress is a concern for leaders who focused on retaining employees. Factors associated with workplace stress include leaders' relationships with coworkers, workload, isolation, long hours, a toxic working environment, and limited advancement Bish, Kenny, & Nay, 2014; Faucett, Corwyn, & Poling, 2013; Newton & Teo, 2014).

Greenbaum, Quade, Mawritz, Kim, and Crosby (2014) noted the retail environment could also be stressful to employees forced to cope with demanding and challenging customers. Stress affects the retail workplace negatively, contributing to high turnover rates, employee shortages, and low performance. Causes of stress included role ambiguity, financial insecurity, role conflict, and limited career growth (Bish et al., 2014; Faucett et al., 2013; Newton & Teo, 2014; Otto, Mohr, Kottwitz, & Korlek, 2014; Zhao, Mattila, & Ngan, 2014). Baumann (2015) noted that stress factors in the workplace might lead to employees seeking employment elsewhere.

Transition

Section 1 was an introduction to the study, the background of the business problem, problem statement, purpose statement, the nature of the study, and research question. Definitions of terms and explanations of the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations provided additional context for understanding the study. The review of the professional and academic literature included a critical analysis and synthesis of the available peer-reviewed books and peer- journals.

In the literature review, I used current professional and academic literature to explore the business problem. The relevant topics that emerged from the literature included retention challenges, the known causes of employee turnover, diversity in the workforce, organizational commitment, organizational culture, employee age, organizational change, leadership, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and workplace stress. Review of the literature revealed employee turnover poses significant issues for leaders (Larkin et al., 2013). Issues include loss in productivity, the need to train new

staff, and recruitment of new employees (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013; Carpenter & Berry, 2014; Gangai, 2014; Griffin et al., 2014; Lu & Kao, 2013; Strom, Sears, & Kelly, 2014). Included in this section was an overview of theoretical considerations regarding the study of turnover in the retail industry. The theories I used to frame this study were Herzberg two-factor theory as the main theory, the supporting theory of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Vroom's expectancy theory as the opposing theory.

The literature review indicated that employee turnover is multidimensional. High levels of voluntary turnover often occur when employees do not have satisfying experiences within their organizations (Xu et al., 2013). Hancock et al. (2013) noted turnover related to dissatisfaction with pay, lack of opportunities for advancement, and poor employer to employee relationships. Greenbaum et al. (2014) noted the retail environment could also be stressful, affecting the workplace negatively and contributing to high turnover rates, employee shortages, and low performance. Greenhaus, Ziegert, & Allen (2012) found family-work conflict and lack of organizational commitment positively related to turnover. Additional factors associated with employee turnover include lack of training, poor working conditions, and ineffective leadership (Greenhaus, et al., 2012; Karatepe, 2013; Vispute, 2013).

Organizational commitment is the employee's emotional bond to the organization (Wayne et al., 2013). Hogan et al. (2013) noted when employees lacked organizational commitment a subsequent increase in turnover rates occurred. Okun et al. (2013) found affective commitment positively correlated with employee age. Arthur and Hardy (2014) found quality leadership improved commitment that led to a reduction in turnover rates.

When employees perceived leadership and organizational changes as positive, employees were more motivated to work for the organization and loyalty increased (Griffin et al., 2014). San Antonio leaders of small retail businesses should work to increase positive organizational changes; so their employees become motivated, remain working with their company, and support the organization.

Hom et al. (2012) noted the annual costs of employee turnover varied widely across different industries and organizations within the same industry. Companies that invest in retention programs preserve staffing levels of individuals with desirable skills and experience, rather than investing in the recruitment of new employees (Kovner et al., 2014). Reinvesting in employees creates a strong organizational culture and can lead to workplace diversity and an organizational climate conducive to reduced employee turnover. San Antonio leaders of small retail businesses should invest in retention programs to create a strong organizational culture which can lead to organizational climate and workplace diversity conducive to reduced employee turnover.

Section 2 contains the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, and the description of the processes for the recruitment of the study participants. The section also includes the discussion of the research methodology and the case study design. Strategies to improve the trustworthiness of the research follow elaboration about the details of the population and sampling, ethical research, data collection, and analysis.

Section 3 included the purpose statement, the research question, and the presentation of the findings. This section also includes the application of professional practices, discussions of how this study applies to social change, the presentation of the

findings, some recommendations for further action, and reflections of my experience in the study.

Section 2: The Project

Statisticians at the USBLS (2012) reported the number of retail employees was 14.77 million in the United States. In September 2012, April's rate of employee turnover in the retail industry was 2.8% (USBLS, 2013). This level of turnover undermines leaders' abilities to sustain retail operations, increase productivity, and maintain profitability (Keeling et al., 2013). Keeling et al. (2013) noted the estimated cost of replacing lower paid retail employees was $3,637 per person. The lack of strategies useful for reducing employee turnover prevents leaders from achieving high retention percentages. According to Herzberg (1959), if employees' needs are not met, employees will leave the organization and seek new employment; the result of losing employees lowers the organization's performance and results in a high turnover rate. This study involved the exploration of strategies small business retail leaders used to successfully reduce employee turnover.

Section 2 includes explanations and descriptions related to the role of the researcher, participant selection process, the selected research method, and the research design. Section 2 also includes details about the population and sampling, ethics in qualitative research, planned data collection processes, and the chosen data analysis technique. I also address research reliability and validity in this section.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the strategies leaders of small retail businesses use to reduce the problem of employee turnover. The population was six owners and managers in small retail businesses in San Antonio, Texas who used

strategies that led to reduced employee turnover. The results of this study may improve small business retail leaders' understanding about the research problem and may lead to the development, and application of strategies to reduce turnover and generate financial savings for their organizations. The findings from the study might contribute to positive social change if leaders apply successful strategies to reduce employee turnover rates, leading to reductions in unemployment, stabilization of communities, and improvements to the human and social conditions outside the workplace.

Role of the Researcher

My role in this study was to conduct semistructured interviews and an online focus group, explore literature, and synthesize information related to the stated business problem. Koch, Niesz, and McCarthy (2013) and Siegle, Rubenstein, and Mitchell (2014) explained that the role of a qualitative researcher is to bring a person's experiences to the study, seek to understand the meaning of the research problem, adapt to the perception of cultural phenomena, remain open to change, and be mindful of personal values. Abma and Stake (2014) contended that in a qualitative case study design, the role of the researcher is to create in-depth descriptions and analysis based on one or multiple cases. My roles encompassed the recommendations of Koch et al., Siegle et al., and Abma and Stake and extended to recruiting the participants, collecting the data, analyzing the data, and evaluating the findings. Presenting the results and recommendations in an organized and objective format were the tasks necessary to complete this research.

My relationship with this topic was from a consumer's perspective, having observed the regularity and cyclical nature of employee turnover. I recognized the challenges and fluctuations of employee turnover contributed negatively to the economy and profitability of an organization. This pattern drew my interest to explore the problem. I had no business or personal relationships with the prospective participants in this study. I never worked in the retail industry and any general knowledge of the topic came from the literature review and my experiences as a consumer.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of a researcher's university holds each researcher accountable for complying with the ethical standards set forth by the university (Denison & Stillman, 2012). Following the university's ethical guidelines promoted the production of quality in my research. I ensured all research processes met the university's standards for research quality and reported the findings without bias. The university's IRB approved this study before data collection began.

Researchers at the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research created the Belmont Report to outline ethical requirements for research involving human beings (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 1979). The requirements are justice, beneficence, and respect for persons (Adams & Miles, 2013). A researcher must apply justice appropriately; each participant had equal benefits, burdens, and access to the research, as recommended by Adams and Miles (2013). Beneficence occurs when researchers maximize all possible benefits and the best interests of the participants and minimize likely harms to the participants (Adams

& Miles, 2013). I treated participants as autonomous agents and protected them by following the standards for the protection of participants, as outlined in the Belmont Report.

Koch et al. (2013) and Overgaard (2015) suggested that a researcher can mitigate bias by using a systematic and disciplined process called bracketing to avoid preconceived ideas about the topic under study. I used bracketing to avoid bias during the research process and data analysis phase. Methodological triangulation, according to Yin (2013), involves the use of multiple sources and helps to minimize bias. I also used methodological triangulation to mitigate bias, by using two data sources to enhance credibility and strengthen the trustworthiness of the study. Andraski, Chandler, Powell, Humes, and Wakefield (2014) noted member checking is useful for increasing the accuracy of the interpretations following transcriptions. Using member checking ensures that a researcher captures the correct meanings and word choice (Archbold, Dahle, & Jordan, 2014; Fusch & Fusch, 2015; Forber-Pratt, 2015; Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). I used member checking to reduce personal biases by allowing the participants to analyze my interpretations of the interview and focus group data and comment on them. I conducted member checking by interpreting data provided to me by the participants, then sharing the interpretations of a one- to two-page summary of the key findings with each participant. The process entailed opportunities for each participant to comment on the interpretations and provide possible explanations for the findings.

The rationale for developing an interview protocol and an online focus group protocol was to ensure the consistency of research execution and the quality of data

collection (Brown et al., 2013). Yin (2014) suggested using a protocol to guide data collection efforts. Bond et al. (2014) noted that a researcher should follow the same interview procedures with all participants. I created an interview protocol (Appendix A) and an online focus group protocol (Appendix B) and I presented the interview questions for the business owners (Appendix C) and the focus group questions for the managers (Appendix D) to each participant and record responses in a consistent manner.

Participants

When researching or exploring businesses as systems, researchers need to identify what strategies are effective and useful (Palinkas et al., 2013; Teeuw et al., 2014). Lucero et al. (2016) and Yin (2014) noted that a qualitative researcher should conduct a study using a single unit or multiple units for analysis. Kazadi, Lievens, and Mahr (2015) noted that using purposeful selection for a limited number of cases facilitates the gathering of valuable knowledge and enhances the data identified in the literature review. I purposefully selected two owners of small businesses for interviews and four managers of small businesses for an online focus group. All of the participants led or managed small businesses in the retail industry in San Antonio, Texas with 90 or fewer employees and successfully developed and applied strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover.

The primary strategy I used to gain access to participants was use of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce database and Alamo Heights Chamber of Commerce database to obtain the publicly available website directory of small business owners in the retail industry. The publicly available directories included the company

names, goods or services sold, contact names, addresses, telephone numbers,websites, and electronic mail addresses of the businesses in the retail industry. I used the Trustoria Directory of US Professional database to obtain publicly available information of managers in the retail industry. The publicly available directory included manager names, industry employed, e-mail addresses, and phone number of the professional. I contacted all of the owners and managers by e-mail addresses to introduce the study and describe the criteria for participation. I e-mailed the business owners invitational research flyer (Appendix E) using the publicly available addresses provided by the Chamber of Commerce organizations and the manager invitational research flyer (Appendix F) using the publicly available addresses provided by the Trustoria Directory of US Professional database. I used the publicly available telephone numbers to follow up with prospective participants, to ensure prospective participants received the invitations, and to offer additional information about the study and answer additional questions.

Elder (2014) noted that establishing and defining criteria are important in the research protocol. Palinkas et al. (2013) and Teeuw et al. (2014) claimed eligibility requirements increase trustworthiness and ethical qualities within the study. Eligible participants had to meet the following criteria for inclusion in this study. The criteria for the inclusions of small business retail owners and managers who successfully developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover were as follows. Retail owners and managers must have been employees in the small business retail industry in companies that employed 90 or fewer employees and operated in San Antonio, Texas with an annual

turnover rate of 7.5% or less. Participants must have demonstrated that they served in the same position for 2 or more years and had to be able to read, write, and speak English fluently. Participants who elected to contribute to the synchronous online focus group were comfortable with technology to the extent that they were able to access the WebEx meeting room and call into the meeting room using the telephone. Retail owners and managers who successfully developed and applied strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover and who met these criteria were eligible to participate in this study. Retail owners and managers who did not meet all of the criteria were not eligible to participate in this study. Screening of all participants occurred after personal contact with business owners and managers through publicly available contact information from the Trustoria US Professional and the Chamber of Commerce organizations. The screening process involved the self-report of individuals who claimed to meet the criteria for the study. Participants who claimed to meet the criteria and who signed an informed consent form were eligible to participate in interviews or online focus group. Interested prospective participants chose between completing a semistructured interview or a synchronous online focus group.

Bryson, Quick, Slotterback, and Crosby (2013) and Namageyo-Funa et al. (2014) emphasized the need for a researcher to use different strategies that increase visibility to gain access to participants. Gaining access depends on a researcher's professional and personal characteristics and others' perceptions of the researcher (Birchall, 2014; Nudzor, 2013). The primary strategy I used to gain access to participants was use of the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce database and Alamo

Heights Chamber of Commerce database to obtain their publicly available website

directory of small businesses in the retail industry. The publicly available directory

included the company names, goods or services sold, contact names, addresses,

telephone numbers, websites, and e-mail addresses of businesses in the retail industry. I

used the Trustoria Directory of US Professional database to obtain publicly available

information of managers in the retail industry. The publicly available directory

included manager names, industry employed, e-mail addresses, and phone number of

the professional. Contacting all of the establishments by e-mail addresses introduced

the study and described the criteria for participation. I e-mailed the business owners

invitational research flyer (Appendix E) using the publicly available addresses provided

by the Chamber of Commerce organizations and the manager invitational research flyer

(Appendix F) using the publicly available addresses provided by the Trustoria

Directory of US Professional database. I used publicly available telephone numbers to

follow up with prospective participants, to ensure prospective participants received the

invitations, and to offer additional information about the study and answer additional

questions.

Trust, respect, and consistent communication are fundamental for building

researcher and participant relationships (Abma & Stake, 2014; Boblin et al., 2013; Siegle

et al., 2014). I developed a working relationship with the participants through initial

conversations that included discussing the business problem, the background of the

problem, and the purpose of the study, and answering freely any and all questions about

the study. Providing every participant with a copy of the informed consent forms and

scheduling appointments and interviews at the convenience of each participant helped build a working relationship with every participant. I enhanced working relationships with the participants by maintaining confidentiality, setting aside any preconceived notions about them, and sharing the research findings with them.

<div align="center">**Research Method and Design**</div>

Sandelowski (2014b) identified three research methodologies: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Kastner, Antony, Soobiah, Straus, and Tricco (2016) suggested that, after a researcher develops the research question, the inquiry should match a method and the design should result in optimal data. The qualitative method allows a researcher to observe and record the participants' behaviors in natural settings (Bevan, 2014). After exploring all three methods, I selected the qualitative method and exploratory multiple case study design.

Research Method

Qualitative researchers seek to gather deep understandings about human behaviors and the reasons for such behaviors (Allen, 2015; Sandelowski, 2014a). Yin (2014) noted that a qualitative study is most suitable for research when the researcher asks *why* or *how* questions and when the researcher has little or no control of the outcome. The qualitative research process is useful for obtaining information about participants' perspectives and experiences, captured in textual data that can lead to themes and findings (Allen, 2015; Nassaji, 2015). The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because, according to Allen (2015), the researcher can (a) identify participants' experiences and perspectives, (b) interpret qualitative data to gain

insights, (c) evaluate a problem within a given context with the purpose of searching for answers, and (d) explore strategies and practices. Nyberg et al. (2014) also discussed how researchers can suggest strategies and practices based on qualitative research. I used the qualitative research method in this study to collect, analyze, and interpret data pertaining to retail leaders' depictions of successfully developed and applied strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover.

Quantitative researchers, according to Franz, Worrell, and Vögele (2013), examine variables, formulate and test hypotheses, and interpret the findings and results. Quantitative researchers use the quantitative method to analyze data numerically (Allen, 2015; Babones, 2015; Nyberg et al., 2014) and they do not seek to understand the in-depth aspects of a phenomenon (Groeneveld et al., 2015; Franz et al., 2013). Quantitative researchers, according to Franz et al. (2013), are less subjective, but frequently fail to capture the contextual elements of qualitative research, important in some studies. I rejected the quantitative research method for this study because the quantitative method would require gathering numerical data and would not reveal the specific descriptive experiences of the participants. I also did not chose the quantitative research method because quantitative researchers rely upon statistical processes to test hypotheses. I intended to explore managerial strategies and perspectives, rather than testing hypotheses through statistical analysis. I also rejected the quantitative method because such a method would not provide a thorough description of the strategies applied successfully by the participants to reduce employee turnover.

Frels and Onwuegbuzie (2013) defined mixed-method study as a practical and academic synthesis based on quantitative and qualitative research methods. In the mixed-method approach, researchers use qualitative research for one phase and quantitative for another phase to examine and analyze numerical data to test hypotheses (Franz et al., 2013; Jervis & Drake, 2014; McKim, 2015; Sparkes, 2014; Sandelowski, 2014b). Christ (2014) stated the combination of both methods is of value to researchers pursuing a triangulation paradigm, but involves a great amount of time and resources to collect and analyze voluminous data. I rejected a mixed-method approach for this study because of time constraints; mixed methodology also entails the broader research experience I lacked to execute both methods simultaneously.

Research Design

Yin (2014) noted that case study design is useful when conducting research with groups, environments, and organizations. Hibbert, Sillince, Diefenbach, and Cunliffe (2014) and Yin (2013) noted the use of an exploratory design is to understand the real-life context in which the problem occurs. Case studies, according to Yin (2014), help researchers to answer questions that begin with *what* and *how*, as compared to *what*, *where*, and *who*.

Yin (2014) subdivided case studies into either single or multiple case studies and discussed three categories: (a) explanatory, (b) descriptive, and (c) exploratory. Yin noted that single case studies focus on a single event, person, or organization and multiple case studies involve the study of several distinct units. The study of several different small businesses in the retail industry involves multiple cases. Yin noted that explanatory case

study helps in clarification of causal relationships used to develop a theory. Hall and Jurow (2015) and Sangster-Gormley (2013) suggested descriptive case studies pertain to the generation of descriptions of the phenomenon that focus on particular features. Exploratory case study, according to Yin, involves the study of distinct phenomena with a focus on patterns in the data and models that help explain them. Hibbert et al. (2014) described exploratory design as focusing on *what* questions, involving a well-articulated plan to explore answers to research questions derived from theory or prior research. Yin (2014) noted that multiple case study researchers explore the differences within and between cases. I chose an exploratory multiple case study design for this study because there was a need to explore strategies retail leaders use to reduce the problem of employee turnover in the retail industry.

Case study researchers typically concentrate on particular events or situations (Langley et al., 2013; Kidd et al., 2016). Yin (2013) claimed that recording the experiences of participants to understand their real life situations provides the focus for the case study design or a phenomenological design. Elo et al. (2014) noted that phenomenological researchers explore unique human situations or encounters from different perspectives with the purpose of focusing on the essence of the meaning of those shared experiences. Walsh et al. (2015) stated that phenomenological design is appropriate for researchers who attempt to establish a holistic view of participants' life experience. I rejected the phenomenological approach for this study because I did not intend to obtain a holistic picture of the essence of meaning of the experiences of retail

leaders; instead, I was interested in the strategies applied by leaders to reduce the problem of employee turnover.

Ethnographic study is useful when exploring cultural traits of a group of participants and interpreting their social interactions (Tobin & Tisdell, 2015; Walsh et al., 2015). Ethnography design is useful when a researcher observes an event or happening in a natural setting (Farren, 2014). Tobin and Tisdell (2015) noted that ethnography is the study of cultures through interpretation, close observation, and reading. Tobin and Tisdell suggested that ethnographic researchers work in the field with immersion in the culture they are studying. I rejected an ethnographic study because I would not be exploring cultural traits of a group of participants and did not intend to become immersed in the field or culture studied.

Data saturation, according to Elo et al. (2014) and Siegle et al. (2014) occurs when no new data, coding, or themes emerge from the information collected. Yin (2013) suggested that if data saturation is not achievable, the interviews should continue until data saturation is evident. I continued to conduct additional interviews with participants until no new data appear to emerge from the data collection efforts.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was retail owners and managers from small businesses in the retail industry in San Antonio, Texas who successfully developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover. The small business owners were members of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and Alamo Heights Chamber of Commerce with publicly available contact information. The managers

were registered members of Trustoria US Professional directory with publicly available contact informatin. For the purposes of this case study design, small businesses were those with 90 or fewer employees with an annual turnover rate of 7.5% or less. Lucero et al. (2016) and Yin (2013) and Yin (2014) noted that a population is a collection of individuals with similar characteristics. The retail owners and managers in small businesses with 90 or fewer employees in San Antonio, Texas represented the population for this case study.

The city of San Antonio is in South Central Texas (Cunningham et al., 2015). This region of the United States shares borders with the Mexican states. The border includes Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana (Hotez et al., 2012). Halebic and Nivin (2012) revealed that businesses employing fewer than five employees comprise the majority percentage of businesses in San Antonio. The retail trade drives job growth in the state of Texas (Halebic & Nivin, 2012). Halebic and Nivin claimed the retail industry is the second largest industry employer in the San Antonio metropolitan area, employing almost 60,000 workers. As major metropolitan markets of Texas exceeded the country's output growth, it is not surprising that consumer purchasing power in Texas sustains superior retail spending (Halebic & Nivin, 2012).

A qualitative researcher can conduct a case study using a single unit or multiple units of analysis within the same or different settings (Lucero et al., 2016; Yin, 2013; Yin, 2014). The population of retail leaders from multiple businesses in the retail industry of San Antonio, Texas was appropriate for the selection of cases in a multiple case study.

There were more retail industry small business owners and managers in San Antonio. A census was not possible and a sampling strategy, as described below, applied to the selection of cases from the larger population.

Elo et al. (2014) noted that sampling strategies must align with the purpose of the study. The sampling method for the study was a purposeful criterion-based sampling, based on self-report and publicly available contact and company information. Using purposeful criterion-based sampling method is helpful for screening participants who have information critical to the intended discoveries of the study (Conte, 2014; Frasca et al., 2014). I used purposeful criterion-based sampling to ensure participants met the criteria that had succeeded in develop strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover. This purposeful sampling strategy is appropriate for researchers who are unable to include every member of the population in the research and who depend on information-rich participants who can provide in-depth data that can lead to answers to the research question (Hyett, Kenny, & Dickson-Swift, 2014).

The sample size for this study was two retail owners and four managers from multiple small business retail organizations in San Antonio, Texas who successfully developed and applied strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover. The rationale for using a small sample, according to Frasca et al. (2014), is to obtain in-depth data from data collection efforts including interviews and a focus group with the participants. Qualitative researchers use small sample sizes compared to quantitative researchers, who usually use larger sample sizes for statistical purposes (Blew, Lee, Farr,

Schiferl, & Going, 2014). Siegle et al. (2014) argued that in the qualitative study, there are no set restrictions or guidelines for sample size. Siegle et al. further noted that qualitative researchers using purposeful criterion-based sampling must rely upon their observational and analytical capabilities with respect to data about participants' experiences to determine if data are sufficient for answering the research question.

Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Fontenot (2013) suggested that sample size depends on the purpose of the inquiry, what the researcher wants to know, what led to credibility, what is at stake, what is useful, what can be done in the allotted time, and what resources are available. Englander (2016) and Englander (2012) suggested that a sample size should be sufficiently representative of the population. Harf et al. (2015) claimed that between three and six subjects comprise a reasonable sample size. The selection of the sample size of six was consistent with the recommendations of Harf et al. (2015). A sample size of six improved the likelihood of data saturation that, according to Marshall et al., ultimately determines the final sample size in a qualitative study. I expected to include six participants in the sample, but prepared to include additional participants, if necessary and appropriate, to meet the goals of data saturation.

Data saturation, according to Elo et al. (2014) and Siegle et al. (2014) occurs when no new data, coding, or themes emerge from the information collected. Yin (2013) suggested that if data saturation is not achievable, the interviews should continue until data saturation is evident or the researcher can recruit additional participants who may add data relevant for answering the research question. Hammarberg, Kirkman, and de Lacey (2016) claimed that in qualitative research,

data saturation governs the purposeful sample size. Using sampling to help reach a point of data saturation, when no new information results from additional interviews. I continued to add new participants from different organizations until I observed data saturation, when no new information or ideas appeared to emerge from the interview and data collection process.

Following the collection of publicly available contact information for prospective participants from the websites of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and Alamo Heights Chamber of Commerce and Trustoria US Professional, I sent an invitational flyer to prospective participants via electronic mail. Interesting prospective participants contacted me using my information provided on the invitational research flyers (Appendices E and F) to ask questions and express interests. Screening the prospective participants ensured they met the criteria for this study. The criteria for retail owners and managers who successfully developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover included employment in their managerial positions in San Antonio, Texas for 2 or more years in small retail businesses with 90 or fewer employees with an annual turnover rate of 7.5% or less. Participants were able to read, write, and speak English fluently. Participants who elected to contribute to the synchronous online focus group were comfortable with technology to the extent that they were able to access the WebEx meeting room and call into the meeting room using the telephone. After screening the participants, if they were eligible to participate in the study, I discussed the consent forms, and set an appointment for semistructured interview sessions and the synchronous online focus group meeting. Retail owners and managers who did not meet

all of the criteria or who met the criteria but did not return a signed informed consent form were not be eligible to participate in this study.

Okal et al. (2016) and Marshall et al. (2016) claimed interviews should occur at a site that is comfortable and familiar. Gill (2014) and Mealer and Jones (2014) noted that site locations must be quiet and absent of distractions to ensure the quality of the digital voice recordings. The location for semistructured interviews was the San Antonio Public Library, that was convenient to the participants; this site was private and neutral. I contacted the San Antonio Public Library to book a private room for the semistructured interviews. The focus group meeting was held in a synchronous, WebEx online meeting room, minimizing interruption, privacy, and collaboration.

Ethical Research

After the IRB approved the research proposal, data collection began. Abernethy et al. (2014) suggested that a researcher must comply with ethical guidelines relating to human participants set forth by the IRB. Castleberry (2014) noted when conducting a case study involving human participants, the researcher should keep data and information pertaining to the participants private and confidential. I understood the ethical considerations about the protection of human research participants. A certificate issued by the National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research (NIH) validates this competency (Appendix G).

The university's IRB of a researcher requires that researchers follow the standard for the conducting ethical research (Denison & Stillman, 2012; Dresser, 2013). The informed consent forms contained an explanation of the purpose of the study, discussion

of data confidentiality and integrity, the types of information collected, an explanation of who could view the data collected, and a description of the interview and data collection processes. The consent forms also included information about the expected time commitment for study involvement, expectations of participants, privacy assurances, and the option to withdraw from the study without consequences at any time before, during, or after data collection. Participation in the study was voluntary and risks included minor discomforts that exist in daily life, such as stress, upset, or fatigue. I complied with the university's standard for ethical research and made sure that each retail owner received and signed two consent forms prior to initiating the semistructured interview. I kept one signed form and the participant kept the other signed form. Business owners signed the form in my presence prior to the semistructured interviews and managers replied by e-mail with the words *I consent* prior to the online focus group.

Participants could withdraw from the study at any time, as discussed in the invitational research flyers (Appendices E and F) and the informed consent forms. Participants could contact the Walden University representative or me at any time, before, during, or after data collection, to withdraw from the study. Any participant who wished to withdraw from this study could do so by informing me by phone, in person, or electronic mail, prior to, during, or after the semistructured interview or online focus group. Upon the participant's notification, I planned to destroy all related data by deletion of electronic files, shredding of paper documents, and incineration of all digital materials pertaining to the withdrawn participant. No participants received incentives. The invitational research flyers (Appendices E and F) and the consent forms contained

confirmation statements that there would be no incentives and that participation in the

study was voluntary.

Researchers have a responsibility to protect the participants in their research study

(Dresser, 2013; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 1979). Yardley, Watts,

Pearson, and Richardson (2014) believed researchers have a special obligation to their

participants to ensure confidentially of data. In this study, retail owners signed two

consent forms and managers replied by e-mail with the words *I consent* that contained

language assuring them of the ethical protection standards of the research project and

information about their rights. I upheld the standards of conduct for ethical research in

this study set forth by the university's IRB and the National Commission for the

Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (U.S. Department

of Health & Human Services, 1979). I adhered to the university's IRB recommendations

to maintain protection of participants. The IRB approval number for this study 08-30-16-

0279008.

The informed consent forms were agreements between the individual participants

and me. The agreement contained provisions for ensuring that each participant received a

guarantee of confidentiality. Information and signed forms received from the participants,

all interview and focus group related materials, and all data remain private and

confidential. Special precautions applied to protect the participants' identities. For

example, I assigned a pseudonym to each participant.

Researchers should demonstrate that they will provide true evidence; evidence

must be credible, trustworthy and honest, and the data accumulated must be valid (Koch

et al., 2013; Sandelowski, 2014a; Sarapin, Christy, Lareau, Krakow, & Jensen, 2014; Wang et al., 2014). Ensuring data safety and the confidentiality of participants included safeguarding identifying information such as names, affiliations, and organizations. In this study, these measures included labeling the collected participants' data with distinctive pseudonym codes. For example, O1 and O2 represented the owners and M1 through M4 represented the managers. The use of pseudonyms protected confidentiality and privacy; a list of pseudonyms that connects participants' real names and pseudonyms exists for the purposes of identifying and extracting data from any participant who chose to withdraw. The list and all information collected in this study remained private and secure. All information received remains confidential. I did not include any participants' names or anything else that could identify them in the study reports. In the final study, reports about participants included only their distinctive pseudonym codes (e.g., O1, O2, and M1 through M4). After keeping all collected data, signed forms, and the list of pseudonyms in a locked safe for 5 years, I will destroy all data, forms, and lists through deletion of electronic files, shredding of paper documents, and incineration of all digital materials.

Data Collection Instruments

In qualitative studies, data collection might include the use of semistructured interviews, document review, archived data, observations, focus groups, or a combination of these approaches (Elo et al., 2014; Ozer & Douglas, 2015; Wiewiora, Murphy, Trigunarsyah, & Brown, 2014). In case studies, triangulation involves the collection and analysis of more than one type of data or data from more than one source (Denzin, 2012).

Wiewiora et al. (2014) stated semistructured interviews are useful for an in-depth investigations or explorations. Using the same set of open-ended questions for each interview ensures consistency; Wiewiora et al. also noted the effectiveness of semistructured interviews for case study research because they allow the flexibility to ask additional questions or to pursue unexpected yet relevant lines of inquiry. Semistructured interviews consist of open-ended, follow-up, and probing questions (Fleming, Phillips, Kaseroff, & Huck, 2014). The data collection protocol for the semistructured interviews in this study for business owners included a set of eight interview questions (Appendix C) delivered in a semi-structured interview format.

Himmelheber (2014) noted that in case study research, the researcher obtains data from more than one source. Data collection through a focus group augments semistructured interview data in a case study (DaMota-Pedrosa, Näslund, & Jasmand, 2012; Masson, Delarue, Bouillot, Sieffermann, & Blumenthal, 2016). Focus groups, according to Butz and Stupnisky (2016), are useful for triangulation and development of comprehensive study findings. I used an online focus group protocol (Appendix B) with managers who answered focus group questions (Appendix D). The data collection protocol for the online focus group of managers in this study included a set of eight focus group questions (Appendix D).

Andraski et al. (2014) described the member checking process as an important quality control by which the participants have the opportunity to review the initial interpretations of the data and offer their thoughts about the interpretations and reasons for the findings. Andraski et al. noted that member checking enhances the academic rigor

of a study. Simpson and Quigley (2016) noted that member checking might enhance the academic rigor of the study and could enhance the trustworthiness of the study. According to Allen (2015) and Moreland and Apker (2015), a researcher provides the data interpretations to the participants and allows them to comment on and clarify the information. I conducted member checking by interpreting data provided to me by the participants then sharing the interpretations of a one- to two-page summary of the key findings with each participant so each participant could comment on the interpretations.

Data Collection Technique

Case study research experts, including Lucero et al. (2016) and Madhlangobe, Chikasha, Mafa, and Kurasha (2014) recommended using multiple sources of information in case study design during data collection to explore attitudinal, behavioral issues, and the range of historical facts relating to a case. Yin wrote about the main types of data collection for case studies that include semistructured interviews, document review, archived data, observation, and focus group. The data collection technique for this study was semistructured interview and an online focus group for methodological triangulation.

Initial contact with participants followed IRB approval. I e-mailed the business owners invitational research flyer (Appendix E) using the publicly available addresses provided by two Chamber of Commerce organizations and the manager invitational research flyer (Appendix F) using the publicly available addresses provided by the Trustoria Directory of US Professional database. Interesting prospective participants contacted me using my information provided on the invitational research flyers

(Appendices E and F) to ask questions and express interests. Screening the prospective participants to ensure they meet the criteria for this study. I scheduled a semistructured interview with business owners and an online focus group meeting with managers at a mutually acceptable time and date and each interview and the online focus group occurred only after a prospective subject agreed to voluntarily participate in the study and returns a signed informed consent forms. Obtaining a signed consent form and choosing interview locations that ensured privacy were steps advocated by research experts (Andreae et al., 2016; Nassaji, 2015). Participants in the semistructured interview received two copies of the informed consent form to read and sign. I kept one copy and the participant retained the other copy. Participants in semistructured interviews can return a signed copy to me at the interview site, before the start of the interview questions. Online focus group participants replied by e-mail to the inforrmed consent form with the words *I consent* before the online focus group session. We discussed the form before each interview or the online focus group begins and each participant can ask additional questions before data collection starts.

The interview site for semistructured interviews were in an authorized private room at San Antonio Public Library. The interview location within the city limits was accessible to the business owners in the sample because owners had small businesses in the same city. Johnson and Esterling (2015) and McGonagle, Brown, and Schoeni (2015) claimed interviews should occur at a site that is comfortable with few distractions, in a place that is quiet to ensure recording quality. Noone besides the participant and myself were within hearing range of the interview. The private room at

the library for semistructured interviews was a quiet and private environment. The

focus group was online through a synchronous WebEx format. The use of a

synchronous online focus group was an acceptable means for qualitative data collection

(Moore, McKee, & McLoughlin, 2015). The semistructured interviews and the online

focus group lasted for approximately 60 minutes.

  Wiewiora et al. (2014) posited that qualitative researchers often collect interview

data by recording then transcribing interviews. I conducted semistructured interviews and

online focus group by strictly adhering to a protocol (Appendices A and B) and present

the interview questions (Appendices C and D) to each participant, recording their

responses in a consistent manner; using the audio-recording function of the cellular

telephone and a digital recorder as a back-up device for semistructured interviews and

using the audio-recording function of WebEx software and a digital recorder as a back-up

device for focus group session. According to Grayshield, Rutherford, Salazar, Mihecoby,

and Luna (2015), recording options are growing and include digital recorders,

transcription machines, and voice recording software, but many qualitative researchers do

not use this software because of poor quality or difficulties encountered during the

transcription process. The recording device on the cellular telephone and WebEx did not

require additional devices or electronic equipment or cords, because these devices occur

through the internal power supply on a fully charged; telephone, laptop, and desktop

computer.

  I uploaded the audio files to the computer and the storage, playing, and pause

features of the audio files allow transcription to occur by listening to small sections,

leading to more ease and accuracy of transcriptions. The digital recorder was a back-up

recorder in the event of a telephone failure. Elwyn, Barr, and Grande (2015) noted that

frequently used recording devices include smartphones and digital recorders. Blake et al.

(2015) noted that a few studies have assessed the quality and reliability of data upload

electronically and recommend that data may be more accurate and precise than data enter

on composed questionnaires. The reasons for not selecting the digital recorder as the

primary recording instrument was the personal experiences that digital files can be

difficult to start and stop, there may be poor audio quality, and the files may be difficult

to organize. There are additional issues of efficiency, accuracy, and trustworthiness with

other means to recording and transcriptions, such as voice recognition software (Mi et al.,

2016; Neal, Neal, VanDyke, & Kornbluh, 2015).

   With the use of interviews and a focus group, I engaged the participants in open-

ended conversations. Gergen, Josselson, and Freeman (2015) and Wiewiora et al. (2014)

noted that the conversational nature of interviews during qualitative data collection leads

to in-depth prolific data used to answer the research questions. Coenen, Stamm, Stucki,

and Cieza (2012) proposed the use of semistructured interviews to gain an in-depth

understanding of the participants' views. Using semistructured interviews, a researcher

can concentrate on issues concerning the research question and provide the participants

with opportunities to give detailed accounts of their experiences (Hyett et al., 2014;

Verleye, Gemmel, & Rangarajan, 2014). After the interview, I conducted member

checking by interpreting data and sharing the interpretations in a one- to two-page

summary with each participant, allowing participants to comment on the interpretations of the data.

Using a focus group is another form of data collection (Smit et al., 2016). In addition to semistructured interviews, an online focus group occurred as an added source of evidence. Use a focus group session improves and develops a study (Coenen et al., 2012). Interviewing participants who are knowledgeable about a specific topic in a focus group in a private confidential setting allows participants to communicate information freely (Smit et al., 2016). Use of a WebEx format allows participants to log into the synchronous online meeting room using their assigned pseudonym (e.g. M1 through M4) to ensure confidentiality (Ashburner, Vickerstaff, Beetge, J., & Copley, 2016; Moore et al., 2015). The use of a WebEx format led to the automated generation of the written account of the online focus group meeting, which eliminated the need for additional transcriptions of the focus group data by the researcher. After the online focus group, I conducted member checking by interpreting data and sharing the interpretations in a one-to two-page summary with each participant, allowing participants to comment on the interpretations of the data.

Methodological triangulation, as described by Andraski et al. (2014), Cooper and Hall (2014), and Yin (2013), stems from multiple sources of data. Fusch and Fusch (2015) noted that methodological triangulation adds depth to the data collection. Conducting member checking and triangulating the data collected from semistructured interviews and the online focus group heighten the trustworthiness of the findings of the

study. I triangulated semistructured interview data from multiple informants and online focus group data from multiple informants to develop the findings of the study.

Using a semistructured interview approach for data collection has advantages and disadvantages. Kurz, Elliott, and Roach (2015) suggested the benefits of using the semistructured interview are opportunities to gain insight and detect social cues. Kurz et al. noted that semistructured interview give the researcher the opportunity to both listen and observe the participants. Patil (2014) noted that semistructured interviews may seem intrusive to the participants. Additional disadvantages with this technique include the interviewer's influence on the participants that can lead to bias and the possibility of shifting during the interviews in irrelevant directions (Himmelheber, 2014). I minimized my own influence by reiterating answers and using the same protocol with every participant.

The decision to conduct an online focus group occurred after a thorough review of the literature to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of online focus groups in qualitative research. Forrestal, D'Angelo, and Vogel (2015) compared data from face-to-face focus groups and online focus groups and revealed that there are no differences in data. Use of an online focus group has several advantages in qualitative research. An online format can occur from any location with Internet access with an electronically generated record of the session, thus allowing the researcher and participants to commit to a shorter timeframe (Moore et al., 2015). Another strength of a focus group is that participants in the group may interact openly, generating more collaborative data (Moore et al., 2015). Additional advantages with this technique allow interaction between

participants and maximize exploration of information that comes from a diverse group (Coenen et al., 2012; Smit et al., 2016).

Coenen et al. (2012) found that focus groups could be disadvantageous because the communication in the group frequently leaves the interviewer as an observer, unable to help guide conversation. Moore et al. (2015) noted that, in comparison to larger focus groups, a smaller online focus group of three or four people invites more participation from individual contributors. Another disadvantage is that it may be difficult to conduct a focus group because the participants may not feel comfortable with the time commitment or the use of the synchronous online tools (Coenen et al., 2012; Forrestal et al., 2015; Smit et al., 2016). More professionals are using web-based technologies as part of their employment responsibilities and in an increasingly technologically-oriented world, it is reasonable to assume that there is the minimum familiarity with technology tools required to successfully complete an online focus group (Forrestal et al., 2015).

Using member checking heightens the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings (Anney, 2014; Boblin et al., 2013). For example, member checking decreases the chance of misinterpretations (Andraski et al., 2014; Vance, 2015). Hyett et al. (2014) noted that member checking is helpful to researchers engaged in case study because it helps to minimize bias and ensure the accuracy of the interpreted findings. I conducted member checking by interpreting what the participants shared, then presenting a one- to two-page summary of the key findings with each participant and welcoming participants' appraisals, comments, and explanations related to the interpretations.

Data Organization Technique

Bor (2013), Sarma, Islam, and Gazi (2013), and Saunders, Kitzinger, and Kitzinger (2014) noted the usefulness of digital files and the importance of a naming convention. Using a naming convention for files aided in data tracking, and with protecting participants' confidentiality and privacy. In this study, I stored the narrative data in word processing software, with the data assigned and labeled with distinctive pseudonyms, rather than participants' names, to facilitate confidential digital file storage.

I transcribed the recorded interview data into word processing software. WebEx provided a downloadable transcript of the online focus group and I transcribed any part of the record not already provided to me in a textual format. Hermanowicz (2013) and Irvine, Drew, and Sainsbury (2013) suggested using qualitative analysis software to enhance the researcher's capacity to store, organize, and analyze interviews and journal notes. After transcribing the recorded data into word processing software, and compiling the data from the interviews and the online focus group into a single word processing file, I uploaded the data to computer-aided data analysis software. NVivo software is a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) software. Using software to develop codes and themes aids researchers with data synthesis and presentation (Davidson, Paulus, & Jackson, 2016; Ivankova, 2014; Roulston, 2014).

NVivo software can help the researcher identify themes from the grouping of data (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2015). Other software choices for qualitative data analysis as noted by Kaefer, Roper, and Sinha (2015) include MaxQDA, Atlas.ti,

and dedoose, among others. Each option shares the advantage of simplifying analysis

of voluminous textual data, but there are also disadvantages (Rogerson, Soltani, &

Copeland, 2016). Disadvantages include the costs of use and the process of learning

and becoming proficient with the different software options (Davidson et al., 2016;

Kaefer et al., 2015). Other considerations pertain to the support of the institution for

use of the software and potential costs of license fees (Kaefer et al., 2015). After

looking at the costs, the learning required to use the software, and the prevalence of use

in and support by doctorate-level research institutions, I selected NVivo 11 to use as a

software package suitable for my needs.

I organized the data by grouping codes from identified phrases, words, or

statements that frequently appear within the data, using NVivo 11. The data groupings

included the responses from each research question and journal notes. I contacted the

participants and provide each with the same brief summary, consisting of no more than

two pages of the interpreted data, for review. I let each participant comment on the

interpretations of the summaries.

In this study, I recorded all data colletion and analysis steps with notations in a

research journal, as recommended by Yin (2014). The research journal included the

handwritten interview and online focus group notes, topics, the participants'

information, and how I identified themes. Using the research journal helped mitigate

bias that may taint the study (Cowan, 2014; Peredaryenko & Krauss, 2013; Pocock,

2015; Tindall, MacDonald, Carrol, & Moody, 2015; Wyatt & Márquez, 2015; Young

& MacPhail, 2015).

In this study, I secured all digital data on my password-protected computer and back it up on a password-protected hard drive; I am the only person with access to the stored information. Digitally recorded interviews, the online focus group transcript, journal notes, and the transcripts from NVivo 11 database were on a password-protected external thumb drive and will remain locked in a safe for 5 years at my home. After the 5-year period, according to the recommendations of Walden University concerning data storage, I will complete the deletion, shredding, and destruction of all data.

Data Analysis

A researcher uses multiple sources to collect data for case study analysis (Greene & Seung, 2014). Rizo et al. (2015) and Wilson (2014) noted that qualitative researchers ask open-ended interview questions when collecting data. With the aid of protocols (Appendices A and B), I presented the interview questions (Appendices C and D) to each participant. In addition to semistructured interviews, I conducted an online focus group leading to methodological triangulation. Yin (2013) noted that, with the use of methodological triangulation, a researcher can use two sources to decrease the weakness of one source and strengthen the outcome of the study. Methodological triangulation, as described by Cairney and St. Denny (2015), combines multiple sources, such as semistructured interviews and focus group data, to strengthen the research. I analyzed data from semistructured interviews and the online focus group to obtain different information that might complement one another and enrich the data analysis findings. Onwuegbuzie and Byers (2014) posited that the data analysis process is the most

meaningful step in qualitative research. The purpose of this data analysis was to reveal themes that answered the research question. In this study, data analysis lea to an understanding the strategies of small business retail owners and managers applied successfully to reduce the problem of employee turnover.

After data collection, I analyzed the data. Hyett et al. (2014) and Yazan (2015) suggested that the data analysis processes involve the discovery of meaningful themes, from descriptions and patterns in the data, that answer the research question in a study. In this case, I organized the collected data in categories. Using the five-step process, as described by Yin (2014), was my systematic interpretation of retail leaders' strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover. The data analysis process followed Yin's recursive five-phase cycle of qualitative data analysis. The steps included: (a) compiling, (b) disassembling, (c) reassembling (and arranging), (d) interpreting, and (e) concluding. In addition to using Yin's recursive five-phase cycle of qualitative data analysis for analysis involving triangulation within cases, the cross-case synthesis approach applied in the final data analysis steps of this multiple case study.

In this study, I imported textual transcripts into NVivo 11 from word processing software. The first phase of data collection and data analysis was data compilation. Compiling, according to Haines, Summers, Turnbull, Turnbull, and Palmer (2015), is the process of organizing the data. Essary (2014) noted that compiling is the first stage of data analysis. In the compilation phase, according to Cox and McLeod (2014) and Yin (2014), researchers create databases for all journal notes, online focus group, and interviews. I created a database and start the compilation process within 24 hours after

the first interview. Repeating this iterative process for textual data generated from each interview, the online focus group, and all journal notes formed the building blocks of the database. I organized the data from interviews and online focus group simultaneously selecting and arranging the data into by types, labeling, and coding into categories.

After compiling the data, I conducted the next phase of data collection and data analysis. Essary (2014) noted that disassembling is the second stage of data analysis. Disassembling the data as noted by Castleberry (2014) involves a conventional procedure of open coding data. Data disassembling followed through with a coding and data compilation process. During this process, codes emerged from the data analysis software (Cox & McLeod, 2014; Haines et al., 2015; Yin, 2014). Disassembling the data as noted by Siegle et al. (2014) include dividing the data into individual groups. Coding of data includes segmenting and labeling data with category names to place data in groups. Coding data was significant in identifying themes and patterns.

The third phase in the process is reassembling (and arranging) the data (Essary, 2014). Reassembling is the process of recombination or rearrangement data (Cox & McLeod, 2014). Haines et al. (2015) noted that, in this phase, a researcher rearranges the data by placing all the data with the same coding categories together. Haines et al. stated that recombination and rearrangements might stem from rearranging data into tabular forms or depicting the data graphically. I analyzed the data after I reassembled the data into a prioritized organized category by significance found in the data accumulation process utilizing themes. Yin (2014) noted that a researcher should reassembled the

themes observing connection to aid in answer. I reassembled the data by continuing to look for specific patterns in the data, concentrating on patterns of convergence and divergence. In this phase, I reassembled and arranged the interview data by themes to compare with the online focus group data.

The fourth phase in the process is interpreting the data (Yin, 2014). Castleberry (2014) and Essary (2014) described interpreting the meaning of the data as the procedure of making sense of the data. Haines et al. (2015) suggested that interpreting the data means going beyond describing the data and extracting meanings from the data. Researcher interpretation of the data, according to Yin (2014), is a segment of case study research. In this step, the qualitative researcher discusses and interprets the categorized data generated with the help of the analysis software (Ivankova, 2014; Samonis et al., 2014). I described and comprehended the data by reflecting on the categories and patterns found from the information received from the participants. I analyzed the themes of the interview data and the online focus group data by case and comparing the interview data to the online focus group data. In reassembling phase as noted by Yin (2014) involve arranging themes to analyze the phenomenon under study in a relative analysis by case and the procedure utilized is adaptable so an exploration happened, not an examination. Following this step of analysis, I conducted member checking by interpreting data the participants offered and subsequently sharing the interpretations with each participant in the form of a one- to two-pages summary of the key findings. Each participant had the opportunity to comment on the interpretations of the data.

Yin (2013) noted that applying replication logic is useful in interpreting the finding across cases in a multiple case study. Greene and Seung (2014) suggested, in multiple case study, a researcher carries out two stages of analysis, called within-case and cross-case analysis. First, as noted by Yin (2014), within-case analysis occurs with the recursive five-phase cycle, as the researcher gathers, describes, and analyzes data from each case. I interpreted data in-depth from the six cases to provide rich depiction of comparison and differentiation between interviews and online focus group data within cases. Similitudes and contrasts were uncovered between interviews and online focus group data sources when analyze data between both sources and between cases in the interpreting phase. Yin then suggested the continuation of the analysis process with cross-case analysis leading to the description of a unified account across cases. Yin noted that data for case study analysis includes answering the research question case-by-case, followed by cross-case synthesis involving the exploration of all of the cases for patterns, formulating themes based on similarities and differences across all of the cases. Yin also noted that by exploring multiple sources of information using cross-case synthesis within-cases reinforced the findings even further. I explored different sources of information with a cross-case synthesis within the individual cases to reinforce the findings even further. In this study, I used cross-case synthesis, following the within-case analysis based on the recursive five-phase cycle described. I continued the analysis process with the cross-case approach to identify a unified account, based on recognizable patterns across all of the cases.

The final phase of data analysis, according to Haines et al. (2015), concludes with the discussion of the data analysis findings. This phase provides a way of explaining or drawing the conclusions from the entire study (Cox & McLeod, 2014). Yin (2014) noted that the conclusions drawn from the whole study should reflect the use of the recursive phase cycles. I used the conclusions from the constructions to comprehend the meaning of the data. I used text and tables to report the findings obtained from data analysis. The visual depictions may take the form of tables, charts, and graphs, when necessary and appropriate. The report of findings included supportive examples from the actual data. The discussion of the findings and conclusions occurred in light of the theoretical and coneptual underpinnings of the study.

Methodological triangulation, according to Cairney and St. Denny (2015) and Chao (2014), is the procedure of collaborating multiple data sources. Caro et al. (2014) and Heale and Forbes (2013) suggested triangulation procedures through checking and cross checking descriptions against theoretical interpretations and continuously checking for representativeness of data. Cairney and St. Denny (2015) stated that methodological triangulation enhances credibility and strengthens the validity of the study. I used semistructured interviews and an online focus group to collect data to obtain different information from multiple informants that might complement another. I used methodological triangulation to compare the findings across and within multiple data sources. Semistructured interviews with owners and the online focus group with managers heightened the credibility attainable through triangulation involving multiple informants and multiple data sources.

The qualitative analysis software chosen for this study was NVivo 11. The key features of the qualitative analysis software enhance the researcher's abilities to sort data and explore convergent and divergent keywords and phrases among voluminous data (Ivankova, 2014; Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014). Using NVivo software to gain a general sense of meaning from the data occurred through the comparing of codes and patterns, leading to major themes (Castleberry, 2014; Edwards-Jones, 2014). I used NVivo 11 software to gain an understanding of the graphical trail from the data. Use of Nvivo was helpful with the generation of tables, charts, and visual representations of codes, patterns, and thematic findings.

The conceptual framework connects with the methodology and the literature (Borrego, Foster, & Froyd, 2014; Yazan, 2015; Yin, 2014). The conceptual framework that forms the basis for this study was the Herzberg two-factor theory, the supporting theory was Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, and the Vroom's expectancy theory was the opposing theory. I discussed the results of data analysis in the view of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, Maslow's hierarchy of need theory, and the Vroom's expectancy theory. I compared the key themes with the literature (including newly published studies). After presenting the themes in accordance to Yin's recursive five-phase cycle, I reported how the findings related to or varied from the findings in the prior literature review Halebic and Nivin's (2012) study and the theoretical framework. I plan to share the results with each participant, the president of the Texas Retailer Association, and the retail industries at large by e-mail. Participants may request a summary of the report or a full version of the publication, which I will provide to them upon request.

Reliability and Validity

Gringeri, Barusch, and Cambron (2013) stated reliability and validity are the traditional standards for judging quality in research. Baysal, Holmes, and Godfrey (2013), Boblin et al. (2013), Gibson, Webb, and Lehn (2014), and Humphry and Heldsinger (2014) suggested different methods to enhance reliability, including using software to analyze interview and focus group data, member checking, and the use of multiple sources of data. In this case study research, I followed the three steps recommended to strengthen reliability and validity of the study's findings. Employing the process of triangulation by using multiple data sources, conducting member checking, and using computer-aided data analysis software ensured reliability and validity of the study.

Wang et al. (2014) claimed qualitative studies should have dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability. Meltzer et al. (2013) and Taylor-Ritzler, Suarez-Balcazar, Garcia-Iriarte, Henry, and Balcazar (2013) noted that a researcher must document steps to heighten dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability used in the research process. Using sound procedures in this study represented the application of scholarly principles and the published report included the documentation of the steps applied to heighten the dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability of the study.

Reliability

Creating and implementing reliability strategies within a study ensures dependable and trustworthy results (Boblin et al., 2013). Pocock (2015) found reliability is important

to determine quality and stability of data obtained. In academic research, Elo et al. (2014) described reliability as a study's accuracy, reflected by the use of consistent and replicable methods. Elo et al. noted dependability in qualitative studies requires sound and rigorous methodology. Qualitative researchers achieve dependability (reliability in quantitative studies) in numerous ways, including the documentation of explanations of research steps to enable others to judge the rigor and trustworthiness of the research process. I collected data with the use of well-documented, consistent methods to ensure truth-value, applicability, and reliability in this study.

Pocock (2015) discussed validity in terms of the rigor and quality of research design, and discussed trustworthiness in terms of the dependability of the study results. Pocock noted that bracketing or epoché is used to reduce biases stemming from predispositions of the researcher. In this study, I used bracketing before interviewing the participants, conducting the online focus group, coding data, and interpreting the results, to reduce biases that could influence the outcomes of the study. Implementing strategies to ensure trustworthiness is the responsibility of the researcher (Peake-Andrasik et al., 2014).

Following consistent, well-documented, accepted research methodology and design can lead to dependable research results (Anney, 2014; Boblin et al., 2013). To ensure truth-value, applicability, and reliability, I was consistent when gathering data, recording and documenting verbatim responses from the participants. I actively compared transcriptions to the audio-tapes to ensure accuracy of the transcribed data. Checking for accuracy ensures consistency (Pocock, 2015; Revsbaek & Tanggaard, 2015). Adherence

to the interview and focus group protocol, peer review processes, and research standards

set forth by the University ensure reliability.

Methodological triangulation, according to Koch et al. (2013), is a researcher's

use of several data sources to study a research topic and to view information from

multiple perspectives. Methodological triangulation, as noted by Archibald (2015) and

Harvey (2015) enhances findings from enriched data analysis. Applying triangulation

techniques enhance the study's credibility. I used methodological triangulation to

increase credibility, relying upon multiple informants and multiple data collection

sources.

Using member checking enhances reliability in a study (Elo et al., 2014; Roche,

Vaterlaus, & Young, 2015; Yin, 2014). Andraski et al. (2014) and Yin (2013) claimed

member checking improves accuracy and adds reliability. Member checking, according

to Elo et al. (2014), helps decrease the chance of misinterpretations of data. I used

member checking to enhance the reliability in this study.

Validity

Pocock (2015) noted rigor and issues of credibility were concerns in naturalistic

investigations; trustworthiness was an important consideration reflecting the credibility of

the findings of the study. Gathering and documenting the details about how retail owners

and managers successfully reduce employee turnover through capturing the experiences

of owners and managers led to an understanding that must be credible. Noble and Smith

(2015) defined credibility as the results of the research that are believable. Noble and

Smith suggested that the readers or future researchers are the only one who can judge the

credibility of the findings in a study. In order to allow others to judge the credibility of the study, the steps taken to ensure credibility were part of this report.

Boblin et al. (2013) and Noble and Smith (2015) noted that to ensure the accuracy of the findings in a study, a researcher should use triangulation involving multiple sources and member checking. Noble and Smith suggested that credibility depends more on the richness of the information collected instead of the amount of data collected. Elo et al. (2014) claimed documenting the interview questions and using an interview protocol for every interview helps ensure credibility. I used a consistently applied interview protocol to collect data from multiple informants and adhered to an online focus group protocol.

Methodological triangulation, according to Koch et al. (2013), is a researcher's use of several data sources to study a research topic and to view information from multiple perspectives. Archibald (2015) and Harvey (2015) noted that methodological triangulation in case study research enhances findings from enriched data analysis. Applying triangulation techniques enhance the study's credibility. I used methodological triangulation to increase credibility, relying upon multiple informants and multiple data collection sources.

Using member checking enhances validity in a qualitative study (Andraski et al., 2014; Elo et al., 2014; Caretta, 2015). Andraski et al. (2014) and Fusch and Ness (2015) claimed member checking improves accuracy, adds credibility, and helps decrease the chance of misinterpretations of data. Ensuring the credibility of the study involves documenting all steps and procedures and retaining all documents and responses from the

interviews and focus group. I recorded and documented interview answers to ensure credibility in this qualitative study. In addition, the results from the online focus group and the process of member checking were a part of the report of the results.

Elo et al. (2014) noted transferability in a qualitative study is whether or not discovered information will transfer to another research setting. Boblin et al. (2013) noted transferability is the degree to which the results of qualitative research can transfer to other circumstances. The appropriateness of the transferability of a study, according to Thelwell, Wagstaff, Rayner, Chapman, and Barker (2016), depends on the prudent judgements of the reader. Boblin et al. noted qualitative researcher should enhance transferability by describing the context of the research. Qualitative researchers enhance transferability on a case-to-case basis by providing rich descriptions of the population, sample, method, design, and sampling techniques (Anney, 2014; Barratt, Ferris, & Lenton, 2014; Boblin et al., 2013; Cope, 2014; Rossetto, 2014). In this study, I provided enough information about the population, sample, method, design, and sampling techniques so another researcher can appropriately judge the transferability.

After the interviews and the online focus group, I used member checking to ensure consistency and accuracy in the data. In this study, member checking occurred after the end of the last interview and online focus group. Andraski et al. (2014) and Castleberry (2014) noted that a researcher should continue to interview participants until no new code emerging. I continued to conduct interviews with the same participants until no additional coding was feasible.

Elo et al. (2014) noted confirmability in qualitative studies is the same as objectivity in quantitative studies. Christ (2014) suggested confirmability is the degree to which other researchers could corroborate the results. Peake-Andrasik et al. (2014) claimed confirmability is the degree to which another researcher might endorse the results and findings of the study. To promote confirmability in this study, I used multiple sources of data for triangulation, keeping a log that tracks data collection, and the choices for the study methodolody, design, and analysis processes leading to the findings were suject to the peer-review process inherent in doctoral-level resarch. After forming my initial interpretations of the data collected, I used a member checking that allows participants to confirm the interpretations formed from the analysis of the data.

The criteria outlined for selecting retail owners and managers who successfully developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover ensure that the participants were knowledgeable about employee turnover. Conclusions drawn were based on the knowledge and descriptions obtained from the owners and managers who successfully applied strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover in small businesses of the retail in San Antonio, Texas. I continued to conduct additional interviews with participants until no additional information appeared and interviewed new participants, as necessary and appropriate to achieve data saturation. Andraski et al. (2014) and Castleberry (2014) noted that a researcher should continue to interview existing or new participants until no new data emerges from the data collection process.

Siegle et al. (2014) described data saturation as the point at which no new information emerges from the data collection efforts. Peake-Andrasik et al. (2014) noted

data collection should continue until no new information emerges. Marshall et al. (2013) claimed the determination of the point of data saturation depends on the researcher's judgment, experience, and vigilant attention to the data during the collection process. Ramthun and Matkin (2014) described methodological triangulation as a researcher's use of several data sources from multiple perspectives and noted that methodological triangulation also aids in reaching the point of data saturation. In this study, I recognized data saturation through attention to the nature, richness, and repetition of the data during data collection and methodological triangulation. I concluded that data saturation was reached when data become repetitive and no new information resulted from ongoing interview attempts.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 included a review of the purpose statement, obligations related to the role of the researcher, and the participant selection process. In Section 2, I further explained the selected research method and the research design. There were discussions about population and sampling, ethics in qualitative research, population, a description of the sampling method, the ethical considerations for the research, planned data collection processes, and the chosen data analysis technique. I also explained reliability and validity in Section 2 and how the concepts apply to this study. In this section, I also identified the ethical characteristics of the research, provided explanations of the instrument in data collection, provided details about the data collection and organization techniques, and explained the data analysis plans. This section culminated in the techniques applied to heighten the trustworthiness of the study.

Section 3 starts with the purpose statement progressing to the presentation of findings. The section includes focus on the research question in relation to the discussion of the findings. Section 3 includes an address of the application of the study findings to professional practices and how this study applies to social change. I conclude the section with recommendations for further study and reflections about my experiences in the study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

 In Section 3, I provide detailed descriptions of the data collected, the conceptual framework, the supporting theory, the opposing theory, and the findings connected to the research question. Incorporated into this section are an introduction to the study, presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, and recommendations for action. Section 3 also includes the recommendation for further research, my reflection of the doctoral journey, and conclusions.

Introduction

 The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the strategies leaders of small retail businesses use to reduce the problem of employee turnover. Scholars explored and analyzed the issue of employee turnover in other industries (Bebe, 2016; Carreno, 2016). To build on those initial efforts, the purpose of this study was to explore strategies exclusively with the retail industry. The findings from this qualitative data analysis applied to data obtained from semistructured interviews of two retail owners and a focus group with four retail managers from multiple small businesses in the retail industry in San Antonio, Texas. The analysis of the findings resulted in eight major themes.

 Section 3 includes the presentation of findings, description of the sample, and detailed explanations for the reasons the analysis led to the eight thematic findings. The section also includes a discussion of the major thematic findings as they relate to the conceptual framework for this study. The section continues with a comparison of the eight thematic findings to relevant previously published results of research studies found

in the existing literature. The section continues with descriptions about the potential

applications of these findings to professional practices and social change.

Recommendations for leadership actions and suggestions for additional research lead to

the reflections and concluding remarks of this study.

Presentation of the Findings

This case study design represented an in-depth exploration to understand a

phenomenon through multiple real-world settings. The overarching reseach question for

the study was this: What strategies do leaders of small retail businesses use to reduce the

problem of employee turnover? Qualitative data analysis led to the identification of eight

major themes. Six participants from six small businesses in the retail industry were

selected based on their experiences of successfully developing strategies to reduce the

problem of employee turnover in San Antonio, Texas. All six participants completed the

informed consent process. Semistructured interviews took place at the San Antonio

Public Library where the setting was quiet, private, and free of distractions. Quality

digital voice recordings captured the interview data as participants described their

experiences and provided responses to each of the semistructured interview questions

(Appendix C). The focus group meeting with retail managers took place in a

synchronous, WebEx online meeting room where retail managers provided their

responses to online focus group questions (Appendix D) and participated in related

discussions.

The descripton of the sample from the San Antonio, Texas retail industry appears

in Table 3. The description of the sample includes gender, age, race, the number of years

the participant worked in the field of retail, the number of employees the participant

supervised at the time of the interviews, the number of years on their current jobs, and

their levels of education. The ages ranged between 33 and 70 years old. There were four

women and two men who participated in the study. The participants supervised between

29 and 85 employees. The time at their current jobs ranged between 4 years and 25 years.

All of the participants had college degrees, with four participants holding master's

degrees and one participant who completed his PhD. The psuedonyms assigned were O1

and O2 for the two small business retail owners who participated in the study. M1, M2,

M3, and M4 represented the small business retail managers who participated in the focus

group.

Table 3

Description of the Sample

	Gender	Age	Race	Field Years	Employees Supervised	Years at Job	Education
O1	F	58	Black	35	85	25	MBA
O2	M	70	White	41	60	20	PHD
M1	F	42	Hispanic	8	29	4	MBA
M2	M	33	Black	16	37	6	MBA
M3	F	44	Hispanic	10	73	9	BA
M4	F	49	Black	7.5	51	6	MSC

For this study, I followed the five-step process as described by Yin (2014) for

analysis of data collected. Yin described the procedures for compiling, disassembling,

reassembling, interpreting, and concluding the qualitative data analysis process. Data

saturation occurred at the point that no new information appeared to emerge from the data

collection efforts. I collected data from two semistructured interviews of two retail

business owners and a synchronous online focus group with four retail managers; at that

point I identified that data saturation occurred. I transcribed the audio-recorded data into a Microsoft Word file, which resulted in the textual data analyzed in this study. After forming my initial interpretations of the data collected, I conducted member checking by interpreting what the participants shared, then presented a one-page summary of the key findings to each participant and welcomed participants' appraisals, comments, and explanations related to the interpretations. Member checking allowed the participants to affirm my analysis of the findings was accurate, reasonable, and credible and helped to minimize bias and ensure the accuracy of the interpreted findings.

Table 4 includes a summary of the phrases of analysis that led to the eight major themes that emerged from the data. Microsoft Word and NVivo were the tools used in the computer-aided qualitative data analysis procedures, with Word used in the transcription, review, and organization process and NVivo used for the identification of key terms and textual patterns that led to identification of themes. I used the NVivo 11 software to code data and patterns, which led to eight major themes and facilitated an understanding of the graphical trail from the data. Using Nvivo was helpful for generating tables, charts, and visual representations of codes, patterns, and thematic findings.

Table 4

Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the process
Getting familiar with the data:	Transcribing recorded interview, journalizing notes, and online focus group data in to word processing software, reading and re-reading the data, journalizing initial ideas.
Creating initial codes:	Compiling textual transcripts into NVivo 11 for organizing data. I organized the data simultaneously selecting and arranging the data by types, labeling, and coding into categories.
Exploring themes:	Disassembling the data of open coding data. Codes emerged from NVivo 11 software. I divide the data into individual groups, segmenting, and labeling data with category names to place data in groups. Assembling all coding data significant to each potential theme and patterns.
Reviewing themes:	Reassembling (and arranging) the data by rearranges the data placing all the data with the same coding categories together into tabular forms. I analyzed the data after I reassembled the data into category by significance found in the data accumulation process utilizing themes by continuously looking for specific patterns of divergence and convergence comparing the dataset creating a thematic guide of the analysis.
Characterizing and naming of themes:	Interpreting the data, making sense of the data reflecting on categories, and patterns from information received from the participants.
Conduct member checking:	Sharing the interpretations with each participant in the form of a one page summary of the key findings of data collected to ensure that the finding are accurate.

(table continues)

Phase	Description of the process
Contrasting and similitude data:	I conduct cross-case synthesis looking at all cases for patterns, formulating themes based on similarities and differences across all of the cases.
Explaining the report:	Concluding of data analysis. Selection of rich, compelling text and tables, the reporting findings included supportive examples from the actual data, analysis relating to conceptual framework connects with the methodology and the literature to create a scholarly narrative of the analysis.

Data analysis produced eight themes pertaining to the strategies leaders of small retail businesses used to reduce the problem of employee turnover. Focus group data and journal notes were used to triangulate and strengthen the findings from the semistructured interview data. From the methodological triangulation, eight themes emerged from the data: (a) leadership understanding of the problem, (b) a selective recruitment process, (c) a flexible yet engaging culture of continuous learning, (d) valuing employees, their skills, talents, and contributions, (e) rewarding achievements based on intangible aspects of employee satisfaction, (f) maintaining a safe, healthy, respectful, and aesthetically appealing work environment, (g) loyalty, trust, and commitment generated through teamwork, relationship building, transparency, and communication, and (h) quantifiable evaluations of the effectiveness of strategies.

The subsections below contain the details about the thematic findings that emerged from the triangulated data collected. Major thematic groups emerged from the analysis of the data, based on key terms and phrases that formed discernable patterns in the data. The following subsections include additional details about each major thematic area, including participants' quotes that represent each major finding. The third, fifth, and

seventh themes also include subthemes related to the overarching major theme. Each major theme pertains to the strategies participants used to reduce employee turnover in the retail industry.

Theme 1: Leadership Understanding of the Problem

According to all of the participants in the study, controlling and managing employee turnover is a complex ceaseless quest that requires leadership understanding of the problem. The entire study sample claimed that strategies to reduce turnover in the retail industry start with an understanding of the problem in their businesses. Participants collectively referred to the concept of leaders, leadership, managers, and management 84 times, in addition to their 26 references to owners. The concept of leadership involvement in understanding of the problem and leadership understanding of the reasons for turnover emerged from the data a total of 20 times, expressed at least once by each participant.

In addition to answering the questions during the focus groups, managers who were participants offered additional documentation of specific turnover rates, based on elaborate ways they applied to understand turnover in their organizations. For example, M1 added data that showed a 3% turnover rate over the prior 12 months. M2 reported a 4% turnover rate. M3 offered additional data that included the documentation of a 6% turnover rate following the corrective actions cited. M4 provided additional data about a 2% turnover rate over the previous 12 months. In addition, M2 offered an extensively detailed documented way that tenure, retention, and turnover computation formulas were figured, which M2 described as an "effective and straightforward technique" for

determining, calculating, and understanding employee retention and turnover over months, years, or a series of months.

Key words and phrases used by participants that culminated in the identification of this major theme included understanding reasons why turnover occurred. For example, M2 said, "There are many reasons why an employee chooses to leave. As a manager, I need to identify issue, make changes, and determine the rate of the employees who intentionally leave." M3 said, "Small business owners and or managers need a reasonable comprehension of the different types of turnover [that] can help leaders focus on the best strategies to reduce employee turnover." O1 explained, "It is important for me as a business owner to recognize the reasons of my departing employees and formulate effective retention strategies and strategies to decrease employee turnover." O1 added, "I have to be very knowledge of why employees chose to leave my place of business and seek employment some other place." M2 continued to offer ways to discover "effective and straightforward techniques to determine the three W's - who, when, and why [an employee] leaves." M1 outright asks, "Why are you searching for employment at new organizations?"

Theme 2: A Selective Recruitment Process

All of the participants in the study offered data that indicated a strategy to reduce turnover started with the hiring process. The participants collectively claimed that a rigorous hiring process can lead to reduced turnover. There were 31 direct references to the concept of hiring practices in the data, with an additional 25 references to recruitment practices. Additional data participants offered pertained to hiring practices,

including job applications and announcements, interview questions asked during hiring, added data about how employers determine person-organization fit, and methods participants used to recruit suitable candidates.

Interview and focus group data that supported this theme included comments from M3 who said, "To reduce employee turnover, the business owner and I work to enhance our hiring process; recruitment, selection, and onboarding is a strategy we use. I am practical during the hiring interview, it will minimize turnover." M4 said, "Throughout the recruiting and selecting process, I hire to fit the culture of the company [because] ineffective hiring procedure increases business cost over a long period of time." M4 added, "My goal is to hire employees for organizational fit, engaging, retaining them, and in turn lower employee turnover, higher morale, and also increase in our company's bottom line." M1 talked about "the time that I will spend selecting, recruiting, training, and hiring new workers." O2 talked in depth about the need to "hire the right person for person-organizational fit, hiring the right employees, person to organizational fit is my aim when selecting new employees, and the right individuals bring higher morale [and] a stronger bottom line." O2 elaborated on the "right culture in one's business," claiming "an advantage of hiring employees for culture fit is successfully hiring employees and my business costs decrease." O1 similarly said, "Hiring an employee who is a poor fit in my business leads to contradictions and a trouble workplace." O1 added, "I have in place corrective strategy to combat against hiring the poor fit candidates."

Theme 3: A Flexible Engaging Culture of Continuous Learning

Table 5 is a summary of the key words that participants used to describe a work culture that is conducive to employee retention. The concept of learning emerged from the data 91 times, with 83 references to training and development, and career development cited 86 times, as important strategies to reducing employee turnover. Participants mentioned the related concepts of learning and education 19 times. The term *engagement* occurred 26 times among the data from interviews and focus group offered by participants in the study. *Flexibility* emerged 55 times from the interview and focus group data. These terms and phrases collectively referred to a work culture on 37 occasions in the data. Additional documentation pertained to training manuals, published career advancement opportunities within the companies, and surveys from employees about workplace training.

Table 5

Reference to Flexible Engaging Learning Culture

Reference	Frequency
Learning	91
Development	86
Training	83
Flexibility	55
Culture	37
Engagement	26
Education	19

Training and career development. Training and career development were key

retention strategies that all of the participants claimed reduced employee turnover. For

example, O1 said, "Training in the workplace promotes employee empowerment and

engagement. I engage my employees through training; training improves employee

productivity, increases employee motivation and satisfaction, and subsequently

employee retention, and training is engaging," M2 said, "Where low turnover is evident,

there are continuous training and employees developing." M3 claimed, "We use the

career development and training as a strategy to reduce turnover, intensify motivation,

and employee expectancy levels."

Participants offered reasons why they believed training and career development

led to reduced employee turnover. For example, M3 described "a unique career

development and training program to increase employee retention followers develop a

sense of loyalty to us, their leaders. Career development and training in the workplace

signals that an employer cares and cherishes the skills of employees." M1 similarly

stated, "Career development and training ensure that employees have support, feel

valued, and have potential for growth in the company. When employees feel valued they

stayed in the company." O2 similarly stated, "Training keeps employees intrigued,

training contributes towards how employees feel valued, employees to see a future

within my business. Training is an investment in my employees [and] leads to work that

is more intrinsically rewarding."

Particularly outspoken about career development and training, M4 concurred that,

"career development and training help educate employees understanding of opportunities

for self-advancement, they also help reduce turnover and retain employees, beneficial to both employees and company, employees remain loyal to an employer when training and career development is a priority." M4 took time to elaborate, as follows: "Training opportunities reinforce employee sense of value not just training but exceptional training. Employee achievements or quality performances derive from training we put all these training experiences and knowledge to work." M4 added, "Now in today's business atmosphere, career development and training are fundamental strategies which maximize employees' career potentials and improve the company as a whole. Efficacious career development frameworks flourish within a culture that supports and rewards learning."

Flexibility. Training in combination with flexible work schedules were two major areas that emerged together from the data. Participants collectively discussed flexibility 55 times, and each participant offered a positive view of flexibility in the workplace. For example, M2 said, "Career development and training enhances employees' opportunity for development and growth which result in higher levels of job satisfaction, lower employee turnover development and training, flexible scheduling work best to reduce the problem of employee turnover." M1 explained that, "Flexible schedule and career development and training work best to reduce the problem of employee turnover flexibility has a huge impact on retaining our most talented, valuable assets." M3 said, "We provide flexible work schedules. Flexible work schedule build solid employee and personal commitment." O2 claimed, "Flexibility is not something I do because employees want it. It is a good business strategy. Flexibility reduce turnover and

increases retention, employee satisfaction, productivity, performance, confidence, commitment, and reduces turnover."

Participants explicitly linked workplace flexibility to a work-life balance. For example, M2 said, "By providing flexibility in the workplace employees control their family and personal life which raise job satisfaction." M1 explained, "Flexible schedule helps me to retain my highly skill employees by supporting balance to their professional and personal lives. I found the flexible work schedule to reduce turnover, absenteeism, and increase retention flexibility solves work and family conflict." O1 similarly expressed that, "flexible hours provide each of my employees a platform to balance work and their family life; it increases productivity and flexible hours help in stress reduction and motivate my employees. Flexible work gives a high level of quality employee satisfaction."

Theme 4: Valuing Employees, Skills, Talents, and Contributions

All the participants in the study discussed the need for employees to feel a sense of value. Table 6 includes a summary of the key terms used by participants to describe the importance of valuing employees' skills, talents, and contributions. Participants collectively mentioned valuing employees 48 times throughout the interviews and focus group. Valuing skills appeared in the data 36 times. Valuing talents was mentioned 13 times. There were nine references to valuing employees' contributions.

Table 6

Reference to Valuing Employees

Reference	Frequency
Valuing Employees	48
Valuing Skills	36
Valuing Talents	13
Valuing Contributions	9

While there appeared to be little in terms of documentation offered to support this theme, the interview data pertaining to the value of employees was extensive. For example, M3 claimed that employees want an "employer that cares and cherishes the skills of their employees. Employees who do not receive something of value will leave the company." M1 said employees need, "support, [to] feel valued. When employees feel valued they stay in the company in which they are employed." M2 said, "I show my followers that I value their contributions which empower them which add positive work experience and foster a healthy working environment." M4 referred to, "and a sense of value in their job" and employees need to know they "are valuable and important to the business." O2 said it was important for, "employees [to] feel valued, feel happy and knowledgeable in their day to day job show them how valuable they are to the success of my business." O1 said, "I valued and recognized each one of my employees. If I make my employees feel valued and they have a sense of where they fit in my business they will be motivated and production will increase."

Theme 5: Rewarding Achievements Intangible Satisfiers

Participants collectively emphasized the importance of rewarding achievements based on intangible aspects of employee satisfaction. Table 7 is a summary of the key words that participants used to describe rewards that are conducive to reducing employee turnover. There were 36 references to the concept of rewards expressed collectively by all of the participants in the study. The concept of employee satisfaction occurred 57 times, with several references associated with the concept of rewards. Rewards, according to participants, could increase job and personal satisfaction, leading to greater motivation and reduced turnover. References to motivators or motivation occurred 37 times in the data, with the majority of references to motivators, expressed by all the participants in the study, related to increasing job satisfaction. Rewards could also help employees feel valued. However, the participants emphasized the concept of intangible rewards and there was a consensus among participants in the study that tangible rewards (for example, monetary rewards) were less effective motivators or satisfiers.

Table 7

Rewarding Achievements through Satisfiers

Reference	Frequency
Rewards	36
Satisfaction/Satisfiers	57
Motivators/Motivation	37

Creative, personalized, desirable rewards. Participants discussed the process of personalizing rewards. For example, M1 suggested, "personalize rewards to the

employee interests reward and recognitions program motivate my subordinates. I tailor

the reward and recognition to each employee; movie tickets, gift cards, lunch, and

additional rewards." M4 said, "I use rewards and acknowledgments that are meaningful

which are tailored to the uniquesness of each employee depending on their personal

preferences [which] increase in productivity, employee retention rates, and reduce

employee turnover in our company." O1 claimed, "Recognition and rewards contribute

to the business culture of appreciation and respect for employees and the work well

done straightforwardly recognizing their accomplishments and commitment, it is my

mission to let my employees know their work doesn't go unnoticed." O1 added, "I also

make sure that I am not giving rewards that are undesirable."

The consensus among participants was that rewards should be creative. M2 said,

"We show generosity and gratitude when employees surpass or meet expectations; give

praise, a simple acknowledgement like a nice short message on a post-it note, or pay for

their lunch. I've been creative in selecting and giving rewards." M2 added, "a simple

thank you, free lunch, pizza party, praise, gift card, and positive feedback, creative,

nonfinancial rewards meets the employee psychological needs." M3 claimed, "I'm very

creative in rewarding and keep my employees happy, rewards inspire employees to

accomplish their very best, my followers are happy receiving pizza as a form of

recognition, and rewards inspire employees to accomplish their very best." Creative

examples that O2 offered included, "invite them to have lunch with me, displaying their

pictures on the bulletin board, making my own personal thank you note." O1 claimed

that employees, "want to feel appreciated I reward my employees in the form of verbal

and symbolic recognition I demonstrate my appreciation and thankfulness for a job well done [with] social events, tickets for movies and sports, prizes, pizzas." O1 added more example of creative rewards, such as "cultural celebrations, gift certificates, a barbeque for the employees with dance and music, food, prize, games, and then back to school supplies for the children."

Monetary motivation. There were mixed impressions about monetary rewards as motivators or satisfiers. About monetary rewards, O2 said, "A feeling of accomplishment is more important than pay for some people showing them how valuable they are to the success of my business money is by all account not the only way to show employees you appreciate them." O1 said, "Employees need something else than money to continue working for an employer. For some people, their paycheck is enough - it is their reward for their work, while for others, the feeling of accomplishment is more valuable than pay." About monetary motivation and rewards, M2 similarly acknowledged that, "For some employees their pay is the most rewarding of their work while for some employees the feeling of accomplishment is more rewarding than their pay check." M3 said, "We have a tight budget compensation increments are not beneficial in retaining retail personnel, I ensure that increase pay is consequential by giving it to the employees who merit the substantial increase in pay." M4 said, "I reward and and acknowledment my employees using non-monetary means. From my experience, I have notice that employees are more motivated by internal factors. They gain satisfaction as a result of internal factors than self interest or money." M1 added, "Pay is not beneficial in retaining retail personnel. It is the least of the

motivating factors that keep employees committed to stay with a company. Employers need to give their employees appreciation, growth, challenge, and opportunity."

Although additional documents could have established a pattern of monetary rewards, such as pay histories, monetary incentives, and similar tangible rewards, these types of documents were considered proprietary and were not available for review. However, the extensive discussions that all of the participants offered about intangible reward systems, with multiple references to many diverse examples were also sufficient to support this theme. These discussions also included admissions from some of the participants that monetary rewards and incentives were not financially feasible.

Theme 6: Safe, Healthy, and Appealing Work Environment

Table 8 includes the key terms that participants most often used to describe a work environment that reduces employee turnover. All of the participants in the study referred to the work environment as conducive to their employee retention, referenced 39 times. The terms used to describe the work environments associated with reduced employee turnover included *safe, healthy, respectful*, and *aesthetically appealing* work environments. There were 16 references to a safe work environment. There were 15 references to a healthy work environment. The idea of a respectful work environment occurred 6 times in the data. M1 explicitly described the benefits of an aesthetically appealing work environment, advising that employers should "make the work environment aesthetically appealing."

Table 8

Reference to Work Environment

Reference	Frequency
Environment	39
Safe	16
Healthy	15
Respectful	6

Regarding a safe work environment, M3 claimed that "a safe healthy work environment" is important to "stable employees." M1 said, "what we leaders do [is] provide a safe work environment when employees are working in a safe environment, I have seen fewer employee absences, less employee turnover and an improvement in performance and the quality of work." M4 said, "I strive for a safe work environment for the employees to work. A safe workplace increases employee morale which, in increases productivity, efficiency and overall profitability." O1 said, "I create a safe working environment. Bad leadership, unsafe working environment, inadequate equipment, not enough man power is the prime culprit of employee turnover."

Regarding a healthy environment, the majority of participants equated safe with healthy. For example, O2 claimed, "a safe, positive, healthy environment improves employees' work-life balance, increases morale in the workplace, positively impacts business. A healthy working environment has it benefits healthy employees who are motivated will stay and continue to work for that employer." O1 said, "A safe working environmnet does not only protect my employees from illness and injury but it also

reduce turnover and absenteeism, raise employee morale, and improve and increase

quality and productivity." O1 added, "It costs less to provide a safe work environment

than the costs of one injury a safe working environment attracts and retains talented

employees [who] will thrive in a healthy, caring, respectful, and safe environment." M2

strives to "foster a healthy working environment."

Additional documentation that supports the idea of maintaining safe, healthy, and

appealing work environments also includes employee manuals and posts in the workplace

about the importance of and ways to maintain health and safety in the workplace. These

included documents common in many workplaces, such as injury prevention and

reporting, handwashing and restroom cleanliness, and safety, fire protection and

protocols, break schedules, and protections from discrimination and harassment, among

others. Although these types of documents exist and are considerations for this study, in

light of the significance of this theme, it is unclear to what extent that these types of

documents and other written rules and policies regarding health and safety were present

across all the businesses represented in the study.

Theme 7: Teamwork, Relationship-building, Transparency, and Communication

All of the participants in the study emphasized the employee retention effects of

loyalty, trust, and commitment generated through teamwork, relationship building,

transparency, and communication. Table 9 is a summary of the key words that

participants used to describe the importance of communications and relationship building

to employee retention. Communication concepts were the topic of discussion by all of the

participants in the interviews and focus group, referenced 64 times in the data.

Relationship building emerged from the data 31 times and was a subject discussed by all

of the participants in the study. The idea of fostering loyalty emerged 11 times from the

data. There were 10 references to the concept of trust. The term commitment was

referenced 15 times by the participants in the study, who each discussed employee

commitment related to employee retention. There were 13 references to teams, teamwork,

and collaboration. Transparency was mentioned four times.

Table 9

Reference to Communications and Relationships

Reference	Frequency
Communication	64
Relationship building	31
Mentoring	23
Commitment	15
Teamwork	13
Empowerment	11
Loyalty	11
Trust	10
Transparency	4

Communication. Communication was a key concept discussed by all of the

participants in the interviews and focus group, referenced 64 times. M3 discussed the

importance of the ability to, "maintain communication among all level of staff, and

listen precisely to my followers need. Communication builds credibility among

employees and their leaders [who] use communication methods of concise, clear,

honest, and consistent to interact with their followers every day." M3 added, "It does

not matter if we use face to face, bulletin boards, or other means to communicate in our

workplace, communication increases job satisfaction effective communication is

important on a daily basis to reduce turnover and increase productivity." M1 talked

about the importance of "brilliant communication strategies and ways to deliver

communication seamlessly." M1 added, "We have an open communication policy - any

time you will be heard - we [leaders] will listen whether it's a work issue, a new idea or

a problem regular meetings are proactive where everyone can communicate." O1 talked

about "business camaraderie" developed through "strong communication channels.

Effective communication between my employees and I impact positive employee

morale and reduce employee turnover." O1 claimed that "communication is a two-way

street, communication enables employees the opportunity in decision making and they

are able to communicate their opinion for job I engage my employees through effective

communication."

     Transparency. Linking communication with transparency and clarity, M2 said,

"Transparency in communication is the key to trusting the message as well as in

believing in one's leader. We give crystal clear information when communicating with

the employees." M4 similarly said, "Communication strategies must be clear if we, as

managers, communicate and listen to our employees, we have and we will be able to

determine what motivates each one of our followers. Transparency and self-awareness

increase employee job satisfaction." M2 said, "We create a culture that is clear with

open communication here communication is a priority. In our work environment

communication is reliable it is ubiquitous."

Relationship-building. Relationship building emerged from the data 31 times,

discussed by all of the participants in the study. For example, M3 talked about the,

"significance of interpersonal relationships within the company." M1 said, "Relationship

building is important in the success of any business. Leaders should know how to build

relationships, establishing trust with their employees which are key components that the

employees will stay with their company. Leaders must build trusting relationships." M2

similarly stated, "Relationship building is a skill and its essential to retaining employees

in small business building internal relationships with employees is very important to

retain employees. The essence of everything in business is leaders knowing how to build

relationships." M4 said, "I cannot overvalue relationships. Building relationships both

internally and externally is vital. Employees are committed to stay with you when there is

great relationship between management and as well as employees." O1 spoke specifically

about building a friendly workplace, claiming, "my business has a friendly work

environment" which can "build a relationship between my employees and myself and

increase engagement between employees."

Mentoring and empowerment. Mentoring as a way to build relationship also

emerged from the data, discussed by the participants on 23 different occasions during the

interviews and focus group. The relationship between mentoring and empowerment was

also a concept that emerged from the data, mentioned by participants 11 times. For

example, O2 said, "I used mentors to efficiently transfer information, ask the right

questions, and provide feedback mentorship builds healthy relationships. Mentoring

provides a structured system for developing solid relationship in the workplace.

Employees who mentor have an empowerment benefit." M1 similarly said, "Mentors

boost career development. Mentoring encourages feedback to the mentees it also give

them the skills that they need to work independently as they share their knowledge

through mentoring." M2 said, "Mentors provide mentee with one-on-one training.

Promoting a mentoring culture has numerous advantages employees who mentor have an

empowerment benefit."

Teamwork and collaboration. There were 13 references to teams, teamwork,

and collaboration. M1 said employee retention improves when leaders, "generate loyalty

and team spirit." M3 claimed, "We make our employees feel that they are part of a team."

M2 said, "My boss promotes a culture of shared collaboration and team work." O1

boasted, "I make my employees feel like they belong to a small team [pause] a tight-knit

business culture I promote a culture of mutual collaboration, team work, and respect." O2

said, "I regard my employees as members of a high performance team."

Loyalty and trust. The generation of loyalty emerged 11 times from the data and

there were 10 references to the concept of trust. Loyalty and trust, according the

participants in the study, lead to commitment, referenced 15 times, which all lead to

employee retention. For expel, M1 said, "We have a more connected supportive team,

happier and healthier employees, our employees feel autonomous and loyal to our

company." O2 talked about "a higher level of loyalty" that stemmed from "building

stronger relationships" and equated a "higher level of commitment and trust" with "a

sense of belonging and acceptance." O1 said, "Employees are loyal to my business"

attributing the loyalty to leadership investment in employees, such as, "teaching

employees how to move in the direction of their own goals and objectives while

continuing to do productive work I create a climate which my employees nurture trust in

me and their manager. A climate which fosters high level of trust."

Theme 8: Quantifiable Evaluations of Strategies

All of the participants in the study referenced evaluations, surveys, and

assessments that helped them understand their employees, the effectiveness of their

retention strategies, and their relationships with employees. There was an emphasis in the

data on quantifiable evaluations and assessments of the effectiveness of strategies,

referenced 11 times in the data. Employee surveys were referenced 17 times by

participants in the study. Examples of surveys were additional data offered by some of

the participants in the study.

M3 said, "I use engagement surveys. Based on the results I receive, I can better

determine levels of trust, motivation and commitment to the company, minimize the

danger of losing employees, evaluate the effectiveness of strategies." M1 discussed

opportunities for employees to "voice their concerns, and share their ideas [I] use

anonymous employee surveys to help me to measure employee satisfaction." O1 shared

similar startegies and claimed, "I use employee satisfaction surveys to evaluate everyone

in my business, even me. I use it to assess the overall mood in the workplace." O2 talked

about, "assessing the success of my business over a period of 20 years - the effectiveness

of career development and training, recruiting and selecting the right person, and

communication strategies show their capacity to balance out the yearly employee

turnover rate."

Summary of Findings

Methodological triangulation as described by Ramthun and Matkin (2014) is a

researcher's use of several data sources from multiple perspectives. Methodological

triangulation also aids in reaching the point of data saturation (Archibald, 2015). Harvey

(2015) noted that triangulation in case study research enhances validation of the findings

from enriched data analysis. Applying triangulation techniques enhanced the study's

credibility and increaed validity of the data. I used methodological triangulation to

increase credibility, relying upon multiple informants and multiple data collection

sources. In this study, I recognized data saturation through attention to the nature,

richness, and repetition of the data during data collection and methodological

triangulation. Triangulation of data drawn from journal notes, focus group data, and

semistructured interview data led to eight major themes summarized in Table 10.

Table 10

Summary of Major Thematic Findings

Theme	Description
Theme 1	Leadership Understanding of the Problem
Theme 2	A Selective Recruitment Process
Theme 3	Flexible Engaging Culture of Continuous Learning
Theme 4	Valuing Employees, Skills, Talents, and Contributions
Theme 5	Rewarding Achievements Through Intangible Satisfiers
Theme 6	Safe, Healthy, Appealing Work Environment
Theme 7	Teamwork, Relationship building, Transparency, and Communication
Theme 8	Quantifiable Evaluations of Strategies

Relationship to Existing Literature and Conceptual Framework

In the following subsections, I evaluate the eight major thematic findings from this study in terms of their relationship to the existing research literature. A comparison of the eight major themes to the existing literature and conceptual framework results in explanations about how the thematic findings are consistent, refute, support, or clarify related findings reported in the body of peer-reviewed literature. The relationship of these results to the conceptual framework completes the discussion.

The conceptual framework included Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory, Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, and Vroom's (1964) expectancy theories. I reviewed the three theories identified with the study findings to gain a deep

understanding of the strategies leaders of small retail businesses need to reduce the problem of employee turnover. Participants responses from the focus group and semistructured interviews supported Herzberg's, Maslow's, and Vroom's theories.

Herzberg's (1959), Maslow's (1943), and Vroom's (1964) theories of motivation affirmed the connection between leadership qualities, understanding of employee turnover, and job satisfaction. Leadership behavior and styles revealed through communication, relationship building, mentoring, commitment, teamwork, empowerment, loyalty, trust, and transparency represent leadership qualities that motivate employees (Budworth, Latham, & Manroop, 2015; Korsakienė, Stankevičienė, Šimelytė, & Talačkienė, 2015; Meléndez, Borges-Mendez, Visser, & Rosofsky, 2015; Tims, Derks, & Bakker, 2016; Welty Peachey, Burton, & Wells, 2014). Promoting reduction in employee turnover starts with successful leadership skills, styles, and qualities. Leaders have the ability to achieve strategies that reduce turnover intentions (Herzberg, 1959; Maslow, 1943; Supanti, Butcher, & Fredline, 2015; Vroom, 1964). Leadership styles, concerns, qualities, and behavior positively affected employee turnover, productivity, job satisfaction, and performance (Bandura & Lyons, 2014; Damij, Levnajić, Skrt, & Suklan, 2015; Herzberg, 1959; Maslow, 1943; Mekraz & Rao Gundala, 2016; Vroom, 1964; Wells et al., 2014).

Leadership Understanding

Participants emphasized that leaders need to understand the reasons why employees choose to leave their place of business and seek employment someplace else. Findings are consistent with previous research that indicated a need for leaders to focus

on understanding mechanisms of employee retention and job satisfaction strategies (George, 2015; Kim & Fernandez, 2015). Leadership understanding of the problem exists through encouraging communication, learning, training and career development, a healthy, safe work environment that supported loyalty, teamwork and collaboration, trust, relationship building, value employees' skilled and talents, and reward achievements based on intangible satisfiers (Charlier, Guay, & Zimmerman, 2016; Fawcett & Pearson, 2015; Pollitt, 2014; Wells, Welty Peachey, & Walker, 2014).

Selective Recruitment

Herzberg's (1959) theory of job satisfaction supports leadership action and understanding and employee job satisfaction. According to the participants in the study it is important to select employees who have a good person to organization fit, which would lead to more job satisfaction. These findings are also consistent with prior research conducted by Vaiman, Haslberger, and Vance (2015) that showed employees' skill, knowledge, and abilities should align with the company's needs; this is a process of career growth.

Workers' perceptions of organizational-job fit and person-job fit connected specifically with employees' decision to leave their current place of employment in previous studies (Chen, Yen, & Tsai, 2014; DeConinck, DeConinck, & Lockwood, 2015). Hiring the right employees for culture fit support with organization culture and mission (Herzberg, 1959; Smith, 2016). Hiring the right fit person with the organizational mission ensure higher productive and meaningful work (Smith, 2016), which aligns with what participants in the study believed to be true. Successfully hiring the right candidate

based on culture fit and past experiences will decrease hiring cost, and promote a culture of employee self-esteem and self-actualization needs (Karatepe, & Vatankhah, 2014).

Joining a company with exceptional needs, motivation and past experiences align with Vroom (1964) theory. Recruiting candidates with unique culture fit linking to organization culture also aligns with Maslow (1943) theory. Culture and organization fit involves employees' physiological and social needs as employees, which if suitable, increases performance in the workplace, consistent with the Maslow theory. The wrong fit may result in performance and productivity decreases, and could result in higher absenteeism (Johnson, Holley, Moregeson, Labonar, & Stetzer, 2014; Yeh, 2014). With these ideas in mind and expressed in the interview and focus group data, participants in the study felt that recruitment and hiring should be as selective as possible to reduce employee turnover in the retail industry.

Continuous Learning and Valuing Employees

Providing a flexible engaging culture of continuous learning emerged as a theme which positively retain employees and which participants also claimed shows that they value their employees. All of the participants shared that continuous learning opportunities are essential strategies to retain retail personnel. These findings are consistent with the previously published idea that strong, talented, skilled performers were more prone to voluntarily quit their jobs because of an absence of career development opportunities (Lu, Sun, & Du, 2016). Once employees satisfied their deficiency needs then self-actualization (personal growth need) emerges (Maslow, 1943). The theories by Herzberg (1959), Maslow (1943), and Vroom (1964) coincide with the

idea that personal achievement through growth and learning, using career development and training programs, lead to job satisfaction.

Prior literature also indicated that employees expected structured training and development programs, advancement opportunities, a variety of responsibilities associated with their jobs, clear career paths, and opportunities to fulfill their desires for success (Oh, Weitz, & Lim, 2016; Winkler, Busch, Clasen, & Vowinkel, 2015). Other authors advanced the idea that leaders should provide their employees with mentoring opportunities, clear career paths, and continuous training (Nawaz & Pangil, 2016). Lack of training and career development decrease employee performance, motivation, and job satisfaction (Sharma & Dhar, 2016), consistent with the claims made by participants in this study.

Career development and training opportunities improved job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1959; Maslow, 1943; Vroom, 1964), consistent with what the participants in the study reported about a flexible engaging culture of continuous learning. The data from this study aligned well with the previously published findings that job satisfaction advanced through career growth, training, work environment, recognition, and trust, lower turnover rate (Morley, Scullion, Collings, & Schuler, 2015; Sharma & Dhar, 2016; Pollitt, 2014). These findings from other industries appear to apply to the retention of employees in the retail industry in San Antonio, Texas.

The Herzberg (1959), Maslow (1943), and Vroom (1964) theories validate the perception that opportunity, achievement from career development and training, and personal growth lead to increases in motivation, job satisfaction, organizational

commitment, and productivity. According to the participants in this study, employee-training opportunities motivate employees and improve job satisfaction, which represent findings that are consistent with prior study results that showed development and training programs also lead to employee job satisfaction (Johnson & Beehr, 2014). Based on the results of this study, as well as previously cited research by Nawaz and Pangil (2016) and Pearce and Manz (2014), leaders should create continuous training, clear career path, and mentoring opportunities for their employees.

When employees feel a sense of value, production and profit increases (Barr, 2015; Barrick et al., 2015). Nawaz and Pangil (2016) found career growth opportunities align with reducing employee turnover, consistent with the findings in this study that employees need to feel valued and that their employers value their skills, abilities, and contributions. Career growth paths that are concise and clear can lead to a sense of value and direction (Ertürk & Vurgun, 2014), which aligned with the perceptions of the owners and managers in this study. Continuous learning by providing employees with training and career development opportunities ensures a sense of value and reduces turnover.

Teamwork, Relationship-building, Transparency, and Communication

All six participants discussed communication strategies that included daily collaboration with employees, concise consistent feedback about employees' performances, surveys, assessments, and evaluations, and maintained an open door policy. This thematic finding is consistent with the previously published findings that frequent interactions between leadership and employees were a main job satisfaction theme, identified by Tong, Tak, and Wong (2015). Findings also coincided with the idea

that leaders successfully reduced employee turnover in other industries using effective communication strategies (Ayub, Manaf, & Hamzah, 2014).

Clear open regular communication, transparency, open door policy, and concise consistent feedback support the Herzberg (1959) motivation-hygiene theory, while honest and objective feedback, open communication in both directions by leaders and employees align with the Maslow (1943) hierarchy of needs theory. Loyalty, trust, and commitment generated through teamwork, relationship building, transparency, and communication theme associate with tenets of Maslow hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg motivation-hygiene theory of what motivates people in the workplace. Communications are great assets for employee retention, according to the participants in this study, which is consistent with prior claims that positive feedback, clear concise communication, and relationship building increase employee retention and job satisfaction (Avanzi, Fraccaroli, Sarchielli, Ullrich, & van Dick, 2014; Mensah, 2015; Osman, Noordin, Daud, & Othman, 2016). Lack of communication has a negative influence on voluntary turnover (Griep et al., 2016).

Rewarding Achievements Through Intangible Satisfiers

Job satisfaction includes intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Herzberg (1959) described the intrinsic component as a need for self-realization and self-actualization, which was consistent with what the owners and managers in this study claimed led to the greatest satisfaction from rewards. In addition, flexible schedules, promotions, nurturing organizational culture, praise, and feedback were motivating rewards to employees, according to the participants in this study. Other motivators include meaningful work of

value, healthy working environment, and feeling or belonging to something, which participants cited that also associate with Herzberg's (1959), Maslow's (1943), and Vroom's (1964) theories.

Participants identified negotiating, monetary rewards, compensation, and pay as factors they considered are not beneficial to retaining retail personnel, consistent with previously published findings that monetary rewards and negotiation are considered less effective motivators or satisfiers (Cerasoli, Nicklin, & Ford, 2014; Olafsen, Halvari, Forest, & Deci, 2015). Instead intangible rewards could increase job and personal satisfaction, reduce employee turnover, lead to greater motivation, and help employees feel valued. Recognition, reward, praise, and achievement promote retention (Blumberga & Austruma, 2015; Kim, 2014). These facets lead to a sense of personal accomplishment that aligns with Maslow (1943), recognition aligned with Herzberg (1959) theory, and valued rewards, symbolic and verbal recognition employee effort-to-performance expectancy, performance-to-reward expectancy align with Vroom (1964) theory. Recognition and rewards, as noted by Herzberg, are vital factors to improve motivation, job satisfaction, and retention. Attaining rewards aligned to all three theories of the conceptual framework in this study.

Safe, Healthy, Appealing Work Environment

Consistent with what participants in this study described, Houlfort et al. (2015) noted a healthy working environment promotes and maintains teamwork, values, belongings, autonomy, and self-worth, which has a positive influence on reducing turnover intention, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. A healthy working

environment promotes feedback and recognitions, resulting in increases in performance, employees' achievement, motivation, job satisfaction, emotional attachment, and appreciation (Herzberg, 1959). Intrinsic motivation as noted by Porath, Gerbasi, and Schorch (2015) can occur when employees work in environments that satisfy their internal needs. When employees find work rewarding, challenging, and exciting, then they are more likely to stay in that work environment.

Quantifiable Evaluations of Strategies

Packard and Jones (2015) identified lack of evaluation affects voluntary turnover. Quantifiable evaluation of employees and of themselves and their work environment and culture is a strategy that small retail business leaders use as a main factor in reducing employee turnover of small retail employees. Evaluations, surveys, and assessments help retail leaders understanding critical business practices that affect their efforts to reduce employee turnover. These tools help small retail business owners and managers maintain collaborative opportunities with their employees providing constructive feedback (Budworth et al., 2015; DiPietro, Kline, & Nierop; 2014; Winkler et al., 2015). Lack of evaluation, surveys, and assessments can lead to voluntary turnover and employee dissatisfaction (Budworth et al., 2015), consistent with what the owners and managers reported in this study.

Employee survey measures employee satisfaction. Engagement surveys provide leaders the opportunities to receive honest and open feedback. Leaders utilizing surveys as a strategy can identify issues voiced by employees, in a timely manner. Leaders of small retail businesses that implement strategies to reduce the problem of employee

turnover create a culture grounded on trust, honesty, social needs, a feeling of acceptance and belonging (training), and intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Leaders' perceptions of surveys as a strategy for reducing employee turnover links with Maslow theory of a culture enhancing employee performance and consistently with recognition and reward with the employee contribution, and distribution system for rewards aligned with the expectation of employees.

Training, recognizing, and valuing skills and contributions, employer and peer acceptance, continuous feedback leading to greater autonomy, achievable rewards, transparency and trust, align with Vroom (1964) theory. Cognitive antecedents and highly motivated employees, according to the Vroom theory and participants in the study, lead to reasons for employees to stay and not leave a company. Employees wanting different things from the organization; including more challenge, job security, and advancements aligns with the Vroom theory, and according to participants are important facets of job satisfaction they need to constantly monitor through quantifiable means, to retain employees and reduce turnover.

Applications to Professional Practice

The findings from this study add to the present collection of learning strategies and provide current information on how the findings are pertinent to enhancing business practices in the retail industry which may contribute to potential leaders' useful information for reducing employee turnover. Retail leaders may use the eight major themes found in this doctoral study to improve their professional practices by developing strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover. These eight themes may form a

foundation for further research studies. These themes may apply across any industries, small or large corporations, and may offer global leaders with strategies to reduce employee turnover in the workplace.

I used three motivational theories, Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory, Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory, and Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory to depict factors that affect retention rates, job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, high employee turnover, and employee motivation. Factors that lead to employees' satisfaction are decision-making, flexibility, healthy working environment, opportunities and advancement, education and training, recognition, interpersonal relations, challenges while the factors that leads to employee dissatisfaction are poor working conditions and pay (Gilles et al., 2014; Hancock et al., 2013; Kim, & Fernandez, 2015). Leadership understanding of high turnover, a careful selection of new hires, flexible engaging culture of continuous learning, valuing employees, skills, talents, and contributions, rewarding achievement based on intangible aspect of employee satisfaction, safe, healthy, appealing working environment, teamwork, relationship building, transparency, and communication, and quantifiable evaluations of strategies are main features to reduce employee turnover in the workplace.

The results showed that all of the participants believed the above themes represented the strategies they expressed and that measures taken in alignment with these themes could have a positive influence on retaining employees. When employees are dissatisfied with lack of training, work, poor working environment, and ineffective leadership, they are more likely to leave that workplace (Beattie et al., 2014; Karatepe,

2013; Mulki et al., 2015). All participants stated exceptional communication between leaders and employees improve productive, profitability, and reduce employee turnover. It is imperative for leaders to implement and understand strategies for reducing employee turnover.

Implications for Social Change

Eight themes emerged from the six cases. All themes provide an understanding of strategies retail leaders can use to combat against the problem of voluntary employee turnover. Findings from this study may contribute to business leaders, Texas Retailer Association, and the retail industries at large for improvements to the understanding about employee turnover and strategies to help reduce the problem of voluntary employee turnover. Reducing the problem of unexpected staffing changes may improve organizational effectiveness, as suggested by Delmar et al. (2013). The implications for positive social change include the potential for leaders to apply strategies useful for reducing employee turnover rates. Lower turnover rates might reduce unemployment, stabilize communities, and improve the human and social conditions outside the workplace.

Recommendations for Action

Research from this study concentrated on strategies leaders used to reduce employee turnover that can apply to all industries and organizations. Avanzi et al. (2014) conducted a study that analyzed employee turnover focusing on turnover intentions noted increased employee satisfaction, motivation, and performance reduce turnover intention. Leadership understanding of high turnover, a careful selection of new hires, flexible

engaging culture of continuous learning, valuing employees, skills, talents, and

contributions, rewarding achievement based on intangible aspect of employee

satisfaction, safe, healthy, appealing working environment, teamwork, relationship

building, transparency, and communication, and quantifiable evaluations of strategies are

main features to reduce employee turnover in the workplace.

I recommend that small business owners and managers develop strategies of job

satisfaction to reduce employee turnover. In the small business retail industry, the

turnover rate is higher and a challenge faced by small business owners (Halebic & Nivin,

2012). When conducting this research, I found that implementing effective strategies to

reduce employee turnover in the workplace was needed because retail personnel who are

dissatisfied with their work are more likely to seek employment elsewhere.

The findings from this study led to recommendations for business leaders, in the

form of strategies to reduce employee turnover. Leadership can take comprehensive steps

to recognize and understand the problem of high turnover. Leaders can implement careful

selection strategies for new hires. Providing a flexible engaging culture of continuous

learning is something leaders can provide to help reduce turnover. Showing that they

value employees, skills, talents, and contributions are ways leaders may be able to apply

in their workplace to reduce turnover. Thoughtful, creative rewards for achievements

based on intangible aspects of employee satisfaction are recommendations for leaders to

reduce employee turnover. Providing safe, healthy, appealing working environments are

ways that employers may be able to reduce turnover in the workplace. Leaders should

focus on building teamwork, relationships, transparency, and communication to help

reduce turnover. The use of quantifiable evaluations of strategies can help leaders

understand the problem, the effectiveness of their strategies, and additional ways they can

reduce turnover in the workplace. I plan to disseminate these results and

recommendations with each participant, the president of the Texas Retailer Association,

business journals, conferences, training seminars, and the retail industries at large.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the strategies leaders of

small retail businesses use to reduce the problem of employee turnover, which could be

extended to larger businesses, corporations, and other industries. The research population

included owners and managers in small retail businesses in San Antonio, Texas who used

strategies that led to reduced employee turnover, leading to a superior understanding of

the successful strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover. Expectations were

that the findings from the study might make a positive social change including the

potential for leaders to apply strategies useful for reducing employee turnover rates.

Future study could include more detailed focus on each of the thematic areas to develop a

more detailed understanding of the applications of each of those strategies in reducing

turnover. Lower turnover rates might reduce unemployment, stabilize communities, and

improve the human and social conditions outside the workplace. Additional studies

pertinent to these particular social benefits could build on the foundations that this study

provided.

Limitation of this study included small business retail owners and managers who

applied successful strategies for reducing employee turnover. A future study might

pertain to employees and retail owners in different locations and in different types of

retail sectors. Participation was restricted to business owners and managers from six

small retail businesses located within the city limits of San Antonio, Texas. Not each

theme categorized in this research reflected a larger population of all retail businesses but

did apply to this subset. The sample for this study was small and repeat studies with a

larger sample might expand or build on the results of this study. Future research might

concentrate on other industries, larger size companies, and incorporate a larger

population.

Reflections

It was my dream from an early age to become a doctor. My dream led me to

Walden University Doctor of Business Administration degree program. The path I

travelled to receive this degree was challenging, rewarding, and interesting. I was

exceptionally eager to embark on my new journey from the very moment I spoke with the

recruiter. However, as the journey continued, I became dispirited but was encouraged by

my cohorts' relation and chairs to stay on the path.

My interest in employee turnover was from a consumer's perspective. I have

observed the regularity and cyclical nature of employee turnover. I recognized the

challenges and fluctuations of employee turnover that contributed negatively to the

economy and profitability of an organization. This pattern drew my interest to explore the

problem, as I began to review professional and academic literature related to employee

turnover, employee retention, and employee turnover strateggies.

Summary and Study Conclusion

Reducing employee turnover is a challenging problem for small retail business leaders. Small retail businesses in San Antonio, Texas experience difficulties competing with their larger counterparts for labor resources, resulting in higher employee turnover in smaller firms (Halebic & Nivin, 2012) and a cost of $3,637.00 to replace each employee (Keeling et al., 2013). Participants within this study developed and shared strategies to combat the problem, beginning with the understanding and the reasons why employees choose to leave their place of business and seek employment someplace else. Reducing employee turnover requires leaders to implement strategies to increase motivation and job satisfaction (Ncube & Samuel, 2014). All the more unequivocally, the findings indicate lack of flexible engaging of learning, development, training flexibility, engagement, feel value, rewards, safe healthy working environment, recognition, relationship building between leaders and employees, communication, opportunity and advancement why retail personnel leave their job.

The findings of this study authenticate the conceptual framework, motivational theories, by Herzberg's (1959), Maslow's (1943), and Vroom's (1964), who suggested that the absence of job satisfaction is a forerunner to turnover among personnel. Business leaders should implement successful strategies that concentrate on a combination of diverse strategies, for example, flexible engaging of learning, development, training flexibility, engagement, feel value, rewards, safe healthy working environment, recognition, relationship building between leaders and employees, communication, opportunity and advancement.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol for Business Owners

Time of Interview:
Interviewer:
Interviewee pseudonym:
Date:
Location of the interview:

[May I turn on the cellular telephone and digital voice recorders ?]

Introduction:
Thank you very much for meeting with me today. I am appreciative for your assistance in helping me complete this study. My name is Amelia Pryce, and I am a student at Walden University working on my Doctor of Business Administration degree in Information Systems Management. I am conducting a study entitled *Strategies to Reduce Employee Turnover in Small Retail Businesses.* The purpose of this study is to explore the strategies leaders of small retail businesses use to reduce the problem of employee turnover.

[Give interviewee two copies of the consent form to read and sign.]
Do you have any questions regarding the consent form to participate in interviews in this study?

[**Interviewee must sign both informed consent forms before continuing. One copy will remain with the interviewee; the other is for my research files.]**

Before each interview read the following script:
You have read and signed the consent forms. This form explains the purpose of this study. Thank you for volunteering your valuable time to complete the interview. You are encouraged to ask any question or seek any clarifications as you deem necessary. Today, I used a set of eight questions designed specifically to inquire about your experiences as a retail business owner who have successfully developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover. The semistructured interview may take up to an hour. This interview is confidential, you may refuse to answer any questions, and you are free to withdraw at any time. Any information that you share that is significant to this research study may be used; your identity will not be revealed. In the final study, you will be referred to with a distinctive pseudonym code (e.g., O1, O2). Do you have any questions concerning the study before we begin?

[Begin Open-Ended Interview Questions]

[End of Interview]
Thank you very much for your time and participation in the study. Over the next week, you will be asked to member check the interview data, which is to review a one- to two-

page summary of the key findings of the interview to ensure that the findings are accurate. This should take about 20 minutes.

[I continued to interview new participants until a point of data saturation is established.]

Appendix B: Online Focus Group Protocol for Managers

Time of Online Focus Group:
Interviewer:
Number of Attendees:
Participant pseudonyms:
Location:
Cadre:
Date:

[May I turn on the WebEx and digital voice recorders ?]

Introduction:
Thank you very much for meeting with me today. I am appreciative for your assistance in helping me complete this study. My name is Amelia Pryce, and I am a student at Walden University working on my Doctor of Business Administration degree in Information Systems Management. I am conducting a study entitled *Strategies to Reduce Employee Turnover in Small Retail Businesses.* The purpose of study is to explore the strategies leaders of small retail businesses use to reduce the problem of employee turnover.

[**I will check my e-mail inbox to make sure the interviewees reply to the informed consent forms by e-mail with the words, "I consent" before continuing. Interviewee must print or save a copy consent form for your records.**]
Does anyone have any questions regarding the consent form to participate in the online focus group in this study?

Before the online focus group questions begin, read the following script:
You all have read and esigned the consent forms. This form explains the purpose of this study. Thank you for volunteering your valuable time to complete the interview. You are encouraged to ask any question or seek any clarifications as you deem necessary. Today, I used a set of eight questions designed specifically to inquire about your experiences as a retail manager who successfully developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover. The online focus group may last approximately an hour. This online focus group is confidential, you may refuse to answer any questions, and you are free to withdraw at any time. Any information that you share that is significant to this research study may be used; your identity will not be revealed. In the final study, you will be referred to with a distinctive pseudonym code (e.g., M1 through M4). Do you have any questions concerning the study before we begin?

[Begin Open-Ended Interview Questions]

[End of Focus Group]

Thank you very much for your time and participation in the study. Over the next week, you will be asked to member check the focus group data, which is to review a one- to two-page summary of the key findings of the interview to ensure that the findings are accurate. This should take about 20 minutes.

[I continued to interview new participants until a point of data saturation is established.]

Appendix C: Business Owners Interview Questions

The following open-ended questions will guide the business owners' responses to

the focal inquiry of this exploratory study:

1. What are your experiences with employee turnover?

2. What strategies have you used to reduce employee turnover?

3. What strategies worked best to reduce the problem of employee turnover?

4. How do you know that these strategies worked best?

5. What indicators did you use to make sure that these strategies worked?

6. What strategies were not beneficial in retaining retail personnel?

7. What barriers prohibit employee turnover strategies from being

   successful?

8. What additional comments would you like to add relating to reducing

   turnover?

Appendix D: Online Focus Group Questions for Managers

The following open-ended questions will guide the managers' responses in a

focus group to the focal inquiry of this exploratory study:

1. What are your experiences with employee turnover?

2. What strategies have you and the business owner used to reduce employee

   turnover?

3. What strategies worked best to reduce the problem of employee turnover?

4. How do you know that these strategies worked best?

5. What indicators did you use to make sure that these strategies worked?

6. What strategies were not beneficial in retaining retail personnel?

7. What barriers prohibit employee turnover strategies from being

   successful?

8. What additional comments would you like to add relating to reducing

   turnover?

Appendix E: Business Owners Invitational Research Flyer

EMPLOYEE TURNOVER!!

➢ Are you a retail owner of a small retail business who successfully
   developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover in San
   Antonio, Texas?

You are invited to participate in a study about how retail leaders reduce the problem
of employee turnover. My name is Amelia Pryce and I am a doctoral student seeking
small business retail owners who have successfully developed strategies to reduce
the problem of employee turnover, like yourself, who are willing to participate in
semistructured interviews and respond to eight interview questions.

Criteria to participate in the study
➢ You must be employed in the retail industry in San Antonio, Texas.
➢ You have held your position in retail business for 2 or more years.
➢ You work for a small business in the retail industry in San Antonio, Texas
   that employees 90 or fewer people with an annual turnover rate of with an
   annual turnover rate of 7.5% or less. You must be able to read, write, and
   speak fluent English.

If you choose to participate in the study you will asked to:
➢ Sign an informed consent form.
➢ Complete a recorded semistructured interview session lasting
   approximately one hour.
➢ At the completion of the individual interview, you will be asked to
   member check the interview data, which is to review a one- to two-page
   summary of the key findings of the interview to ensure that the findings
   are accurate. This should take about 20 minutes.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and there will be no incentive. You may
you may refuse to answer any questions and withdraw from the study at any time
without any problems. The results of the study will be published; however, your
personal information and company identities will remain confidential and will not be
disclosed to anyone. Semistructured interviews will be conducted in an authorized
private room at the ███████████ Library that is convenient to the participants. I
plan to share the final results from the study with you, the Texas Retailer Association,
and the retail industries at large.

Your participation in this doctoral study can make a difference for the retail industries. If you decide to participate in interviews please call Amelia Pryce at ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ or e-mail at ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓.

Thank you for your interest!

Appendix F: Managers Invitational Research Flyer

EMPLOYEE TURNOVER!!

➢ Are you a retail manager of a small retail business who successfully developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover in San Antonio, Texas?

You are invited to participate in a study about how retail leaders reduce the problem of employee turnover. My name is Amelia Pryce and I am a doctoral student seeking small business retail managers who have successfully developed strategies to reduce the problem of employee turnover, like yourself, who are willing to participate in an online focus group and respond to eight interview questions.

Criteria to participate in the study
➢ You must be employed in the retail industry in San Antonio, Texas.
➢ You have held your position in retail business for 2 or more years.
➢ You work for a small business in the retail industry in San Antonio, Texas that employees 90 or fewer people with an annual turnover rate of with an annual turnover rate of 7.5% or less. You must be able to read, write, and speak fluent English.
➢ You must be comfortable with technology to the extent that you will be able to access the WebEx meeting room and call into the meeting room using the telephone if you are a manager.

If you choose to participate in the study you will asked to:
➢ Reply by e-mail with the words I consent to the informed consent form.
➢ Complete an online focus group lasting approximately one hour.
➢ At the completion of the focus group, you will be asked to member check the focus group data, which is to review a one- to two-page summary of the key findings of the interview to ensure that the findings are accurate. This should take about 20 minutes.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and there will be no incentive. You may you may refuse to answer any questions and withdraw from the study at any time without any problems. The results of the study will be published; however, your personal information and company identities will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone. The focus group meeting will be held in a synchronous, private, confidential WebEx online meeting room, using your assigned pseudonym for confidentiality. I plan to share the final results from the study with you, the Texas Retailer Association, and the retail industries at large.

Your participation in this doctoral study can make a difference for the retail industries. If you decide to participate in interviews please call Amelia Pryce at ███████████ or e-mail at ███████████████ .

Thank you for your interest!

Appendix G: The National Institutes of Health Certificate

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Amelia Pryce** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants."

Date of completion: 01/27/2015

Certification Number: 1669979