

2017

Effective Strategies Employed by Retail Store Leaders to Reduce Employee Turnover

Alexandro Beato
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Alexandro Beato

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Review Committee

Dr. Gergana Velkova, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration
Faculty

Dr. Teresa Jepma, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Julia East, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2017

Abstract

Effective Strategies Employed by Retail Store Leaders to Reduce Employee Turnover

by

Alexandro Beato

MS, Columbia Southern University, 2011

BS, Columbia Southern University, 2005

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

May 2017

Abstract

Employee turnover affects retail organizations in the form of lower productivity, decreased profitability, and reduced sustainability. In 2014, organizations lost over \$11 billion in tangible and intangible assets as the result of employee turnover. High employee turnover rates have an adverse effect on productivity, which lead to unsustainable business practices. The number of retail employees who quit their jobs each month increased from 432,000 in December 2016 to 464,000 in January 2017, which indicates that some managers lack strategies to reduce employee turnover. Using the transformational leadership theory, the purpose of this single case study was to explore effective strategies used by retail store managers from El Paso, Texas to decrease employee turnover. Participants were purposefully selected because of their experience implementing effective employee turnover reduction strategies; they reduced employee turnover from 24% in 2012 to 15% in 2016. Data were collected via face-to-face semistructured interviews with 10 managers and the review of organizational documents on employee turnover. Data were analyzed using inductive coding of phrases, word frequency searches, and theme interpretation. Three themes emerged: supportive leadership reduced employee turnover, managing personnel scheduling decreased employee turnover, and competitive compensation reduced employee turnover. Reducing employee turnover contributes to social change by providing retail store managers with valuable insight that can lead to enhanced sustainability, improved organizational growth, and increased profitability, which might promote prosperity for local families and the community.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to my wife Brooke and my three children, Donovan, Cassandra, and Elina. My wife was an active supporter who encouraged me throughout this journey. To my children, I want you to know that through commitment, planning, resilience, and willingness all dreams are obtainable. Thank you for being so understanding when I had to change previous family plans to submit revisions of my work. To my wife and children, I am very thankful God placed you in my life. Honey, I love you! This doctoral study is also dedicated to my mother, Zoila Torres and my father, Mariano Beato. Mom, you have worked so hard to give me and my sisters better opportunities. Regardless of the challenges you faced, you always did the best you could; I am forever grateful for the sacrifices you made to ensure I had better opportunities than you did. Furthermore, to my siblings; never stop striving to achieve your goals because the biggest rival in the battle against success is a pessimistic mind. Finally and most importantly, I want to thank God for being there with me throughout the most difficult times of the doctoral study journey.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank my doctoral study committee comprised of great mentors and scholars to include: Dr. Gergana Velkova (Chair), Dr. Teresa Jepma (SCM), and Dr. Julia East (URR) for supporting and advising me during the doctoral study process. I also want to thank Dr. Neil Mathur who served as my URR during the final stage of the proposal review process. Dr. Velkova, your commitment to my success was more than what I expected from a chair; you always exceeded my expectations. As a future educator, your caring and supportive teaching style would serve as the foundation for my career. I do not know how you found the time in a week to do all you did, but I am grateful. Your addition as my chair was a blessing. Dr. Jepma, as a 2nd Committee Member, you helped me become a better scholar; I appreciate your quick feedback. As the result of your comments, my scholarly writing improved significantly. Dr. East, your academic knowledge had a positive impact on the quality of my study. I am grateful for having you as my professor in one of my previous courses, my mentor during my two residencies, and as my URR. Dr. Freda Turner, although I only had the pleasure of talking to you once during my second residency to discuss my study; your advice saved me unnecessary headaches; I never met a program director who cares so much about the success of his or her students. I am also grateful for all my professors, Walden University staff, and colleagues I had the pleasure of working with during the doctoral study journey. Although there are too many names to mention, your constructive criticisms and contributions helped me see things from different perspectives. As I always say, one's success is dependent on the people God places in one's path.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Employee turnover is a complex business problem that requires leaders' involvements; losing well-trained workers has a negative effect on profitability, productivity, and sustainability (Bothma & Roodt, 2012). Managing employee turnover is critical in the retail industry because retailers experience a higher turnover rate than other sectors (McManus & Mosca, 2015). Bothma and Roodt (2012) found that employee turnover in the retail industry resulted in an increase of 9% of the operating budget. Hom, Mitchell, Lee, and Griffeth (2012) indicated that employee turnover also has an adverse effect on the business' bottom line. The cost associated with training a new employee ranges from 90% to 200% of the employee's annual salary (Hom et al., 2012). Researchers conducted a plethora of research on employee turnover, but retail managers continue to struggle retaining top performers (Bothma & Roodt, 2012). Based on current challenges faced by retail store managers, additional research to explore effective strategies used by retail store managers to reduce employee turnover intentions might help other managers increase employee retention. Enhancing managers' understanding of employee turnover might lead to the implementation of new retention strategies.

Background of the Problem

Business' managers care about employee retention because of how critical workers are to the survival of an organization (Mohr, Young, & Burgess, 2012). Several researchers found that employee turnover has a negative impact on a company's sustainability because losing essential workers results in loss of revenue (Hancock, Allen,

Bosco, McDaniel, & Pierce, 2013), loss of knowledge (Eckardt, Skaggs, & Youndt, 2014; Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013), and loss of productivity (Mohr et al, 2012). In a competitive business environment, leaders must retain key employees to continue creating long-term values for the company's stakeholders.

The survival of a business depends on managers' ability to retain top performers (Mohr et al., 2012). Key workers promote business sustainability, resulting in profitability and the achievement of stakeholders' expectations (Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013; Martin, 2015). Researchers showed that organization leaders continue to struggle predicting and managing employee turnover (Mohr et al., 2012; The U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2015). Another challenge retail managers are facing is that employee turnover continues to become more difficult to predict (The U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2015). Hathaway (2013) reported a monthly increase of 200,000 employee turnovers from 2011 to 2012. In a more recent report, there was a monthly increase of 600,000 turnovers from 2013 to 2015 (The U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2015). Further research on employee turnover is necessary to provide retail managers with new strategies other leaders considered effective in increasing employee retention.

Problem Statement

In 2014, organizations lost over \$11 billion in tangible and intangible assets as a result of employee turnover (McManus & Mosca, 2015). From 2011 to 2012, the monthly average of workers who quit their jobs increased from 1.9 to 2.1 million (Hathaway, 2013). The U.S. Department of Labor Statistics (2015) data show that 2.7 million workers quit their jobs in March 2015. The general business problem is that

employee turnover has a negative impact on organizations' performance, profitability, and productivity. The specific business problem is that some retail store managers lack strategies to reduce front-line employee turnover.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore effective strategies that retail store managers use to decrease front-line employee turnover. The target population consisted of retail store managers from a business in El Paso, Texas. The implications for social change include the potential to improve sustainability and promote organizational growth and profitability, which in turn might lead to new employment opportunities and promote prosperity for local families and the community.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative single case study is appropriate to explore the strategies retail store managers use to decrease frontline employee turnover; Wilkinson, Podlowska, and Sakel (2016) established that qualitative researchers study a person, group, organization, or situation to gain new insight. A qualitative method provides researchers with direct insight into a situation; scholars can also use qualitative research to understand the underlying reasons for a problem (Yin, 2015). A quantitative method is suitable when researchers seek to quantify data, present findings in a numerical or mathematical form, and generalize results from a sample of a target population (Brockington, 2014). In addition, in quantitative studies, researchers test preconceived hypotheses (Bishop & Lexchin, 2013; Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Researchers who select the mixed method employ both quantitative and qualitative research methods (in parallel or chronologically)

to gain new understandings of a phenomenon of importance (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). A quantitative or mixed method study was not appropriate for this study because I did not intend to examine statistical relationships or differences.

A case study was the appropriate design for this research because I intended to explore in-depth strategies employed by retail store managers to reduce employee turnover. A single case study design is appropriate when researchers study a particular person, group, organization, or situation over a period of time to gain a holistic understanding of the factors contributing to the problem (Keenan, Teijlingen, & Pitchforth, 2015). My objective was to explore effective retention strategies that store managers use at a single retail store in El Paso, Texas. An ethnography design is appropriate to study social or cultural problems or document the customs, beliefs, perspectives, and practices of people, organizations, teams, and communities in their native habitat (Reeves, Peller, Goldman, & Kitto, 2013), which was not the intent of this study. Researchers use a phenomenological design to explore participants' lived experience as it relates to a particular phenomenon (Schwartz, Stevens, Ramirez, & Wulf, 2013), which also was not the intent of this study. Garcia and Gluesing (2013) described a case study as qualitative research of realities that encompasses the interaction between self and environment, and requires collecting data from two or more sources such as observation, interviews, and documents. On the other hand, researchers use a narrative design to collect data from people and present findings as stories told by the research participants (Yin, 2015). Scholars using a narrative design construct a narrative rendition

of the findings from a real-world setting and emphasize a sense of being there (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Research Question

Developing a research question is the first step when conducting scholarly research (Zhu, 2015). Once the scholar crafts the research question, it serves as a guide for all stages of data inquiry, data analysis, and reporting (Mayo, Asano, & Barbic, 2013). The research question gives purpose to the study and enables scholars to determine the focus of their projects. The research question is the foundation of the study (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013). The overarching research question in this study was: What strategies do retail store managers use to reduce front-line employee turnover? The interview questions were as follows:

Interview Questions

1. How do you gather the necessary information to implement strategies to reduce employee turnover?
2. What strategies have you used to reduce front-line employee turnover?
3. What strategies were effective in reducing front-line employee turnover?
4. How did your front-line employees respond to these strategies?
5. What are some of the benefits of implementing a viable front-line employee turnover reduction strategy?
6. How do you measure the effectiveness of your front-line employee retention strategies?

7. What else would you like to share about your successful strategies for reducing front-line employee turnover?

Conceptual Framework

The theory that I used as the conceptual framework for this study was the transformational leadership theory. In 1978, James McGregor Burns developed the transformational leadership framework (Burns, 1978). Bass (1985) later extended the works of Burns by addressing how transformational leaders motivate subordinates to focus on higher level needs. Burns used the transformational leadership theory to offer an explanation for leadership based on the premise that leaders are able to inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions, and motivations to work toward common goals. The key constructs or propositions underlying the transformational leadership theory are: (a) individualized consideration, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c) inspirational motivation, and (d) idealized influence.

The transformational leadership theory provided a lens through which I explored effective strategies that retail store leaders use to reduce employee turnover. Recent literature suggested that transformational leaders are effective at bringing positive change into an organization (Herman, Huang, & Lam, 2013; Waldman, Carter, & Hom, 2012). Some researchers used the transformational leadership theory to understand how leadership strategies were valuable in reducing employee turnover (Herman et al., 2013; Waldman et al., 2012). As related to this study, utilizing the propositions offered by the transformational leadership theory may enable participants to effectively share their

perceptions and experiences regarding leaders' transformational leadership characteristics as they pertain to employee turnover.

Operational Definitions

Employee turnover: Employee turnover is the percentage or quantity of workers who quit or leave an organization to look for new employment opportunities (Pohler & Schmidt, 2015).

Transactional leadership: A leadership style based on management by exception and Transactional leadership (Bass, 1985).

Transformational leadership: A leadership style centered on a democratic or autonomous approach (Bass, 1985).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions are unconfirmed facts that the researcher accepts as true (Madsen, 2013). Limitations are any constraints that might influence the study (Connelly, 2013). Researchers do not have control over limitations (Aastrup & Halldorsson, 2013). Researchers use delimitations to limit the scope of the study and set boundaries (Madsen, 2013). On the other hand, researchers have control over the delimitations (Fan, 2013).

Assumptions

Scholars must report unverified facts as assumptions (Aastrup & Halldorsson, 2013). Researchers' assumptions influence how they interpret and analyze data (Kirkwood & Price, 2013); therefore, scholars must state all assumptions. The first assumption was that retail store managers are involved in the implementation of employee retention strategies. Another assumption was that participants would be

honest, truthful, and unbiased when answering interview questions. The last assumption was that interviewees would provide truthful information that helps answer the central research question.

Limitations

The first limitation was that participants might not recall all the details associated with the strategies they implemented to reduce employee turnover. Connelly (2013) noted that individuals have a difficult time making an accurate reproduction of the past because people rely on constructive processes that are subject to error and distortion. A person's memory serves critical functions in everyday life but is also prone to distortions, errors, and illusions that effect a person's ability to accurately remember past experiences (You, 2015). The last limitation was that the quality of collected data depends on the honesty and experience of the participants. As Maskara (2014) stated, participants' honesty and their ability to provide reliable information influence the accuracy of the findings.

Delimitations

Delimitations are boundaries or restrictions that researchers impose on a project to limit its scope (Childers, 2014). Scholars have control over the delimitations of the project. The first delimitation for this research was the geographical location; all participants were from El Paso, Texas. Another delimitation was the target population. Only retail store managers who had experience implementing effective front-line employee turnover strategies participated in the study. The third delimitation was sample size. One of the restrictions of qualitative research is that researchers might use a small

sample size because they need more time to collect qualitative data (Yin, 2015). The last delimitation was the industry; I only explored effective retention strategies in the retail industry.

Significance of the Study

Reducing employee turnover is essential to business practice because employee retention influences profitability and sustainability (Bothma & Roodt, 2012). Profitable companies can bring positive change to their communities by making monetary contributions, donations, and creating new employment opportunities. Employee retention is critical to the success of retail stores because retaining top performers helps increase profit margins (Alshanbri et al., 2015), which enables organizations to affect their communities through positive social change.

Contribution to Business Practice

The retail industry continues to experience high employee turnover rates (Alshanbri et al., 2015; Bothma & Roodt, 2012). Rohde, Shaw, Butryn, and Stice (2015) indicated that employee turnover affects the retail industry more than other sectors. Previous researchers demonstrated that employee turnover has an adverse effect on a business' profitability (Bothma & Roodt, 2012), and training a new employee can result in an expense of 90% to 200% of the employee's annual salary (Hom et al., 2012). Although previous researchers explored employee turnover, retail store leaders continue to struggle retaining top performers (Alshanbri et al., 2015). The findings from this study might provide new insights on effective strategies that could help retail store leaders reduce employee turnover and increase profitability.

Implications for Social Change

Successful businesses create opportunities that bring positive social change for the communities they serve (Steiner & Atterton, 2014). Institutions are a force of social change in many ways, such as in creating jobs, contributing to nonprofit organizations, and donating to programs and activities that can benefit the entire community (Steiner & Atterton, 2014). Employee turnover threatens organizations' profitability and sustainability, which affects companies' ability to contribute to their communities (Bothma & Roodt, 2012). Employee turnover also reduces profit margins of small retail businesses and consumes revenues intended for other organizational activities, such as expansion, facility updates, and future investments (Hom et al., 2012). Reducing employee turnover enables a company to be a force for positive social change by improving sustainability and promoting organizational growth and profitability, which in turn can lead to new employment opportunities and promote prosperity for local families and the communities.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore effective strategies used by retail store managers to reduce employee turnover. This literature review provided the foundation for exploring employee turnover in the retail industry and other sectors. I organized the literature review by themes to present the information in a more comprehensive manner. The first theme of the literature review encompasses the transformational leadership theory and supporting and rival leadership theories (transactional leadership theory and servant leadership theory) for this study. The second

theme contains information on employee turnover in the retail industry and recent studies on employee turnover. The third theme comprises evidence on employee turnover strategies. The last theme of the literature review encompasses the effects of employee turnover on productivity and sustainability.

I searched multiple databases to find supporting articles for this study including: (a) Academic Search Complete, (b) ProQuest Central, (c) Business Source Complete, (d) Business Source Premier, and (e) Google Scholars. Keywords for searching articles in databases included *employee turnover*, *leadership and employee turnover*, *employee turnover strategies*, *employee turnover in the retail industry*, *employee retention strategies*, and *the transformational leadership theory*. The literature review consists of 134 studies, of which 114 (89%) of the articles were published between 2013 and 2016 in peer-reviewed journals; 1% (1) of the peer-reviewed count are dissertations. The remaining 19 (11%) of the sources include peer-reviewed articles published before 2013, non-peer-reviewed articles, government websites, and books. The entire study consists of 274 articles, 93% of the sources (Appendix D) are peer-reviewed with a publication date between 2013 and 2017. Five percent of the peer-reviewed count are from dissertations. The other 7% of the articles consist of non-peer-reviewed sources or articles published before 2013. Although there is an extensive body of literature on employee turnover, I concluded there is a gap in the literature on effective employee turnover strategies that managers use to reduce employee turnover intentions.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Since Burns published the transformational leadership theory in 1978, his work has received a significant amount of attention with some researchers suggesting that transformational leaders bring positive organizational change (Herman et al., 2013; Holten & Brenner, 2015; Resmi, Gemini, Silvian, & Kannan, 2014; Waldman et al., 2012). Burns (1978) used the transformational leadership theory to explain how leaders can inspire subordinates to exceed organizational objectives and achieve a common goal. Over the years, scholars used the transformational leadership theory to understand different organizational phenomena such as employee turnover and employee retention (Gul, Ahmad, Rehman, Shabir, & Razzaq, 2012; Gyensare, Anku-Tsedde, Sanda, & Okpoti, 2016; Simmons & Culbertson, 2013). Researchers found that the transformational leadership theory is a full-range leadership model successful for exploring organizational phenomena (Paladan, 2015; Stempel, Rigotti, & Mohr, 2015; Thompson & Glaso, 2015). The transformational leadership theory has international acceptance in leadership literature and receives significant support from empirical research (Paladan, 2015). The key constructs or propositions underlying the transformational leadership theory are: (a) individualized consideration, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c) inspirational motivation, and (d) idealized influence (Burns, 1978).

Transformational leadership is the most common leadership theory researchers use to explore strategies and bring positive organizational change (Caillier, 2014). Kamisan and King (2013) stated that more scholars preferred using the transformational leadership theory over the transactional leadership theory to explore organizational

phenomena. The transformational leadership theory is useful to study leaders' behaviors and how such behaviors affect employees' performance and organizational commitment (Pohler & Schmidt, 2015), job satisfaction and stress (Boon, 2015; Sheraz, Wajid, Sajid, Qureshi, & Rizwan, 2014), and burnout and turnover (Salem, 2015). Transformational leaders lead subordinates through: (a) inspiration, (b) exemplary behaviors, and (c) selfless conduct (Aggarwal & Krishnan, 2013). Another study indicated that the transformational leadership theory refers to transformational leaders as exemplary leaders who inspire others through actions and commitment (Holstad, Korek, Rigotti, & Mohr, 2014). The findings of Caillier (2014), Holstad et al. (2014), and Aggarwal and Krishnan (2013) are consistent with Burns' (1978) explanation of the transformational leadership theory.

Aggarwal and Krishnan (2013) found that transformational leadership behaviors had a positive effect on productivity and employee commitment. Transformational leadership behaviors promote growth, creativity, independence, maturity, and increase subordinates' trust in the leadership. In addition, transformational leaders inspire followers to become more productive by communicating a compelling organizational vision that stimulates powerful emotions in subordinates; thus, appealing to followers' moral values (Holstad et al., 2014). Also, transformational leaders promote employees' self-confidence by supporting employees' aspirations to become valuable members of the organization (Aggarwal & Krishnan, 2013; Karakitapoglu-Aygun & Gumusluoglu, 2013). The results of Karakitapoglu-Aygun and Gumusluoglu's (2013) research concurred with the propositions of individualized considerations, which Burns (1978)

described as a leader's ability to create a work environment where followers can develop their full potential.

To understand the complex marketplace, many researchers and practitioners use the transformational leadership theory as a foundation to explore new knowledge and demonstrate positive and supportive leadership (Northouse, 2013). Leaders engage in transformational leadership behaviors to bring about positive change and be a catalyst for transformation and innovation (Liu, Jing, & Gao, 2015). Transformational leaders can transform an institution by inspiring, supporting, and developing subordinates (Liu et al., 2015; Northouse, 2013). A notable difference between transactional and transformational leaders is that transactional leaders use a reward system to motivate followers while transformational leaders inspire subordinates through continuous interactions, encouragement, and support. Northouse (2013) stated that researchers who plan to use transformational leadership must understand the four constructs of the transformational leadership theory: (a) individualized consideration, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c) inspirational motivation, and (d) idealized influence. Individualized consideration refers to leaders' ability to provide a supportive climate to address the professional and developmental needs of each employee (Paladan, 2015).

Individualized consideration. Employing individualized consideration helps organizations develop followers because leaders focus on subordinates' strengths and weaknesses (Paladan, 2015). Leaders can use behaviors associated with individualized consideration to mentor and help followers reach self-actualization (Northouse, 2013). Burns (1978) stated that transformational leaders act as mentors and coaches

while helping followers achieve their full potential. Furthermore, practicing behaviors associated with individualized consideration provide leaders with the opportunity to increase followers' competence (Burns, 1978).

Simmons and Culbertson (2013) used the transformational leadership theory to explore how transformational leaders' behaviors influenced employee citizenship, followers' perception of leaders, and teamwork. The researchers discovered that leaders' behaviors associated with individualized consideration had an overall positive effect on the organization and promoted employees' citizenship, taking-charge behaviors, followers' perceptions of leaders, and teamwork. Other scholars explored the relationship between professional growth, organization commitment, and transformational leaders and found that treating followers based on their competence and proficiency promoted professional growth, which in turn increased employees' organizational commitment and reduced employee turnover intentions (Gul et al., 2012). Similar to the findings of Gul et al. (2012), other researchers established that leaders who treated subordinates as unique individuals promoted employees' organizational commitment and loyalty, which in turn mitigated employee turnover intentions (Gyensare et al., 2016; Pohler & Schmidt, 2015). Leadership's behaviors associated with individualized consideration: (a) stimulates motivation, (b) improves morale, (c) increases performance, and (d) and promotes a sense of identity and teamwork, which are important predictors of employee turnover (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013).

Intellectual stimulation. Intellectual stimulation refers to leaders' ability to stimulate followers to become innovative while challenging the beliefs of everyone in the organization and improving the institution (Northouse, 2013). Leaders' behaviors associated with intellectual stimulation support subordinates and create an environment where workers can take initiatives to solve organizational challenges (Burns, 1978). Transformational leaders' actions and demeanors inspire subordinates to be creative, which leads to an increase in employees' job satisfaction (Gul et al., 2012; Simmons & Culbertson, 2013). Researchers found that increased job satisfaction resulted in a reduction of employee turnover intentions (Paladan, 2015; Patton, 2015). Also, leadership behaviors linked to intellectual stimulation promote creativity, create an environment where employees collaborate with one another to find solutions to organizational problems, and help employees become valuable members of the organization (Northouse, 2013).

Pohler and Schmidt (2015) found transformational leaders' ability to influence followers promoted creativity and helped employees feel empowered. Leaders who can stimulate or inspire subordinates can provide organizations with the following benefits: (a) increased productivity, (b) improved job satisfaction, and (c) decreased employee turnover (Haile, 2015). In addition, Haile (2015) agreed with the previous work of Aiswarya and Ramasundaram (2014). Haile (2015) found that when leaders motivated or inspired subordinates, employees experienced an increased level of job satisfaction, which resulted in a reduction of employee turnover intentions. Other researchers found similar findings as Aiswarya and Ramasundaram (2014) and suggested that satisfied

workers were less likely to quit their jobs than employees who experienced lower job satisfaction (Alsaraireh, Quinn-Griffin, Ziehm, & Fitzpatrick, 2014; Mathieu, Fabi, Lacoursiere, & Raymond, 2015). Based on the literature, workers with leaders who were effective at stimulating employees experienced a reduction of employee turnover intentions (Alsaraireh et al., 2014; Mathieu et al., 2015; Pohler & Schmidt, 2015).

Inspirational motivation. Inspirational motivation refers to a leader's ability to inspire subordinates to reach a higher level of motivation, which helps leaders influence followers to align personal values with organizational values (Northouse, 2013). Burns (1978) found that inspirational leaders communicate their expectations of followers in a passionate manner that motivate subordinates to become committed to the organization's vision. Leaders who practice inspirational motivation have the emotional appeal to inspire followers to focus on organizational objectives rather than individual goals (Northouse, 2013). Leaders who inspire and motivate their employees encourage trust, promote teamwork, and increase employees' organizational commitment (Paladan, 2015).

Inspirational leaders are effective during organizational crises (Patton, 2015). In challenging times, inspirational leaders build a strong foundation that promotes stability by providing the necessary support, guidance, motivation, and inspiration to subordinates (Patton, 2015). Some of the behaviors associated with inspirational motivation are active listening, leadership involvement, delegation, and supportive leadership (Elo et al., 2014; Paladan, 2015). Some researchers discovered that the behaviors associated with inspirational motivation are essential for building professional relationships between

leaders and subordinates, increase employees' commitment, and reduce employee turnover (Herman et al., 2013; Waldman et al., 2012). Salem (2015) conducted a study to explore the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational stress, and employees' burnout and found a negative correlation between transformational leadership and stress; based on these findings, the scholar noted that transformational leaders were effective at reducing employee turnover intentions. Similar to Salem (2015), Hand, Hicks, and Bahr (2015) compared stress levels of workers with transformational and transactional leaders and found no significant difference in the level of stress of employees with transformational managers than employees with transactional managers. Although Hand et al. (2015) and Salem (2015) could not link transformational leadership to reduced stress, the researchers found that transformational leaders' ability to inspire and motivate followers during challenging times reduced employee turnover intentions.

Idealized influence. Burns (1978) indicated that idealized influence is similar to charisma and describes leaders who have such a strong influence over subordinates that followers want to emulate. Leaders who display behaviors that promote idealized influence have a positive effect on employees' organizational commitment, which leads to a reduction in employee turnover (Gul et al., 2012; Raes & De Jong, 2015). When leaders' behaviors have a positive influence over followers, workers experience a deep level of inspiration and increased respect and trust in their leaders (Northouse, 2013). Employees also associate positive leaders' behaviors with high standards of moral and ethical conduct (Northouse, 2013). Leaders' behaviors such as ethical conduct, leadership involvement, caring for subordinates, and fair treatment of followers promote

leaders' idealized influence over followers (Gul et al., 2012). When leaders display behaviors that promote idealized influence, subordinates' respect for their leaders increases (Northouse, 2013); increased trust and respect in leadership leads to a reduction of employee turnover intentions (Gul et al., 2012). Through idealized influence, transformational leaders can inspire subordinates and promote employee's organizational commitment, which in turn improves employee retention (Gul et al., 2012). Leaders' behaviors associated with idealized influence promote subordinates' admiration of leaders, increase organizational commitment, and improve job satisfaction, resulting in a reduction of employee turnover intentions (Aiswarya & Ramasundaram, 2014; Haile, 2015).

Researchers discovered that leaders' behaviors that promoted idealized influence over subordinates stimulated organizational commitment (Gul et al., 2012; Gyensare et al., 2016; Salehzadeh, Shahin, Kazemi, & Shaemi, 2015). Some studies indicated that transformational leaders' behaviors associated with individualized influence had a positive effect on self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, and promoted emotional stability (Gul et al., 2012; Gyensare et al., 2016). Another study indicated that transformational leaders gained a significant level of influence over followers as the result of using empowerment to promote employee development and productivity (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013). Empowering subordinates promotes personal growth and helps employees become more independent (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013). Some scholars found that empowering subordinates also increased job satisfaction (Aiswarya & Ramasundaram, 2014; Haile, 2015), while other researchers suggested that an increase in

job satisfaction resulted in a reduction of employee turnover intentions (Alsaraireh et al., 2014; Mathieu et al., 2015).

Criticisms against the transformational leadership theory. Despite the international acceptance of the transformational leadership theory, some researchers identified multiple shortcomings (Lee, 2014; Northouse, 2013; Walton, 2014). One of the criticisms of the transformational leadership theory is that Burns (1978) described transformational leaders as *great men* (Northouse, 2013). Another criticism is that the transformational leadership theory refers to transformational leaders in a manner that indicates a flawless, impeccable, and idealized form of leadership (Lee, 2014; Northouse 2013). Burns (1978) discussed the advantages of using transformational behaviors but failed to address the disadvantages. Lee (2014) reported that transformational ideals can be dangerous whenever leaders use their emotional appeal and influence over followers to accomplish illegitimate goals. Some critics of the transformational leadership theory showed historical examples where a transformational leader such as Adolf Hitler used his influence over people to achieve his evil objectives (Effelsberg & Solga, 2013; Walton, 2014). Bass (1985) responded to criticism of transformational leaders' dark sides by separating transformational leadership and pseudo-transformational leadership, but he did not offer a detailed explanation of pseudo-transformational leadership. Regardless of some criticism, the transformational leadership theory continues to receive worldwide acceptance.

Supporting and Opposing Theories and Models

In addition to the transformational leadership theory, researchers use multiple theories and models to explore employee turnover. To gain a thorough understanding of employee turnover, I conducted an in-depth review of some of the most common theories researchers used to understand employee turnover. The following information is an overview of the servant leadership theory, the transactional leadership theory, and Mobley's employee turnover decision making process model.

The servant leadership theory. The servant leadership theory derived from the work of Greenleaf in 1970; the researcher identified the following characteristics in servant leaders: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. The servant leadership theory provides an explanation of leaders who promote a caring and healthy working environment where employees consider themselves valued members of the organization (Beck, 2014; Chen, Zhu, & Zhou, 2014; Kermond, Liao, & Wang, 2015). Chen et al. (2014) found that servant leaders' behaviors promoted a positive organizational culture where leaders focused on the personal and professional well-being of followers.

Servant leaders promote professional growth through: (a) listening, (b) awareness, (c) persuasion, (d) commitment to followers, and (e) employee development. Scholars established that the servant leadership theory refers to leaders who focus on outcomes, employee interactions, job attitudes, organizational citizenship behavior, and employees' performance (Noland & Richards, 2015; Wang, 2015). The servant leadership theory

refers to servant leaders as employee-centric; somewhat different than most people's image of a leader (Noland & Richards, 2015). Chen et al. (2014) found that servant leaders consider meeting subordinates' needs a top priority, are patient, and understand the importance of meeting employees' developmental needs.

The caring and supportive nature described by the servant leadership theory are similar to the constructs of individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation documented by Burns (1978) in the transformational leadership theory. Sun (2013) supported the findings of Greenleaf (1970); Sun (2013) reported that servant leaders had a positive effect on organizations' profitability because workers want their leaders to value their efforts. Greenleaf (1970) indicated that servant leaders have a genuine concern for employees. The findings of Thompson (2014) also supported the work of Greenleaf (1970), Thompson discovered that servant leaders' behaviors promoted followers' learning and growth and employees' organizational commitment, which in turn reduced employee turnover intentions. The servant leadership theory provides an explanation of a noble approach and a more humanistic stance where leaders do not hog power or try to dominate followers (Sun, 2013). Instead, servant leaders share power and enable subordinates to grow by providing the needed support as workers create a path to autonomy (Thompson, 2014).

While examining the relationship between servant leadership and employee loyalty and a researcher found a positive correlation between the two variables; the scholar discovered that servant leaders reduced employee turnover by increasing workers' loyalty (Benawa, 2015). The findings of Davenport (2014) were similar to the

findings of Benawa (2015), Davenport (2014) confirmed that servant leaders' behaviors had a positive effect on employees' loyalty. When leaders are caring, subordinates reciprocate leaders' actions through increased organizational commitment (Davenport, 2014). The findings of Benawa (2015) and Davenport (2014) indicated that servant leaders' commitment to subordinates increased employee loyalty, resulting in a reduction of employee turnover intentions.

Servant leaders' behaviors improve the lives of employees, promote healthy organizational cultures, build responsible organizations, and improve subordinates' trust in leadership (Davenport, 2014). Kashyap and Rangnekar (2014) examined how servant leaders impacted employee turnover intentions by considering how followers' trust in leadership affected employee turnover intentions; the researchers found that lack of trust in leadership significantly increased employee turnover. On the other hand, employees who trusted their leaders experienced reduced turnover intentions (Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2014).

The transactional leadership theory. The transactional leadership theory differs from the transformational leadership theory because transactional leaders use a reward system to motivate followers as opposed to using individualized consideration or motivation (Northouse, 2013). The transactional leadership theory offers an explanation of leaders who promote job satisfaction by recognizing workers' achievements, which in turn increases job satisfaction and employee retention (Arzi & Farahbod, 2014). Researchers who explored the transactional leadership theory found that transactional managers use: (a) a reward and punishment system to motivate subordinates, (b) tend to

be direct, (c) expect subordinates to follow orders without question, and (d) have a habit of micromanaging followers (Nye, 2013; Smith, 2015). Some scholars suggested that transformational leaders are more effective than transactional leaders when it comes to bringing positive organizational change (Northhouse, 2013; Rodrigues & Ferreira, 2015; Smith, 2015); while other researchers reported that in some operational environments transactional leaders' behaviors can help institutions overcome production challenges (Ahmad, Abdul-Rahman, & Soon, 2015; Deichmann & Stam, 2015). Ahmad et al. (2015) also stated that transactional leaders were effective at reducing employee turnover of followers motivated by rewards or compensations. Recent studies indicated that effective leaders often use a mix of behaviors associated with both transactional leaders and transformational leaders (Breevaart et al., 2013; Dartey-Baah, 2015; Martin, 2015).

Another study indicated that transactional leaders were effective at employing soft and hard influence tactics (Epitropaki & Martin, 2013). The findings of Epitropaki and Martin were similar to the findings of Ahmad et al. (2015), Epitropaki and Martin found that transactional leaders increased employee retention of workers who enjoy recognition, reward, and compensation. On the other hand, some workers do not operate effectively when working for transactional leaders as the result of the direct leadership style of transactional leaders (Arzi & Farahbod, 2014). Transactional leaders' behaviors can increase employee stress, burnout, and job dissatisfaction, which in turn increase employee turnover intentions (Bridger, Day, & Morton, 2013).

Mobley's turnover decision making process model. The employee turnover decision making process model (Appendix E) shaped studies on employee turnover for

over three decades. Mobley (1977) published the turnover decision making process model to explain the process employees go through when deciding to quit or stay at a job. Mobley (1977) proposed the following ten steps to explain the employee turnover decision making process: (a) evaluation of existing jobs, (b) experienced job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, (c) thinking of quitting, (d) evaluation of expected utility of search and cost of quitting, (e) intention to search for alternatives, (f) search for alternatives, (g) evaluation of alternatives, (h) comparison of alternatives vs. present job, (i) intention to quit or stay, and (j) quit or stay.

Mobley (1977) found that employees' job dissatisfaction leads to the first stage (evaluation of existing jobs) of the employee turnover decision making process. During the first stage, workers evaluate available employment opportunities to gain insight of potential jobs. Mobley indicated that employees are always evaluating existing job opportunities. The second stage occurs when a worker experiences job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. When a workers experience job satisfaction, they remain in the first stage. On the other hand, an employee who experiences job dissatisfaction moves to the third stage (thinking of quitting). Workers' quitting intentions increase during the third stage. During the fourth stage (evaluation of expected utility of search and cost of quitting) employees evaluate the cost of quitting the current employment. Workers who determine the cost of quitting is too high might decide to stay at the current job. Employees who decide that the cost of quitting is low in comparison to available employment opportunities move on to the fifth stage (intention to search for alternatives). Workers who are in the fifth stage have increased quitting intentions. During the sixth

stage (search for alternatives) workers search for prospective jobs increase significantly. Once the search for available jobs ends, employees evaluate all existing employment opportunities (stage seven). Stage eight (comparison of alternatives vs. present job) is a critical step in Mobley's (1977) employee turnover decision making process model because during this phase workers compare the advantages and disadvantages of quitting or staying at their jobs. Employees who determine that quitting is beneficial proceed to stage nine (intention to quit or stay) and stage ten (quit or stay). On the other hand, workers who decide that prospective jobs are not beneficial at the time return to a previous stage.

Mobley (1977) found a direct relationship between job dissatisfaction and employees' turnover behavior. In addition, Mobley showed that employees' values and job perceptions affected turnover intentions. Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, and Meglino (1979) expanded the previous work of Mobley (1977) and found that other variables such as non-work values, immediate gratification, and impulsivity affected job satisfaction. Furthermore, Mobley et al. (1979) discovered that immediate gratification and impulsivity affected the relationship between turnover intentions and actual turnover. The findings of Mobley et al. (1979) also indicated that job dissatisfaction does not always result in employee turnover; some dissatisfied workers may engage in other unconventional withdrawal behaviors such as increased absenteeism.

Mobley (1977) presented a logical sequence of steps and provided a compelling explanation of the process workers go through when considering to quit or stay at a job. AlBattat and Som (2013) used Mobley's (1977) employee decision making process

model to understand employee turnover intentions and found that Mobley's (1977) turnover model presented a valid sequence of steps through which scholars could understand employee turnover. Other scholars also recommended the use of Mobley's employee turnover decision making process model for future studies on employee turnover (Peltokorpi, Allen & Froese, 2015; Wittmer, Shepard, & Martin, 2014). More recently, Joo, Hahn, and Peterson (2015) employed Mobley's model to understand how perceived organizational support, developmental feedback, and job complexity influenced employee turnover. Other researchers also found that Mobley's work on employee turnover continues to contribute to the understanding of the process employees go through when deciding to quit or stay at a job (Babalola, Stouten, & Euwema, 2015; Katsikea, Theodosiou, & Morgan, 2015; Peltokorpi, Allen, & Froese, 2015; Qiu, Haobin, Hung, & York, 2015).

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover continues to be an important topic to management scholars and practitioners because of the potential effects associated with losing experienced workers (Hancock et al., 2013). The high level of attention given to the exploration of employee turnover is the result of the significant consequences for businesses that fail to retain talented workers (Hancock et al., 2013). Most current literature on employee turnover consists of examinations of predictors, including compensation packages, advancement opportunities, and developmental training (Zhang, Long, & Zhang, 2015), new working integration programs (Kamalzaman, Zulkeflee, Hamid, Sahari, & Halim, 2015), person-organization-fit, person-job-fit, employee job-related attitudes, and

behaviors (Hassan, Akram, & Naz, 2012), job satisfaction (Kessler, 2014), leadership styles (Liu, Cai, Li, Shi, & Fang, 2013; Long, Thean, Ismail, & Jusoh, 2012), and job attractiveness (Mitchell & Lee, 2013). In the following section, I will present a review of current literature on employee turnover in the retail industry and other sectors.

The current literature suggests that reducing employee turnover is difficult because there are many variables that affect employee turnover intentions. Several researchers emphasized that reducing employee turnover is a complex business problem that requires continuous research (Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013; Huffman, Casper, & Payne, 2014; Vanderpool & Way, 2013). Other scholars found that leaders are having a difficult time retaining top employees because workers are always searching for better employment opportunities (Ferreira & Almeida, 2015; Kamalzaman et al., 2015). Employee turnover continues to affect organizations' sustainability and profitability (Baldwin & Lafrance, 2014; Bothma & Roodt, 2012). The success of an organization depends on leaders' ability to implement sustainable business practices, profitability, and effective employee retention strategies (McManus & Mosca, 2015).

Employee turnover in the retail industry. Retail store leaders face many challenges in today's competitive marketplace, but employee retention should be a priority because losing talent has a negative effect on managers' ability to accomplish the organization's mission (Kamalzman et al., 2015). Some of the consequences of employee turnover in the retail industry are loss of motivation among workers, leaders are not able to compete with other retailers effectively, reduced profit, and lower customer satisfaction (Kamalzman et al., 2015). Ferreira and Almeida (2015) found a

relationship between employee retention and sales. The findings of Ferreira and Almeida (2015) also indicated that failure to retain talented workers had a negative effect on the financial performance of retail organizations, as well as other sectors.

Although scholars continue to explore employee turnover, retail store managers continue to struggle implementing effective retention strategies (Alshanbri et al., 2015; Bothma & Roodt, 2012). To understand employee turnover, researchers' interest in the phenomenon increased significantly over the past decade (Loliwe, 2016). Although researchers' commitment to exploring employee turnover should provide retail store leaders with information to improve employee retention, a recent report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) showed that the retail industry was among one of the business sectors with the highest employee turnover rate in 2015.

Retail managers must implement effective strategies to address the challenge of employee turnover (Hom et al., 2012). The retail industry is one of the largest sectors in the United States with the capability of employing over 15 million workers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). Researchers have different justifications to explain the high employee turnover rate in the retail industry, such as lack of advancement opportunities, nonexistent employee training programs, and marginal employee compensations (Zhang, Ni, & Xu, 2014). Ferreira and Almeida (2015) hypothesized that the higher the frequency of pay increases and promotions, the lower the employee turnover rate, and the greater the number of training hours per employee, the lower the employee turnover rate. Contrary to Zhang et al. (2014), Ferreira and Almeida's (2015) findings indicated that a correlation did not exist between training and employee turnover and between

compensation and employee turnover. The inconsistencies between the two studies might imply that employee turnover is a complex business problem for which there is not an all-in-one strategy to improve retention.

The high employee turnover rate in the retail sector is causing a lack of well-trained professionals in the industry; the shortage is more significant at middle-management level (Kamalzaman et al., 2015). The retail industry is a fast-paced business, and most managers do not have a mentoring program to integrate new employees into their new positions (Bush, 2015). Managers should implement a mentoring program to reduce the amount of time needed for new workers to become proficient at their jobs; a mentoring program also increases workers' job satisfaction, which in turn reduces employee turnover (Browne, Thorpe, Tunny, Adams, & Palermo, 2013; Bush, 2015).

Harrison and Gordon (2014) examined the correlation between employees' misconceptions, burnout, work environment, and turnover intentions. The researchers collected data from 151 retail employees from a retail store in the state of New York. Harrison and Gordon (2014) reported a correlation between employees' burnout and turnover intentions. The findings of Harrison and Gordon (2014) indicated that when employees' burnout increases, employee turnover intentions also increase. Guveli et al. (2015) supported the findings of Harrison and Gordon (2014); Guveli et al. (2015) concluded that employee burnout led to an increase of employee turnover intentions. Guveli et al. (2015) also indicated that emotional exhaustion was ten times higher among employees experiencing excessive levels of burnout when compared to workers who

indicated normal burnout levels. The findings of Harrison and Gordon (2014) and Guveli et al. (2015) indicated that unrealistic expectations from employees, such as workload, community, control, reward, fairness, and values affected employee turnover intentions.

Employee turnover in other industries and countries. Managing employee turnover is an important aspect of operating a business because losing trained workers affects profitability and sustainability; therefore, controlling and predicting employee turnover is an essential business practice in most business sectors (Hongvichit, 2015). Organization leaders continue to value the importance of competitiveness in an effort to improve performance (Amankwaa & Anku-Tsedo, 2015; Tse, Huang, & Lam, 2013). Most managers agree that employees are the most valuable resource an organization possesses and talented workers are critical to the survival of a business (Mitchell & Lee, 2013). While examining employee turnover, researchers found that numerous variables affected employee turnover including person-organization-fit, person-job-fit, and employee job-related attitudes and behaviors (Hassan et al., 2012), job satisfaction (Kessler, 2014), leadership styles (Liu et al., 2013), and job attractiveness (Mitchell & Lee, 2013)

Hassan et al. (2012) investigated employees' job-related attitudes and behaviors to gain an understanding of how such variables affected employee turnover intentions in the banking sector; the scholar found that workers' attitude toward their jobs affected employee turnover intentions. Other researchers concurred with the findings of Hassan et al. (2012) and established that workers' attitudes toward their jobs increased or decreased employee turnover intentions (Otchere-Ankrah, Tenakwah, & Tenakwah, 2015;

Sachdeva, 2014). The findings of Sachdeva (2014) also indicated that workers who had a positive attitude toward their job experienced higher levels of job satisfaction, resulting in a reduction of turnover intentions. On the other hand, employees with a negative attitude toward their job experienced a higher level of job dissatisfaction and increased turnover intentions (Otchere-Ankrah et al., 2015; Sachdeva, 2014).

A study indicated that person-organization fit and person-job fit had a moderate impact on employee turnover in the general business sector (Memon, Salleh, Baharom, & Harun, 2014). The findings of Hassan et al. (2012) were similar to the findings Memon et al. (2014), Hassan et al. found a significant correlation between person-organization-fit and employee turnover intentions. Having employees who are the right fit for an organization increases job satisfaction and reduces turnover intention (Boon, 2015). The findings of Memon et al. (2014) and Hassan et al. (2012) indicated that hiring managers should hire prospective employees who are the right fit for the job and the organization, failing to do so increases the chances of future employee turnover.

Kessler (2014) explored the cost of voluntary employee turnover in the technology industry in Israel by conducting an in-depth literature review of recent research on employee turnover and reviewing companies' financial documentations; the scholar discovered that voluntary employee turnover had a negative impact on business's profitability. In another study, researchers explored the effects of employee turnover on organizational profitability and found that a high employee turnover rate led to reduced productivity (Simon, De Sivatte, Olmos, & Shaw, 2013). Although Kessler's (2014) and Simon et al. (2013) studied the effect of employee turnover, Simon et al. (2013) found

that voluntary and involuntary employee turnover had different effects on productivity. Simon et al. (2013) discovered that the effects of employee turnover were reliant on the type of turnover (voluntary or involuntary). Involuntary employee turnover had a positive effect on profitability and productivity while voluntary employee turnover had a negative effect.

While examining the correlation between human resource management (HRM), leadership styles, and employee turnover; researchers discovered a relationship between leadership styles and employee turnover (Liu et al., 2013). The scholars collected data from 190 human resource personnel from Shenzhen and Hong Kong and found that leadership styles were a significant predictor of employee turnover (Liu et al., 2013). The findings of Liu et al. (2013) indicated that leadership styles increased or reduced employee turnover intentions and HRM moderated the relationship between leadership style and employee turnover. In another study, the researcher recommended that human resource managers implement strategies to reduce employee turnover intentions (Bryant & Allen, 2013). Also, Bryant and Allen (2013) pointed out that the cost of employee turnover can exceed the employees' annual salary. In addition, the findings of Lui et al. (2013) indicated that leadership styles affect employees' organization identity, which in turn influences employee turnover. When workers perceive leaders' leadership style as effective, employees' organization identity and commitment increases, resulting in a decrease of employee turnover intentions (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

After collecting data from different sectors, Mitchell and Lee (2013) found that workers compared the attractiveness of their current jobs in comparison to available jobs

opportunities when considering to quit. After comparing available opportunities, employees selected the option with the highest judged attractiveness (Mitchell & Lee, 2013). Based on another study, most employees measure job attractiveness based on the salary, employee benefits, and variable pay (Schlechter, Hung, & Bussin, 2014). The findings of Schlechter et al. (2014) indicated that salary was the most significant predictor of job attractiveness, followed by employee benefits. When employees received adequate compensation, employees experienced a higher level of job attractiveness, which in turn reduced employee turnover intentions (Schlechter et al., 2014).

El-Nahas, Eman, and Ayman (2013) conducted a study to explore the relationship between leadership behavior, organizational culture, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee turnover intentions in the Egyptian retail sector. El-Nahas et al. (2013) provided questionnaires to 700 employees and received feedback from 455 participants and found that leadership behaviors affected organizational culture, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. The findings of Mathieu et al. (2015) were similar to the findings of El-Nahas et al. (2013), Mathieu et al. (2015) reported that leadership behaviors affected turnover intentions through job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Positive leaders' behaviors increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment, resulting in a reduction of employee turnover intentions (Mathieu et al., 2015). On the contrary, negative leaders' behaviors had an adverse effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, resulting in an increase of employee turnover intentions (Mathieu et al., 2015). In another study,

scholars also found evidence that organizational commitment affected employee turnover intentions; based on the findings, workers who reported high organizational commitment were less likely to quit their jobs while employees who reported low organizational commitment experienced higher quitting intentions ((Stanley, Vandenberghe, Vandenberg, & Bentein, 2013).

Rutherford, Wei, Park, and Hur (2012) investigated managers' effectiveness at integrating a new proposed business model into an organization; the researchers used a sample of 292 Chinese salespeople to examine the relationship between emotional exhaustion, perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, and turnover intentions. The findings of Rutherford et al. (2012) indicated that there was a relationship between emotional exhaustion, perceived organizational support, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. Another research also indicated that there was a relationship between perceived organizational support and employee turnover intentions; moreover, the findings the study showed that employees who reported low perceived organizational support experienced an increase in turnover intentions as oppose to workers who reported high perceived organizational support (Kalemci-Tuzun & Arzu-Kalemci, 2012). In regards to job satisfaction and employee turnover, a recent study found evidence of a moderate relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions (Abbas, Raja, Darr, & Bouckennooghe 2014).

While examining how disruptive periods of organizational change in the general business sector affected employee turnover, researchers discovered that employee

turnover was higher during disruptive periods of organizational change (Lalitha & Singh, 2014). Also, Lalitha and Singh (2014) identified that employee turnover resulted in several expenses and losses including: (a) the cost of hiring a new person, (b) the cost of training a new employee, (c) lost productivity, (d) lost engagement, (e) errors in customer service, and (f) negative cultural impact. Lalitha and Singh (2014) found five key factors that increased employee retention including: (a) confidence in leadership, (b) opportunity for career development, (c) autonomy, (d) supportive work environment, and (e) appropriate compensation. Similar to Lalitha and Singh (2014), Schlechter et al. (2014) also linked compensation to employee turnover intentions. The findings of both studies indicated that higher employee compensation results in higher productivity, improved job satisfaction, and increased employee retention (Lalitha & Singh, 2014; Schlechter et al., 2014).

Huffman et al. (2014) examined the correlation between work interference with family and employee turnover using a sample of 5505 U.S. Army officers; the researchers segregated the participants into a married group (group A) and single group (group B). The findings of Huffman et al. (2014) indicated that married employees stayed an average of four years longer at their jobs than single employees. Although married employees were less likely to hop from job to job, Huffman et al. (2014) found that spouses were a positive or negative reinforcement when a worker was considering to quit a job. Another research showed that work-family balance affected employees' psychological outcomes such as job anxiety and turnover intentions (Vanderpool & Way, 2013). The findings of Huffman et al. (2014) and Vanderpool and Way (2013) showed

that work-family balance is a significant predictor of employee turnover intentions. Contrary to Huffman et al. (2014), Vanderpool and Way (2013), and Shuck, Twyford, Reio, and Shuck (2014) found that work-related demands and resources were a more significant predictor of employee turnover intentions than work-family balance.

Hausknecht and Holwerda (2013) examined the consequence of employee turnover on groups, departments, and organization performance to get a better understanding of factors that help managers understand how an employee's departure affected an organization. Based on the findings, the researchers found that several factors (employees' proficiency, positional distribution, remaining member proficiency, time dispersion, and newcomers' proficiency) play a role in determining how employee turnover affects an organization (Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013). Employers can reduce the effects of employee turnover by training employees for other positions and training personnel for the next higher position (Ahmed, Phulpoto, Umrani, & Abbas, 2015; Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013). Since training increases employee engagement, managers can reduce employee turnover intentions by developing an employee training strategy (Ahmed et al., 2015).

Retention Strategies

Implementing an effective retention strategy is critical in the retail industry; manpower is the most important resource business managers need to operate a business (Kamalzaman et al., 2015). Human resource managers agree that the success of an organization depends on managers' ability to retain top performers (Mandhanya, 2015). As a strategy to retain employees, Mandhanya (2015) recommended that leaders offer

developmental training opportunities for their subordinates. Kamalzaman et al. (2015) found that implementing an effective training development plan increases the retention of top performers and promotes employees' organizational commitment. Other researchers discovered that workers who dream of advancement opportunities enjoyed greater responsibilities (Fisher, 2015; Park, 2015). In addition, developmental training challenges top performers; keeping productive employees engaged helps improve retention (Fisher, 2015).

Another strategy to reduce employee turnover is using a reward program to recognize employees for their achievements (Ferreira & Almeida, 2015). The findings of Ferreira and Almeida (2015) indicated a positive relationship between professional recognition and employee retention. When leaders reward followers for superior performance, employees' organizational commitment increases, resulting in a reduction of employee turnover (Ferreira & Almeida, 2015). The findings of Mandhanya (2015) were similar to the findings of Ferreira and Almeida (2015), Mandhanya found that a reward program was an essential component of an effective organization's retention strategy. In addition, providing employees with developmental training might provide workers with knowledge and opportunities for future promotions, which improve job satisfaction and reduce the cost associated with employee turnover. The findings of Ferreira and Almeida (2015) and Mandhanya (2015) indicated that professional recognition is a viable retention strategy.

Leaders also use their organizations' contributions to local communities as a strategy to increase employee retention (Bode, Singh, & Rogan, 2015). Institutions can

increase employee retention by taking part in social initiatives that benefit the community (Bode et al., 2015). Employees' perceptions of an organization affect workers' desires to work for the company (Patro, 2014). Based on the findings of Bode et al. (2015), workers enjoy sharing stories of organizations that support the local communities; the researchers also discovered that businesses that contributed to their communities had a better image than institutions that did not. Moreover, employees in organizations with a good image displayed a higher level of commitment and pride to their organizations (Bode et al., 2015). The findings of Patro (2014) were similar to the findings of Bode et al. (2015), Patro (2014) stated that workers' perception of a business affected employee turnover intentions. The findings of Patro (2014) and Bode et al. (2014) indicated that employees are proud of being a member of organizations that have a positive image; workers' pride increases employees' organizational commitment and reduces employee turnover intentions.

While conducting a study on the relationship between supportive leadership and employee turnover, researchers found a correlation between supportive leadership and reduced employee turnover (Shukla & Rai 2015). Shukla and Rai (2015) recommended that organizations' leaders provide employees with adequate support as a strategy to reduce employee turnover intentions. In a similar study, scholars also linked perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, and organizational commitment to employee turnover intentions; the researchers found that managers could increase employee retention by committing themselves to supporting subordinates (Kalidass & Bahron, 2015). Based on these findings, followers with supportive leaders experienced a

higher level of job satisfaction than workers who had less supportive leaders (Shukla & Rai, 2015). The results of Shukla and Rai (2015) and Einolander (2015) also indicated that supportive leaders create an operational environment that promotes organizational commitment and innovation, which in turn increases job satisfaction and reduces employee turnover intentions. Based on their findings, researchers recommended being a supportive leader as a strategy to reduce employee turnover intentions (Kalidass & Bahron, 2015; Shukla & Rai, 2015)

Employee Turnover and Productivity

Retaining top employees is critical to the survival of an organization (Hom et al., 2012). In 2014, organizations lost over \$11 billion in tangible and intangible assets as a result of employee turnover (McManus & Mosca, 2015). James and Mathew (2012) noted that a high employee turnover rate had an adverse effect on productivity and sustainability. Other scholars concurred with James and Mathew (2012) by reporting that employee turnover continues to threaten organizations' profitability and sustainability (Baldwin & Lafrance, 2014; Bothma & Roodt, 2012). The success of a business depends on leaders' ability to implement sustainable business practices, profitability, and employee retention (McManus & Mosca, 2015).

Losing talented workers has a negative effect on productivity and resource management (James & Mathew, 2012). When managers do not have enough employees to provide customers with adequate services, customers become unhappy due to unsatisfactory service and might decide to shop somewhere else, resulting in unsustainable practices. Retail leaders are concerned about employee turnover because

of the effect that a high employee turnover rate has on organization's productivity and competitiveness (Wang et al., 2015). New employees can be up to 75% less productive than experienced workers in the first 30 days (Duda & Zurkova, 2013). Although new workers can quickly gain experience and become more productive, new employees can take more than 90 days to achieve a 75-100% proficiency level of an experienced worker (Duda & Zurkova, 2013). The findings of Wang et al. (2015) and Duda and Zurkova (2013) indicated that losing experienced workers has a negative effect on productivity, as the result of lost experience.

Several scholars established that employee turnover also has an adverse effect on productivity (Bothma & Roodt, 2012; Duda & Zurkova, 2013; Wang et al., 2015). The main cause of organization failure is businesses' inability to generate a profit as the result of decreased productivity (Duda & Zurkova, 2013). Moreover, organizations' leaders who implement effective strategies to reduce employee turnover are more effective than leaders do not have an effective retention program (Alshanbri et al., 2015). The findings of Bothma and Roodt (2012), Duda and Zurkova (2013), and Wang et al. (2015) indicated that implementing effective strategies to reduce employee turnover is essential to the success of an organization because employee retention increases productivity.

Business leaders who understand the nature and consequences of employee turnover have a better chance at implementing effective employee turnover strategies to reduce the effects associated with loss of productivity (Leon, Bellairs, & Halbesleben, 2015; Prasannakumar, 2015; Savaneviciene, Vaitkevicius, Ciutiene, & Meiliene, 2015). Managers who are knowledgeable of the effects of employee turnover can develop

policies and procedures to minimize the consequences of reduced productivity resulting from employee turnover (Prasannakumar, 2015). Moreover, Prasannakumar (2015) discovered that employee turnover has an adverse effect on productivity, and recommended that business leaders lessen the impact of decreased productivity by cross-training employees for different positions. Some researchers reported that managing employee turnover was critical to the survival of an organization because employee retention led to sustainable productivity and profitability, which are essential components of organizational success (Akkas, Chakma, & Hossain, 2015; Wahyuningtyas, Sule, Kusman, & Soemaryani, 2015).

Consequences of Employee Turnover. Employee turnover continues to disrupt retail organizations; increased employee turnover has a significant effect on retail store managers' ability to implement sustainable strategies (McManus & Mosca, 2015). Since the total cost of hiring a new employee ranges from 90% to 200% of the employee's annual salary, the implementation of effective strategies to reduce employee turnover is essential to the survivability of an organization (Hom et al., 2012). Managers must implement effective strategies to reduce employee turnover to improve the survivability and sustainability of their businesses (Butali, Wesang'ula, & Mamuli, 2014). The discussion below provides an overview of some of the consequences associated with increased employee turnover including: (a) increased employees' job dissatisfaction, (b) reduced customers' satisfaction, (c) declined financial performance, (d) decreased sustainability, (e) reduced productivity and profitability, (f) lower knowledge retention, (g) decreased management of resources, (h) reduced proficiency, (i) lower positional

distribution, (j) increased difficulty in time dispersion, and (k) decreased employees' engagement.

Employee turnover increases other workers' job dissatisfaction, has a negative effect on customers' satisfaction, and affects sustainable business practices (Butali et al., 2014; McManus & Mosca, 2015). When an employee quits his or her job, other workers must take on additional duties until company leaders can hire another employee; the additional responsibilities upset some workers (Butali et al., 2014). Adding additional duties to other workers increases job dissatisfaction, which leads to increased turnover intentions among the remaining employees (McManus & Mosca, 2015). When leaders do not implement effective strategies to reduce employee turnover, employee turnover can lead to additional workers quitting their jobs. The literature indicates that increased employee turnover also reduces the financial performance of organizations because employee turnover leads to increased job dissatisfaction among other workers, decreases customers' satisfaction, and reduces sustainability (Butali et al., 2014; McManus & Mosca, 2015).

Failure to retain key employees leads to loss of productivity (Leon et al., 2015). Organizations with a high employee turnover rate are less productive than institutions with a high retention rate (Prasannakumar, 2015). Leon et al. (2015) also discovered that employee turnover affected more than productivity and sustainability; organizations with a higher employee turnover rate were less profitable as the result of lost knowledge. Unmanaged employee turnover results in loss of knowledge, which leads to unsustainable

business practices and decreases profitability (Akkas et al., 2015; Wahyuningtyas et al., 2015).

Lower productivity also has a negative effect on customers' satisfaction, which in turn effects revenue and sustainability (Duda & Zurkova, 2013). When organizations' leaders do not have adequate staff to provide customers with satisfactory services, institutions lose customers as the result of inadequate customer service and support, resulting in unsustainable practices. Other consequences of high employee turnover rates include decreased organization's performance and competitiveness (Wang et al., 2015). Losing talented workers is detrimental to the survivability of businesses because of reduced productivity and leaders' difficulty managing organization's resources (James & Mathew, 2012; Wahyuningtyas et al., 2015).

In the first 30 days, some new workers are 75% less productive than experienced workers (Duda & Zurkova, 2013). New employees need up to 90 days of experience to achieve a 75-100% proficiency level (Wang et al., 2015). The findings of Wang et al. (2015) and Duda and Zurkova (2013) indicated that losing experienced workers had a negative effect on productivity, sustainability, and survivability, as the result of lost experience. The consequences of high employee turnover are detrimental to the success and survival of businesses (Duda & Zurkova, 2013; Wang et al., 2015).

Increased employee turnover affects organizations' ability to retain knowledge (Leon et al., 2015). When a well-trained employee leaves an organization, organization leaders must hire a new worker who requires training to learn how the new institution operates (Eckardt et al., 2014). Some scholars discovered that employee turnover had a

negative impact on an organization's sustainability because losing essential workers resulted in loss of revenue, as the result of loss of knowledge (Hancock et al., 2013; Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013). The findings of Eckardt et al. (2014) also suggested that ineffective retention strategies hinder leaders' ability to create long-term values for stakeholders.

Moreover, losing talented workers has a negative effect on resource management (Duda & Zurkova, 2013; James & Mathew, 2012). Having an adequate staff is necessary to provide customers with exceptional customer service and support (Duda & Zurkova, 2013). When organizations' leaders do not have adequate staff to provide customers with satisfactory services, institutions lose customers as the result of inadequate customer service and support, resulting in unsustainable practices (James & Mathew, 2012). Inadequate customer service and support leads to customers' dissatisfaction, which in turn leads to a decrease in organization's profitability and competitiveness (Wang et al., 2015).

Hausknecht and Holwerda (2013) conducted a study to examine the consequences of employee turnover on groups, departments, and organizational performance to get a thorough understanding of factors that would help managers understand how an employee's departure affected a business's performance. The findings of Hausknecht and Holwerda (2013) indicated the following consequences of employee turnover: (a) decreased proficiency, (b) lower positional distribution, (c) increased difficulty in time dispersion, and (d) reduced performance and productivity. Managers experiencing increased employee turnover rates have a difficult time implementing an effective

training program as the result of the unpredictable nature of employee turnover (Ahmed et al., 2015). In addition, organizations with a higher employee turnover rate also have decreased employees' engagement (Ahmed et al., 2015; McManus & Mosca, 2015).

The survival of a business depends on managers' ability to retain top performers (Mohr et al., 2012). Key workers promote business sustainability, resulting in increased profitability and the achievement of stakeholders' expectations (Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013; Martin, 2015). Retail industry leaders continue to struggle predicting and managing employee turnover (Mohr et al., 2012; The U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2015). Another challenge retail store managers are facing is that employee turnover continues to become more difficult to predict (The U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2015). In 2013, employee turnover increased to 200,000 per month (Hathaway, 2013). More recently, the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics (2015) reported a monthly employee turnover increase of 600,000 turnovers per month from 2013 to 2015. Further research on employee turnover is necessary to provide retail store managers with new strategies other leaders considered effective in reducing employee turnover. Implementing effective strategies to reduce employee turnover increases business' survivability and sustainability in today's competitive retail industry (McManus & Mosca, 2015).

Transition

The first section of this study included the problem statement and purpose statement, as well as the nature of the study to defend the reason for choosing a qualitative methodology and case study design for this research. In addition, Section 1

encompassed the interview questions, the conceptual framework, and the operational definitions. Section 1 also comprised the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations for the study. The last two components of Section 1 are the significance of the study and a review of the professional and academic literature. The literature review included an exhaustive analysis of current research relevant to employee turnover, recent theories researchers use to understand employee turnover, and other themes used in the literature review to gain a thorough understanding of the research topic. Section 2 includes additional information on the research methods and designs, including the chosen research method and design for this study. Other components found in this section describe my responsibility as the data collection instrument and provide detailed information about the data collection, organization, and analysis process. In addition, there is a discussion about ensuring reliability and validity in qualitative research. Section 3 encompasses the presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, and implications for social change. Moreover, I present my recommendations for actions and future research on employee turnover. Also, Section 3 includes a discussion of my experience during the doctoral study journey and the conclusions from the data analysis.

Section 2: The Project

The second section of this study provides valuable information about my role as the researcher, the purpose of the study, and the criteria for selecting prospective participants. Section 2 also contains a discussion of the research project and an explanation of various research methods and design approaches, including a highlight of the key methodological and design considerations. I also address the reasons for choosing a qualitative method and a case study design to explore effective strategies retail managers use to reduce employee turnover. In addition, there is a discussion of the population and sampling, the process of ensuring ethical research, and the tools used during the data organization, collection, and analysis process. Section 2 also encompasses a discussion on my plan to ensure the reliability and validity of the study findings.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore effective strategies that retail store managers use to decrease front-line employee turnover. The target population consisted of retail store managers from a business in El Paso, Texas. The implications for social change include the potential to improve sustainability, promote organizational growth and profitability, which in term might lead to new employment opportunities and promote prosperity for local families and the community.

Role of the Researcher

In a qualitative study, the researcher is the data collection instrument (Rowley, 2012). The role of a researcher includes collecting and analyzing data (Schoenherr,

Ellram, & Tate, 2015), protecting the rights of human participants (Mitchell & Wellings, 2013), and safeguarding any identifiable information from organizations and participants involved in the study (Gajewski, 2013). When conducting research, scholars must report all data and detach their personal perceptions, values, morals, and beliefs from the study (Cairney & St. Denny, 2015). As the data collection instrument, I collected and analyzed data, protected participants' rights, safeguarded identifiable information, and ensured the findings of this study were the perspectives of the participants.

I chose to conduct research on employee turnover because of my leadership experience as a senior operations manager. I did not have a personal or professional relationship with any of the participants. Although I did not have experience working in the retail industry, I am passionate about understanding organizational problems that leaders need to address to accomplish the business's mission and vision. A recent study showed that researchers select a research topic based on their personal interest and a thorough review of the literature (Bhatti, Janjua, Akhtar, & Azad, 2014).

On July 12, 1974, the National Research Act (Pub. L. 93-348) became law, resulting in the birth of the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (Belmont Report, 1979). The Belmont Report is a summary of the basic ethical principles scholars must live by when conducting research. These principles are (a) respect of persons, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice (Belmont Report, 1979). Respect for persons refers to researchers' responsibility of treating prospective subjects as autonomous agents and ensuring that individuals with diminished autonomy receive additional protection (Adams & Miles, 2013). The principle of

beneficence entails that researchers are responsible for protecting participants from harm (Adams & Miles, 2013). As described in the Belmont Report, justice refers to the fairness of distribution of burden and benefit during and after the research. During the participant selection process, all participants who met the criteria and volunteered to be part of the study were able to share their knowledge of employee turnover. To ensure prospective store managers had a chance to volunteer during the selection process, I sent individual e-mails to all managers from the partner organization who met the criteria for this study. Also, I protected participants from harm and ensured their confidentiality, which was of utmost important to me. In addition, by following the principles of (a) respect of persons, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice, I was able to abide by the three most important researchers' responsibilities outlined in the Belmont Report.

Qualitative researchers must do their best to minimize errors and biases (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Moreover, scholars must eliminate personal biases that may affect the reliability of the study during the data collection and data analysis process (Cairney & St. Denny, 2015). To mitigate potential biases, Moustakas (1994) recommended that researchers engage in *epoche* when conducting qualitative research. When a researcher practices *epoche*, the researcher suspends judgment and accept information in the manner participants present it (Moustakas, 1994). Furthermore, scholars can use a journal to keep track of all actions related to the study to reduce the potential for biases during the research process (Applebaum, 2014). To minimize biases, I used a journal to keep track of all activities related to the data collection and analysis process and asked each interviewee the seven interview questions approved by the IRB. In addition, using open-

ended questions during the interviews enabled participants to openly share their experiences, allowing me to collect information on employee turnover from the perspective of the interviewees. I also practiced epoche as recommended by Moustakas (1994), which allowed me to be aware of my personal biases and keep my judgement and biases under control.

An interview protocol increases the level of effectiveness and efficiency during the interviews (Alby & Fatigante, 2014; Jamshed, 2014). When using an interview protocol, scholars can take advantage of the following benefits: (a) enhanced procedural level of interviewing, (b) improved interview scripts, and (c) increased relevancy of the data collected during the interviews (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). According to Alby and Fatigante (2014), an interview protocol entails more than asking questions; it is a strategy that guides researchers during the interview process. Likewise, Peters and Halcomb (2015) noted that an effective interview protocol promotes consistency during the interview. I selected the interview protocol based on the work of Jacob and Furgerson (2012), who created an interview protocol to increase consistency and improve effectiveness and efficiency during the interview process. Using an interview protocol enabled me to enhance the interview process, which improved the quality and relevancy of the data collection process. The interview protocol (Appendix B) provides additional information about the interview process.

Participants

Researchers must ensure participants have adequate experience to provide information about the phenomenon under study (Hoyland, Hollund, & Olsen, 2015). The

quality of the research depends on researchers' ability to recruit participants who have extensive knowledge of the research problem (Ibrahim & Sidani, 2014; Moscovitch et al., 2015). Failure to select suitable participants effects the reliability and validity of the findings (Barry, Chaney, Piazza-Gardner, & Chavarria, 2014; Lewis, 2013). According to Hoyland et al. (2015), participant selection is one of the most important quality assurance measures in research. All participants met the following criteria: (a) had managerial experience in the retail industry, (b) worked as a retail store manager in El Paso, Texas, and (c) had experience implementing effective strategies to reduce employee turnover.

I contacted the senior manager of a retail store in El Paso, Texas by e-mail and requested permission to collect data at the site from managers. Although researchers can use different strategies to contact prospective companies, Mitchelmore and Rowley (2013) recommended that scholars visit the businesses in person, call the organization and talk to leaders, or e-mail the human resource department to get permission to collect data from the institution. Gajewski (2013) found that contacting organizations in person or by phone were effective ways scholars can use to ask for permission to collect data from an organization. According to Gandy (2015), visiting prospective organizations and contacting them by e-mail are effective strategies because researchers are able to provide the institutions with sufficient information about the research study to make a decision. Maskara (2014) communicated with organizations' leaders in person and by e-mail and recommended that researchers use at least two different approaches to contact prospective institutions.

Once senior leaders of the partner organization agreed to participate in the study, the local store manager provided me with a letter of cooperation; the data collection process started after approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Castro (2013) requested a letter of cooperation from the leaders of the organizations from which he collected data for his project to serve as a contract between the researcher and the institution. Another scholar recommended researchers have a letter of cooperation before starting the data collection process (Gandy, 2015). Having a letter of cooperation protects the organization and the researcher (Maskara, 2015). After the business manager agreed for the company to be part of the study, I requested the e-mail addresses of all employees who met the criteria for this study and contacted prospective participants to request their participation. Inviting participants through e-mail reduces the time it takes to receive replies, is inexpensive, and allows scholars to keep electronic proof of acceptance (Sutherland, Amar, & Laughon, 2013). Prospective participants for this research were retail store managers who had experience implementing effective strategies to reduce front-line employee turnover.

Researchers must gain participants' trust to establish a working relationship with interviewees before the data collection starts (Condit et al., 2015). Scholars can use a consent form to strengthen the working relationship between researchers and participants (Holland, Browman, McDonald, & Saginur, 2013). A failed relationship between researchers and participants has negative consequences; therefore, it is important that scholars understand the consent processes, privacy protections, data storage requirements, and the scope of data sharing (Brett, O'Neill, & O'Gorman, 2014). Furthermore,

building rapport with subjects is also critical to establishing a healthy relationship built on trust (Angelos, 2013). A healthy researcher-participant relationship creates an environment where subjects feel comfortable and can openly share their experiences (Wang, 2015). To establish a working relationship with participants, I provided subjects with information about the purpose of the study, their rights to withdraw from the study at any time, and reassured them that their information would be anonymous and confidential.

Research Method and Design

When conducting research, scholars must pay close attention to choosing an appropriate research methodology and design that help answer the central research question (O'Byrne, 2012). I used a qualitative method with a case study design for this research. Qualitative scholars collect data by exploring documents, observing behaviors, and interviewing participants from a target population (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). According to O'Byrne (2012), qualitative research is a descriptive method scholars use when exploring, explaining, and presenting results about a phenomenon from the point of views of people who experienced it. When using a case study design, scholars explore the experiences of a particular person, group, organization, or situation over a period of time to gain a holistic understanding of the factors contributing to the problem (Keenan et al., 2015). Choosing an appropriate research method and design is vital when conducting research because the design affects what type of conclusions researchers can make about a phenomenon (Astalin, 2013).

Research Method

I used a qualitative method for this study. Researchers can choose from the three traditional research methods including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method. Qualitative researchers provide thorough accounts of data sources and in-depth analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Researchers use a quantitative method to generalize results from a sample of a target population (Marshall et al., 2013). A qualitative method is unique because scholars can use it to gain direct insight into the lives and experiences of the participants. One of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research is that qualitative scholars are not able to reference well-known data sets and statistical tests (Bansal & Corley, 2012).

A qualitative method increases researchers' potential to go beyond descriptions and find details in experiences by identifying a person's actions and intentions (Anyan, 2013). Moreover, qualitative researchers can create relationships with research subjects that can lead to the collection of valuable information that participants might not share with other researchers without an established relationship (Powell & Eddleston, 2013). An advantage of a qualitative methodology is that participants can express themselves openly and provide detailed data that can lead to a deeper understanding of the research problem (Anyan, 2013). Qualitative researchers can obtain detailed information from interviewees because scholars can clarify meanings and ask follow-up questions during the interviews (Powell & Eddleston, 2013).

Researchers use a quantitative method to quantify data, examine differences and relationships, or generalize results from a sample of a target population (Brockington,

2014), which was not the intent of this study. Quantitative research is also an excellent way for scholars to prove, disprove, or test preconceived hypotheses (Bishop & Lexchin, 2013; Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Researchers can study most phenomena using a quantitative methodology, which makes quantitative method flexible, but not all research questions are suitable for quantitative method (Yilmaz, 2013). Although quantitative research has some notable advantages, some phenomena are better understood using a qualitative methodology (Yilmaz, 2013). Since I did not intend to examine differences and relationships, a quantitative methodology was not appropriate for this study.

Mixed method researchers use both quantitative and qualitative research methods (in parallel or chronologically) to gain a new understanding of a phenomenon of importance (Venkatesh et al., 2013). Mixed method research involves collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and integrating both quantitative and qualitative data (Shield, Looze, Tyler, Lepore, & Miller, 2013). Scholars choose a mixed method research to gain a deeper understanding of a particular problem (Venkatesh et al., 2013). The primary benefit of a mixed methodology is that the researchers can take advantage of the strengths inherent in quantitative and qualitative methods while eliminating the weaknesses (Rigotti et al., 2013). A mixed method research was not appropriate for this study because I did not intend to integrate quantitative and qualitative data.

Research Design

I used a case study design for this research. The four main designs researchers use when conducting qualitative research are case study, ethnography, phenomenology, and narrative design (Yin, 2015). The research design is the overall strategy that the

scholar uses to integrate all components of the study into a comprehensive, coherent, and logical manner (Scammacca, Roberts, & Stuebing, 2014). According to Scammacca et al. (2014), the research design is the blueprint of the study that researchers use as a foundation to effectively answer the central research question. Moreover, the research design affects how scholars answer the central research question and draw conclusions from data to prepare the final report (Bailey, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013).

Yin (2015) recommended that researchers collect data from two different sources such as interview, direct observation, documentation, archival records, participant observations, and physical artifacts when using a case study design. Researchers can use a case study design to gain new understandings of a particular person, group, organization, or situation over a period of time to gain a holistic understanding of the factors contributing to the research problem (Keenan et al., 2015). A case study is a qualitative research of realities that requires the interaction between self and environment, and the collection of data from at least two sources such as observation, interviews, and documents (Garcia & Gluesing, 2013; Lunnay, Borlagdan, McNaughton, & Ward, 2015). A single case study was the appropriate design for this research because I intended to explore strategies used by retail store managers to decrease employee turnover. Moreover, qualitative researchers study a person, group, organization, or situation to gain new insight about a particular problem (Wilkinson et al., 2016). This research contains data from interviews and documents on employee turnover, which are two of the data sources Yin (2015) recommended for case studies.

Researchers use an ethnography to explore behaviors, understand a culture or community, and learn about the daily lives of a group (Graneheim, Johansson, & Lindgren, 2014). An ethnography is an inquiry approach where researchers study cultural groups in their natural habitat using interviews and observations (Uriely, 2014). When researchers immerse into a participants' native habitat, scholars can identify discrepancies between what people say they do and what they actually do (Graneheim et al., 2014). Some of the advantages of an ethnography are: (a) the researcher immerses into the participants' lives, (b) improve relationship with research participants, (c) an excellent source of visual data, (d) helps collect data that is difficult for participants to articulate, and (e) is an effective technique for capturing behaviors (Grant, Guthrie, Entwistle, & Williams, 2014). Since researchers use ethnography to explore social issues, cultural problems, or document the customs, beliefs, perspectives, and practices of people, organizations, teams, and communities in their native habitat (Reeves et al., 2013); an ethnography was not appropriate because I intended to explore effective strategies used by retail store managers to reduce employee turnover, not managers' beliefs or an organization's culture.

Scholars can use a phenomenological design to understand a phenomenon by exploring the lived experiences of participants (Sambhava, Nautiyal, & Jain, 2016). A phenomenology is suitable for gathering data about people's perceptions, opinions, and lived experiences related to a phenomenon (Astalin, 2013). Moreover, phenomenological studies are important because researchers can use a phenomenology to explore people's experiences, perceptions, and attitudes as it relates to an event or phenomenon; scholars

can also use a phenomenological design to share people's lived experiences with the research community (Jain, 2016). A phenomenology was not appropriate because researchers use it to explore participants' lived experiences as it relates to a particular phenomenon (Schwartz, et al., 2013). Since I did not intend to explore participants' experiences of a particular phenomenon, a case study design was more appropriate to study effective strategies used by retail store managers to reduce employee turnover.

When conducting qualitative research, scholars must achieve data saturation (Colombo, Froning, Garcia, & Vandelli, 2016; Gelb, Bakhtiari, & Walker, 2015). Researchers achieve data saturation when additional data collection does not result in new information, coding, or theme (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Undermining the importance of data saturation effects the quality of the research findings (Gibbins, Bhatia, Forbes & Reid, 2014). According to Fusch and Ness (2015), failure to achieve data saturation effects content validity. To achieve data saturation, I collected data until now new themes emerged from additional interviews. After receiving IRB approval (12-06-16-0557778) for this study, I interviewed managers from a retail store who had experience implementing employee turnover strategies; data saturation occurred after interviewing 10 participants.

Population and Sampling

The population is a large collection of individuals or objects from where a scholar draws a research sample for a study (Emmel, 2015). Scholars must make sure the target population is accessible; selecting an inaccessible population might affect the researcher's ability to collect data (Shahian et al., 2013). Colombo et al. (2016) and

Gogarty (2013) recommended scholars align the chosen population with the central research question. To align the population with the central research question, I only collected data from managers from a retail store in El Paso, Texas who met the criteria for this research. The target population for this study consisted of a retail store in El Paso, Texas.

Researchers need to choose an interview setting that enables participants to share information without concern for privacy (Robinson, 2014). Scholars must find an adequate interview setting that provides interviewees with privacy; an ideal interview setting is a quiet and private location (Shahian et al., 2013). When searching for an interview location, scholars can ask the organization's leaders to use a private room or office at the business site to conduct the interviews (Gogarty, 2013). To ensure privacy and promote participation, I coordinated with the store manager from the partner organization to get an office at the business site to conduct all interviews. Furthermore, researchers can eliminate participants' travel time by interviewing at the business site (Shahian et al., 2013), which might increase participation.

According to Robinson (2014), purposive samples are the most used form of non-probabilistic sampling. When using a purposive sample, scholars rely on personal judgment and experience to select participants who can provide information about the central research question (Turner, Kim, & Andersen, 2014). Moreover, a purposive sampling provides researchers with the flexibility to select participants with a particular set of characteristics who have knowledge or experience related to the research problem (Barrat & Lenton, 2015; Heywood, Brown, Arrowsmith, & Poppleston, 2015). Although

purposive samples are not a true representation of the population, qualitative researchers consider this sampling approach a choice, not a weakness (Barratt, Ferris, & Lenton, 2015; Barratt & Lenton, 2015). Since I intended to interview participants who have knowledge and experience implementing effective front-line employee turnover strategies, I used a purposive sample to create a flexible sampling strategy to select retail store managers from a retail store in El Paso, Texas who meet the criteria for this study.

The sample size refers to participants researchers collect data from during the data collection process (Fugard & Potts, 2015). Case study scholars can use a small sample size when conducting a case study if researchers can collect data from at least two independent sources (Morse, 2015). The goals of qualitative scholars during the sample size planning is not how large the sample size is, but collecting reliable data to gain a thorough understanding of the research problem (Button et al., 2013; Colombo et al., 2016). Scholars must consider the participants' experience and knowledge when choosing a sample size for a qualitative research. In a recent doctoral study, Gandy (2015) used a sample of four participants to explore small business strategies leaders used to promote company profitability and sustainability. I interviewed 10 experienced managers from a retail store in El Paso, Texas to gain a holistic understanding of effective strategies managers use to reduce front-line employee turnover.

Achieving data saturation is critical in qualitative research; qualitative scholars must continue collecting information until the data start to become repetitive (Colombo et al., 2016). According to Morse (2015), scholars can improve the reliability and validity of qualitative studies by achieving data saturation. Fusch and Ness (2015) stated that one

of the goals of qualitative researchers is to achieve data saturation. According to Harvey (2015), case study researchers should collect data from multiple sources to reach data saturation. To ensure data saturation, I interviewed retail store managers who had experience implementing employee turnover reduction strategies and reviewed organizational documents on employee turnover from 2012-2016. I continued interviewing participants until the achievement of data saturation

When choosing a participant selection strategy, researchers must ensure that prospective subjects are in alignment with the central researcher question (Yin, 2015). Case study scholars should select participants with sufficient experience who can provide new insight to help answer the research problem (Heywood, et al., 2015). According to Hoyland et al. (2015), experienced participants help researchers collect information that leads to a holistic understanding of the research problem. Since I intended to explore effective strategies retail managers use to reduce front-line employee turnover, I interviewed front-line retail managers who have experience implementing employee retention strategies.

Ethical Research

Data collection began after receiving IRB approval (12-06-16-0557778) from Walden University. Scholars must wait to start the data collection after receiving IRB approval (Fiske & Hauser, 2014). In addition to IRB approval, before collecting data, researchers must request permission from prospective organizations and provide participants with a consent form (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). Informed consent is a process researchers use to provide potential participants with

adequate information to make an informed decision about being part of a study (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). During the informed consent process, scholars must ensure prospective participants have the opportunity to ask questions and sign a voluntary agreement to participate (Bristol & Hicks, 2013; Fusch & Ness, 2015). Informed consent is more than a form; it is a mechanism to protect research participants (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). The data collection process did not start until I received a letter of cooperation from the partner organization. After receiving a letter of cooperation from the manager of the partner organization, prospective participants who met the criteria for this study received an e-mail (Appendix A) inviting them to participate in the study. Participant also (a) received a consent form, (b) had adequate time to read and understand the document and ask questions if necessary, (c) received information of their rights to withdraw from the study, and (d) signed the consent forms. Participants also received a signed copy of the consent form for their personal record.

Research subjects have the right to withdraw from a study at any time (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2014). When a participant asks to withdraw from a study, researchers must discontinue all interactions or communications with the research subject and destroy any data collected from the participant (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2014). The consent form includes information about how participants can withdraw from the study. Research participants were able to withdraw from the study by notifying me by e-mail or telephone call. Before starting the interviews, participants received information about the withdrawal process and the

importance of requesting to withdraw before the data analysis phase begins. My goal was to ensure participants had the opportunity to withdrawal from the study before the analysis process began. Since participants did not request to withdraw from this study, all collected data was included in the data analysis and the findings.

Researchers can offer incentives such as cash vouchers, gift cards, cash, or items of monetary value; but scholars must ensure that the value of the incentives is not going to affect the quality or reliability of the data participants provide (Bouter, 2015).

Offering participants incentives can help researchers recruit enough subjects to improve the reliability and validity of the findings (Mduluzza, Midzi, Duruza, & Ndebele, 2013).

Although offering incentives is beneficial and can help reach data saturation, research subjects volunteering for this study did not receive incentives or compensations for participating in this research.

Researchers must take into account the impact of ethical issues that may surface whenever a study involves human participants (Mitchell & Wellings, 2013). In addition, scholars need to disclose all information related to a study to individuals participating in the research (Yin, 2015). Bailey (2014) also suggested that researchers provide participants with all information needed to make an informed decision. Furthermore, scholars must establish adequate measures to secure the collected data during the data collection, data analysis, and data storage process to protect the rights of the participants and preserve subjects' privacy (Yin, 2015). To ensure the ethical protection of participants, I disclosed all information related to the study to all interviewees to make sure subjects were able make an informed decision and requested permission from

leaders of the partner organization to collect data at the business site. Interviews took place in a confidential room at the business site, which enabled me to safeguard participants' information and guarantee privacy during the interview.

In a recent study, Check, Wolf, Dame, and Beskow (2014) recommended that researchers keep all collected data in a locked cabinet for 5 years after the study completion. I stored all collected data on a DVD and uploaded the contents on the DVD to my Amazon Cloud account using password-protected zipped files for organizational documents and audio files from the interviews. I will secure the DVD for 5 years in a locked cabinet at my home office. Hanish (2012) emphasized the important of properly destroying research documents and recommended shredding data in paper format, DVD, or CD. According to Yin (2015), shredding documents is a reliable way to destroy research documents and media. After 5 years, I will shred the DVD and delete the backup stored on my Amazon Cloud account.

Researchers must make every possible effort to mitigate any potential harm to participants by ensuring confidentiality, obtaining informed consent, and protecting the participants' rights to privacy (Wall & Pentz, 2015). Furthermore, scholars must safeguard participants' and companies' identifiable information by coding the information and storing it in a safe location (Mitchell & Wellings, 2013). To protect identifiable information such as participants' names and organizations' names, I coded all identifiable information by labeling interviewees "Participant 1 through 10" and the business "Company 1."

Data Collection Instruments

I was the primary data collection instrument for this study. In qualitative research, scholars are the data collection instruments (Anyan, 2013; Rowley, 2012). According to Rowley (2012), the knowledge produced from the data collection and analysis depends on scholars' experience. Since researchers are the data collection instrument in semistructured qualitative interviews, some characteristics such as biases and experiences can influence the collection of empirical materials (Murakami, 2013; Porter (2015).

In quantitative research, scholars can select from proven data collection instruments to minimize errors during the data collection process; while in qualitative research, the quality of the collected data depends on the researchers' experience and preparation (Bailey, 2014). Yin (2015) stated that qualitative researchers using a case study design must collect data from at least two sources. I interviewed retail store managers and reviewed employee turnover documents until the achievement of data saturation; documents on employee turnover helped validate data from the interviews.

The data collection started after IRB approval. The first step of the data collection process began with an e-mail to the prospective business in El Paso to request permission to collect data at the site from employees. Mitchelmore and Rowley (2013) recommended that researchers e-mail prospective businesses or visit the business and talk senior managers to request permission to collect data. After approval from senior managers, I requested a letter of cooperation as proof of authorization. A letter of cooperation from leaders of the organization serves as a contract between the researcher

and the institution (Castro, 2013). After receiving the letter of cooperation from the store manager, participants received an e-mail invitation requesting participation in the study. Sutherland et al. (2013) noted that inviting participants through e-mail reduces the time it takes to receive replies, is inexpensive, and allows scholars to keep electronic proof of acceptance. If a participant does not reply within a week, I went to the store site and provide him or her a copy of the invitation in person. After prospective subjects agreed to be part of the research, I contacted participants to schedule the interviews.

Face-to-face semistructured interviews and documents on employee turnover were the two sources of data collection for this study. Researchers can use different types of interviews to collect qualitative data, but face-to-face interviewing is the most used data collection method for qualitative research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). The four main types of interviews are face-to-face, focus group, e-mail, and telephone interviews (Ziebland & Hunt, 2014). Face-to-face interview is the preferred data collection method for case study research because interviewers have better control over the interview (Ziebland & Hunt, 2014). In addition, when using semistructured face-to-face interviews, researchers can be more personal with the participants and ask follow-up questions. I used face-to-face interviews and documents on employee turnover as two of data collection sources for this study, as recommended by Yin (2015). The reason for choosing semistructured interviews with open-ended questions is because open-ended questions provide participants with more flexibility when sharing information. Reviewing documents on employee turnover provided new insight into the effectiveness of current employee turnover strategies shared by managers during the interviews.

Face-to-face semistructured interviews was the primary source of data collection in this study. Ziebland and Hunt (2014) found that open-ended questions do not restrict participants' answers; instead, interviewees have an opportunity to provide a complete description of their personal experiences. According to Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez (2015), semistructured face-to-face interviews are more effective when researchers use open-ended questions (Bowden & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015). Other researchers concurred with Ziebland and Hunt (2014) and stated that face-to-face interviews are critical to data collection in qualitative research (Da Silva et al., 2012; Knepp, 2014). To promote efficiency and effectiveness during the interview process, I used an interview protocol (Appendix B). In addition, I asked follow-up questions to ensure participants were providing information pertinent to the research problem.

Qualitative researchers can review documents to collect data for a study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Reviewing documents is one of the methods of data collection recommended by Yin (2015) for a case study design. Moreover, Amankwaa and Anku-Tsede (2015) and Tse et al. (2013) reviewed documents from their partner organizations to gather data on employee turnover. By collecting data from interviews and documents on employee turnover, I followed Yin's (2015) recommendation of gathering data from two independent sources when conducting a case study. Documents were the secondary data collection source for this study. Using interviews and reviewing documents provided insight on effective strategies retail manager use to reduce employee turnover and helped validate the collected data.

Scholars can use member checking to improve reliability and validity in qualitative research (Harvey, 2015). Member checking is a quality control process qualitative scholars use to improve the reliability and validity of data obtained from interviews (Harvey, 2015). When using member checking, researchers provide participants a copy of the transcribed data from the interviews to verify its accuracy (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). According to Morse (2015), the three steps to conduct member checking are: (a) conduct the initial interview, (b) interpret what the participant shared, and (c) share the interpretation with the participants for validation. Furthermore, qualitative researchers can also improve reliability and validity by using methodological triangulation (Yin, 2015). The member checking process took place in an office at the business site. Participants received a copy of the interpretations of the interviews to validate for errors.

Data Collection Technique

To collect sufficient data to answer the central research question, the data collection strategy included semistructured face-to-face interviews using open-ended questions and reviewing documents on employee turnover from the partner organization. When collecting qualitative data, Ziebland and Hunt (2014) recommended face-to-face interview because researchers can ask follow-up questions and observe for verbal and nonverbal expressions. There are four different types of interviews including: (a) face-to-face, (b) focus group, (c) e-mail, and (d) telephone interview (Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014). Although scholars can use any of the four interview approaches to collect data, face-to-face interview is the preferred method for collecting qualitative data because

researchers have better control over what information the participants provide (Ziebland & Hunt, 2014). Interview is also an effective data collection technique for a case study design (Yin, 2015). I used semistructured face-to-face interviews as the primary data collection technique. For additional information on the interview process, read the interview protocol (Appendix B).

Some of the advantages of face-to-face interview are: (a) enhanced screening, (b) increased opportunity for capturing verbal and nonverbal cues, (c) improved control of the interview, and (d) optimized for observing emotions and behaviors (Krall, Wamboldt, & Lohse, 2014). There are also some disadvantages of face-to-face interviews including: (a) time consumption, (b) participants' experiences, and (c) sample size limitations (Krall et al., 2014). Some of the benefits of reviewing documents are: (a) collection process is inexpensive, (b) access to detailed data from official documents, and (c) data collection does not rely on participants' willingness to provide information (Yin, 2015). There are also disadvantages associated with reviewing documents such as: (a) can be subjective, (b) can be time-consuming, and (c) can deter leaders from participating in the study for fear of sharing official documents with researchers from outside the organization (Zhang et al., 2014). I requested permission to review documents on employee turnover from the manager of the partner organization by mail (Appendix C).

The interviews took place in a room or office at the business site. The interview session began with salutations, personal introductions, and an overview of the research topic. Before the interview started, participants reviewed and signed the consent form. Interviewees received a copy of the signed consent form for their personal record and

information about the member-checking process. I recorded all interviews using a Sony digital recorder. Interviews lasted between 30-40 minutes. At the end of the interview, participants received verbal thanks for their participation.

After completing the interviews, leaders from the partner organizations gathered copies of documents on employee turnover for the last five years. The purpose of reviewing documents was to use a secondary data source to validate data from the interviews. Reading documents on employee turnover provided valuable insight to help answer the central research question. My objective was to read documents on employee turnover and combine the data obtained from the documents with the data collected during the interviews. When conducting a qualitative single case study, researchers must use two independent sources of data collection such as interview and document review; using multiple data collection sources promote credibility and enable scholars to reach data saturation (Yin, 2015).

Researchers can use member checking to increase reliability and validity of qualitative research (Andraski, Chandler, Powell, Humes, & Wakefield, 2014; Wang, 2015). Using member checking to verify data collected from interviews helps researchers ensure accuracy and promote credibility (Andraski et al., Check et al., 2014). Morse (2015) recommended a 3-steps process to conduct member checking: (a) conducting the initial interview, (b) interpreting what the participant shared, and (c) sharing the interpretation with the participants for validation. Member checking is preferred by qualitative researchers over transcript review because member checking provide maximum benefits for reliability and validity (Morse, 2015). Some researchers

recommended using member checking to increase reliability and validity (Andraski, 2015; Check et al., 2014; and Morse, 2015). After interpreting the interviews, I visited the store and conducted member checking with participants to validate the interpretations for accuracy. During the member checking process, each participant received a copy of interpretations of the interviews. The member checking process ended after each participant validated the transcriptions of the interviews were accurate.

Data Organization Technique

Data organization is critical while conducting research; creating an effective data organization strategy helps researchers locate needed information in an efficient manner (Gajewski, 2013). During the data collection process, researchers can use reflective journaling to stimulate higher-order thinking skills, which is vital when conducting research (Cengiz & Karatas, 2015). Reflective journaling is a tool used by researchers to record or take notes pertinent to activities or situations the investigator encounters during the data collection process (Cengiz, Karatas & Yadigaroglu, 2014). Taking time to reflect on previous events help researchers grow personally and professionally and can lead to a better understanding of the research problem (Cengiz et al., 2014). Furthermore, researchers must label interview transcripts and documentations using a labeling system to protect participants' privacy and the names of companies that participated in the study (Gajewski, 2013). When using an effective data organization technique, scholars can retrieve data more efficiently (Gajewski, 2013). Having a data organization plan is important; researchers who use an effective data organization technique can manage their data more effectively (Check et al., 2014). NVIVO is a tool researchers use to organize

research data (Zamawe, 2015). Using NVIVO enables researchers to employ proper data management and storage techniques and improves the accessibility of the data. I used reflective journaling, a personal log, NVIVO, and a labeling system to create an efficient data organization strategy.

Another important element of research is implementing an effective data storage strategy (Cengiz et al., 2014). Some studies indicated that researchers must maintain a copy of the audio recordings of the interviews as part of the data storage strategy (Anyan, 2013; Bedi, Bedi, Singh, & Nanda, 2015; Rempel, Francis, Robinson, & Campbell, 2013; Thissen, 2014). Other scholars also recommended storing all notes from interviews as part of the research data (Anyan, 2013; Yin, 2015). The use of a master file list identifies all data and file locations and allows easy retrieval of the information (Gajewski, 2013). Moreover, Gajewski (2013) also recommended researchers store research data in a locked file cabinet for 5 years. I will maintain a copy of interview audio files, interview notes, and documents received from the partner organization in a locked cabinet in my home office on a DVD, create a secondary backup and store on my Amazon Cloud account, and use a master file to improve accessibility. I will maintain the primary (DVD) and secondary (cloud) backups. After 5 years, I will shred the DVD and delete the backup from my Amazon Cloud account.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a systematic process researchers use to arrange, condense, evaluate and summarize all information from the data collection process (U.S. Office of Research Integrity, 2013). Implementing an effective data analysis technique results in

better data interpretations and improve the quality of the findings (Stuckey, 2015; Huang et al. 2014). When conducting qualitative data analysis, Yin (2015) recommended a five steps process that includes compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding.

The data analysis process begins when researchers start compiling the notes, transcriptions, and other research data (Yin, 2015). During the second step, scholars disassemble the collected data into more manageable fragments (Edwards-Jones, 2014). In phase three, scholars start the reassembling process that includes creating codes and clusters (Yin 2015). Once researchers complete organizing the data and creating relevant themes, the data interpretations begin (Yin, 2015). According to Edwards-Jones (2014), during the interpretation phase, researchers may choose to compile, disassemble, and reassemble the data again. The final step of the data analysis process requires that researchers make conclusions from the interpretations from stage four (Yin, 2015). To complete the data analysis process, researchers must compile all collected data, organize the data into more manageable compilations, and arrange into clusters and identify themes. Upon completing the themes identification process, I conducted in-depth interpretations of the interviews and documents on employee turnover from the partner organization and made conclusions from the interpretations. The data analysis process was in sequential order as recommended by Yin (2015).

Triangulation is a data analysis tool that requires using two or more sources to validate research data (Yin, 2015). Researchers can use methodological triangulation to increase the validity of qualitative research (Heale & Forbes, 2013; Walsh, 2013). Morse

(2015) and Wilson (2014) recommended that case study researchers use methodological triangulation during the data analysis process to triangulate research data. When researchers use multiple sources to gain insight into a research problem, scholars can augment the data analysis process by improving the interpretations of the collected data. An effective data analysis results in themes researchers use to present the perspectives of the participants (Walsh, 2013). Researchers use methodological triangulation to validate data during the data analysis process; methodological triangulation requires the use of multiples sources (Anyan, 2013; Fusch & Ness, 2015). I used methodological triangulation to validate data during the data analysis process.

According to Rowley (2012), researchers should use a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) to reduce errors during the data analysis process. Some scholars found NVivo was an effective tool for identifying key themes, coding, and mind-mapping data (Edwards-Jones, 2014; Franzosi, Doyle, McClelland, Rankin, & Vicari, 2013). Zamawe (2015) discovered that researchers can use NVivo to generate themes in seconds while reducing human error during the coding and theme selection process. When analyzing data using a CAQDAS, Rowley (2012) recommended the following process: (a) organize the dataset (b) get acquainted with the data, (c) classify, code, and interpret the data, and (d) present and write up the data. After conducting member checking with all participants, I used NVivo to organize the data and become familiar with the dataset as recommended by Rowley (2012). Using NVivo enabled me to efficiently create word clouds, which were beneficial for creating codes and themes.

Selecting themes is a fundamental task that case study researchers must conduct during the data analysis process (Emmel, 2015). According to Emmel (2015), researchers can use the following steps when choosing themes: (a) discover commonly used words by participants as main themes, (b) narrow down themes to a manageable quantity, (c) find subthemes if necessary, (d) create a hierarchies of themes based on importance, and (e) link themes to the conceptual framework and central research question. Furthermore, Noble and Smith (2013) recommended that researchers organize themes by types. After arranging themes by types, scholars are more effective in identifying the main themes and subthemes (Noble & Smith, 2013). I used the theme selection process recommended by Emmel (2015) to improve the selection of themes and subthemes for this study.

Another important researchers' responsibility during the research process is staying current on their research topic (Yin, 2015). Researchers can sign up for search alerts to stay up-to-date on future publications related to their research topic (Gajewski, 2013). Search alert is a tool researchers use to receive automatic alerts via e-mail or RSS feed when new articles matching a search criteria are available (Wray, 2016). To stay informed on articles published after writing the proposal, I signed up for search alerts with the Walden Library to receive continuous updates of publications on my research topic and conceptual framework.

Utilizing NVivo and following the five steps process (compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding) recommended by Yin (2015) enabled me to manage the collected data effectively during the data analysis. One of the many benefits

of using NVivo was the word frequency feature of the program; this search feature enabled me to find out how often participants shared certain words during the interviews. Moreover, after completing the word frequency search, I was able to create a word cloud, a tree map, and a cluster analysis. After familiarizing myself with the data using NVivo, I used Yin's data analysis process and compiled, disassembled, reassembled, interpreted, and made conclusions from the data.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are two terms scholars use to describe the accuracy and precision of research (Taylor, 2013). The research community measures the quality of a study based on reliability and validity (Taylor, 2013). The meaning of reliability and validity is different in qualitative and quantitative research (Foley & O'Conner, 2013). In qualitative studies, scholars increase reliability and validity by using tools such as member checking and transcript review to strengthen the reliability and validity of the research findings (Foley & O'Conner, 2013). Morse (2015) stated that researchers must address the dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability of qualitative studies to ensure reliability and validity.

Reliability

Reliability is the level of consistency of the results of a qualitative research over time (Noble & Smith, 2015). Promoting reliability is one of the ways researchers improve quality in qualitative research (Taylor, 2013). To increase reliability, Harvey (2015) recommended that scholars discuss the issue of dependability. Researchers can

enhance reliability in qualitative research by addressing the concerns with dependability and using member checking (Morse, 2015).

According to Harvey (2015), researchers can use member checking to improve dependability, which in terms increases the reliability of the findings. Member checking is a quality control process qualitative scholars use to validate interview data (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Scholars can also increase reliability by achieving data saturation (Morse, 2015). To conduct member checking, Morse (2015) recommended the following 3-steps process: (a) conduct the initial interview, (b) interpret what the participant shared, and (c) share the interpretations with the participants for validation. In a recent study, Zohrabi (2013) used member checking to validate interview interpretations to improve the reliability of the findings. To address the issue of reliability, I ensured dependability by using member checking and collecting data until achieving data saturation. I achieved data saturation by collecting data until now new themes or information emerged from additional data collection.

Dependability is a strategy researchers use to ensure reliability in qualitative research (Harvey, 2015). In a recent study, Fusch and Ness (2015) recommended qualitative scholars use member checking to increase the dependability of the findings. Morse (2015) also stated that member checking is the preferred data validation method for qualitative interviews. Yin (2015) also suggested that qualitative scholars select member checking over transcript review whenever possible. To address the issue of dependability, I used member checking as recommended by Fusch and Ness (2015) and Yin (2015). After completing the interpretations of the interviews, participants took

part in the member checking process to validate the interpretations of the interviews for accuracy. To perform member checking, I went to the business site and met with participants; each participant had the opportunity to confirm or correct my interpretations of the responses provided during the interview to ensure accuracy. All participants validated the interpretations of the interviews during the first meeting; therefore, no additional meetings were necessary.

Validity

In qualitative research, validity refers to the suitability of the chosen methodology, design, sample size, data collection techniques and analysis, and the results of the study in relationship to the central research question (Leung, 2015). By ensuring validity, researchers can improve the quality of qualitative research (Dwork et al., 2015). Promoting credibility, transferability, and confirmability helps scholars ensure validity. A recent study indicated that researchers can use member checking and methodological triangulation to improve the validity of the findings (Gandy, 2015). Other scholars asserted that using methodological triangulation and member checking increased the validity of the findings. To ensure validity, I used member checking and methodological triangulation to validate the data from the interviews and promote credibility, transferability, and confirmability. I validated data by collecting data from independent sources and providing each participant with a copy of his or her interview interpretation to validate for accuracy.

In qualitative research, scholars must establish credibility to assert the validity of the findings (Nyhan, 2015). Credibility refers to the level of trust readers and other

researchers have in the findings of a study (Nyhan, 2015). By recording the interviews and maintaining a copy of the recordings, scholars can increase the credibility of their studies (Yin, 2015). Another way investigators can promote credibility is by using member checking to validate the accuracy of the interview interpretations (Morse, 2015). To ensure credibility, I recorded each interview and used member checking to confirm the interpretations were free of errors. During the member checking process, I validated the data from the interviews for accuracy by asking the participants to confirm my interpretations of the interview responses. By conducting member checking and recording the interviews, I promoted credibility and improved the validity of this study.

Transferability refers to the degree to which the findings of a research can apply or transfer beyond the boundaries of the study (Boffa, Moules, Mayan, & Cowie, 2013). To ensure transferability, researchers must provide a detailed description of the research context (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Providing a rich description of the research context helps readers determine whether the findings of a particular study are transferable to another research (Yilmaz, 2013). Detailed descriptions of the participants and research context help future scholars decide on the transferability of the findings to another context (Elo et al., 2014). Some of the factors that can influence the transferability of the results of a research include population, geographical location, and sample size (Burchett, Mayhew, Lavis, & Dobrow, 2013). Since I intended to explore effective strategies used by retail store managers to reduce employee turnover in El Paso, Texas, the boundaries of this study might affect the transferability of the findings to other

sectors and geographical locations. To improve transferability, I provided a detailed description of the data analysis process, participants, and research context.

Confirmability is the degree to which the findings of a qualitative study are verifiable by other researchers (Houghton et al., 2013). Scholars must confirm research results to enable other investigators to contribute to the study (Burchett et al., 2013). When the results of a study are unverifiable, the research community questions the validity of the findings (Childers, 2014). Researchers can improve confirmability in qualitative research by providing readers with a full copy of the data from where the original scholar(s) made the interpretations, such as interview transcriptions, tables, and charts (Childers, 2014). One of the strategies qualitative scholars use to promote confirmability is member checking (Fusch & Ness 2015). To ensure confirmability, I used member checking to validate the interview data for accuracy. I used an office at the business site to conduct member checking; each interviewee had an opportunity to validate my interpretations of the interview responses for accuracy.

Achieving data saturation is also an integral part of improving validity in qualitative research (Yin 2015). Researchers can achieve data saturation by interviewing participants until no new data emerges (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Reaching data saturation is important in qualitative research because achieving data saturation enables scholars to improve the validity of the findings (Yin, 2015). The results of a recent research indicated that by achieving data saturation case study researchers can improve the reliability of the findings (Morse, 2015). To ensure data saturation, I continued

interviewing retail store managers until no new data emerged and no further coding was feasible; data saturation occurred after interviewing 10 participants.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 encompassed the purpose of this study, my role as the researcher, and the criteria for selecting research participants. This section also comprised information of different research methods and designs; including the reason for selecting a qualitative single case study design for this research. In Section 2, I provided a discussion of the population and sampling, the process of ensuring ethical research, and the data collection, organization, and analysis process. Section 2 also contained information about the process to ensure reliability and validity. Section 3 consists of the presentation of findings, the application to professional practice, and the implications for social change. In Section 3, I also discuss recommendations for actions and recommendations for further research on employee turnover. I conclude Section 3 with my personal reflections and conclusions.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Section 3 consists of an introduction of the study and the presentation of the findings. In addition, this section encompasses the application to professional practice and the implications for social change. Also, there is a discussion that provides leaders and managers with recommendations for actions. Section 3 also includes recommendations for further research on employee turnover. In the reflections, I discuss my experience during the doctoral study journey. I conclude with an overview addressing the importance of implementing effective strategies to reduce employee turnover.

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore effective strategies that retail store managers use to decrease front-line employee turnover. Employee turnover is a complex business problem in the retail industry that requires leaders' involvement; the loss of well-trained workers continues to have a negative effect on profitability, productivity, and sustainability (Bothma & Roodt, 2012). Numerous scholars indicated that the retail industry experiences a higher turnover rate than other sectors (Hancock et al., 2013; Hom et al., 2012; McManus & Mosca, 2015). Since employee turnover affects profitability, retail store managers need to implement effective strategies to decrease employee turnover (Bothma & Roodt, 2012).

I explored effective strategies by interviewing 10 managers at a retailer in El Paso, Texas. Participants had experience implementing strategies to reduce employee turnover; all participants (P1-P10) were in managerial positions. During the data

analysis, I compared transcriptions, interview notes, and business records on employee turnover to promote validity and reliability. The data analysis indicated that at this organization, managers were able to reduce employee turnover by adapting a supportive leadership style, managing employees' work schedules effectively, and by offering competitive compensations.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question in this study was: What strategies do retail store managers use to reduce front-line employee turnover? I used semistructured interviews with open-ended questions to enable participants to provide detailed information on effective strategies they used to reduce employee turnover. In addition, I reviewed company documents on employee turnover including organizational spreadsheets, charts, and memorandums to enhance the triangulation of data for this research. Before starting the interviews, all participants signed a consent form and received a signed copy of the consent form for their personal records. Interviews took place at a private location at the business site and lasted between 45 minutes to an hour.

To protect participant's identities, I labeled all transcriptions using a labeling system (P1 thru P10), where P1 means Participant 1. After completing all transcriptions, interviewees participated in member checking. Once participants validated the transcriptions, I coded all data using NVivo. The use of NVivo was valuable as it enabled me to familiarize myself with the research data in a more effective and efficient manner. The primary use of NVivo was to conduct word frequency searches; the data from these searches led to the identification of recurring themes participants shared

during the interviews. During the data analysis, I focused on themes that were pertinent to the central research question and the conceptual framework. The data analysis revealed the following themes:

- Supportive leadership reduced employee turnover.
- Managing personnel scheduling decreased employee turnover.
- Competitive compensation reduced employee turnover

Theme 1: Supportive Leadership Reduced Employee Turnover

Supportive leadership reduced employee turnover was the first theme that emerged from a thorough analysis of the participants' responses and a review of organizational spreadsheets, charts, and memorandums on employee turnover. P3, P7, and P9 explained that supportive managers help mitigate employee turnover, increase employee satisfaction, and improve organizational commitment, which leads to a reduction of employee turnover intentions. P7 said, "I support my team members and I am always there for them whenever they have any questions; I have the most motivated and committed team in this organization." P3 and P9 stated that satisfied employees are more committed to their organizations and experience a reduction of turnover intentions, while P7 indicated that job dissatisfaction is one of the main reasons employees quit their jobs. P9 mentioned, "I reduced employee turnover by being supportive and making sure my team members are satisfied; employees who are satisfied do not quit their jobs."

Some participants also shared that employees who had supportive managers reported a higher level of job satisfaction when compared to employees whose managers were not supportive (P1, P3, P5, P7, and P9). Two participants (P3 and P5) stated that since job

dissatisfaction leads to an increase in employee turnover intentions, managers must talk to team members to identify workers who are experiencing job dissatisfaction. Overall, all 10 participants emphasized that supportive leadership was an effective strategy to reduce employee turnover. The findings that supported leader reduced employee turnovers were similar to Kalidass and Bahron's (2015) and Sun and Wang's (2016), the researchers found that supportive leadership led to a decrease in employee turnover and managers who were not supportive increased employee turnover intentions. In another research, scholars discovered that supportive leaders increased subordinate performance and commitment to the organization; which led to a reduction of employee turnover intentions (Fear, Donsbach, Theilgard, & Shanock, 2017).

P6 and P8 stated that supportive managers reduce employee turnover because team members consider them as mentors who have their best interest in mind. Six participants articulated that using a supportive leadership style was an effective strategy to decrease employee turnover because employees consider supportive managers as approachable and helpful (P1, P2, P4, P5, P8, and P10). P8 stated, "I spend a significant amount of my time making sure that my team members receive exceptional leadership support; in my first year as a manager I lost three team members, now my department has a 100% retention rate over the last 12 months." Based on a thorough analysis of participants' data and a review of organizational spreadsheets, charts, and memorandums on employee turnover, the findings that supportive leadership reduced employee turnover were similar to the findings presented by Burns (1978) to explain the transformational leadership theory. Burns (1978) used the phrase individualized consideration to refer to

leaders' behaviors that stimulate motivation, improve morale, increase performance, and promote a sense of identity and teamwork. Leaders can improve job satisfaction and increase retention by supporting employees and treating them as individuals. Leaders who create a positive work environment have a positive effect on organizational success because they help followers reach their full potential through continuous leadership (Burns, 1978). Based on the responses from participants, managers at this organization reduced employee turnover by using a supportive leadership style (P1, P3, P5, P7, and P10). When asked, what strategies were effective in reducing employee turnover, P3 made the following statement:

Supporting team members with any challenges they have is the most effective strategy I use to reduce employee turnover. I take it to heart when my team members share their problems with me and do my best to help them. I am an approachable leader who strives to make my team members feel comfortable when they are around me. I always tell my team members that my door is always open if they ever want to talk. I have been a manager for 3 years and only lost an employee in my department since I have been in my position. Supportive leadership is the strategy I use to reduce employee turnover.

Other participants shared that supportive leaders increase job satisfaction and reduce stress (P3 and P7). According to P3, job dissatisfaction is one the leading causes of retail employees quitting their jobs. Some of the benefits of increased job satisfaction are an increase in productivity and a reduction of employee turnover (P3, P5, and P7). P5 articulated, "In my experience, improving employees' job satisfaction increases

productivity levels in my department and reduces employee turnover.” P4 shared that supportive managers are more effective at increasing employees’ job satisfaction than managers who are not supportive because employees want to work for leaders who cares about their overall welfare. P4 explained, “When employees start a new job they initially experience a high level of stress; by dedicating additional time to mentor and support new employees, I can improve their skills and reduce employee turnover.” Based on the data analysis, supportive managers can improve job satisfaction, which in turn reduces employee turnover.

Participants stated that supporting employees was essential to the success of their organization because supportive managers help team members become productive employees (P1, P2, P4, and P5). P6 mentioned that supportive managers dedicate a significant amount of time to teach employees new skills that lead to increased productivity; helping employees make sales is important because workers’ wages are production-based at this organization. Productive employees are less likely to quit their jobs when compared to workers who are less productive (P3). P7 said, “My goal as a leader is to support team members and help them become productive; by helping employees become more productive I enable them to make more money, improve their job satisfaction, and help reduce employee turnover.”

According to three participants, supportive leaders at this retail store were effective at improving employees’ weaknesses (P1, P3, and P5). Two participants stated that being a supportive leader enables managers to develop their team members because supportive managers understand employees’ strengths and weaknesses (P2 and P7).

According to P5, supportive managers are more knowledgeable of employees' strengths and weaknesses than managers who are not supportive because team members are more willing to share their weaknesses with supportive leaders. P7 explained, "Since I am an approachable and supportive leader, I know my employees' strengths and weaknesses; I use this insight to know who needs what training." Two participants mentioned that supportive managers reduce employee turnover because they eliminate employee weaknesses through training and help team members reach their full potential (P5 and P8).

P5 articulated that employees tend to trust supportive leaders more than leaders who are not supportive. Other participants shared that leaders who gain the trust of their team members are more effective when it comes developing employees because trustworthiness increases workers' confidence in their leaders (P3 and P7). Two participants stated that by earning employees' trust, supportive leaders gain a deeper understanding of employees' strengths and weaknesses, which help managers develop effective developmental plans and reduce employee turnover that results from a lack of proper training (P3 and P7). P4 explained that gaining team members' trust is essential to reduce employee turnover because employees perceive that trusted leaders have a genuine concern for their professional development; which promotes quicker learning. P3 said, "When managers are supportive, team members are more likely to trust them; my team members enjoy working for me and are less likely to quit because they trust me; even if they decide this is not the right job for them, they will probably come and talk to me about it." Based on a systematic analysis of data from the interviews and a review of

organizational spreadsheets, charts, and memorandums on employee turnover, creating a supportive work environment where followers trust their leaders is an effective strategy to reduce employee turnover.

I reviewed documents on employee turnover from the last 5 years (2012-2016). The findings from organizational memorandums on employee turnover confirmed the findings from the interviews. I reviewed three memorandums posted on the information board with the store manager signature block that emphasized the importance of reducing employee turnover. In one of the memorandums, the store manager stated “Department managers must communicate with their team members to build strong manager-employee relationships, develop and mentor employees, and support team members at all stages of their career paths.” In this memorandum, the store manager reiterated the importance of using supportive leadership as a strategy to reduce employee turnover, which supports the findings from the interviews. Figure 1 provides information about the findings from the review of employee turnover spreadsheets and charts that supports that managers at this organization used effective strategies to reduce employee turnover. Based on a comprehensive review of organizational documents on employee turnover, managers at this retail store were effective at reducing employee turnover. P8 said “Senior leaders started promoting supportive leadership in 2012 to increase employees’ organizational commitment, create productive teams, and increase the retention of top performers.” The information shared by P8 that senior leaders started promoting supportive leadership in 2012 correlates with the findings from Figure 1. As indicated by Figure 1, the organization had a 9% reduction of employee turnover after leaders started to implement

supportive leadership in 2012, which supports the findings from the interview data that supportive leadership had a positive effect on employee retention. According to Figure 1, there was a steady reduction of employee turnover from 2012 to 2016; employee turnover decreased from 24% in 2012 to 15% in 2016, which represents a 9% reduction of employee turnover in 5 years. The findings from Figure 1 revealed a steady yearly decline in employee turnover; the only exception was in 2015 when employee turnover was 1% higher than the previous year (2014).

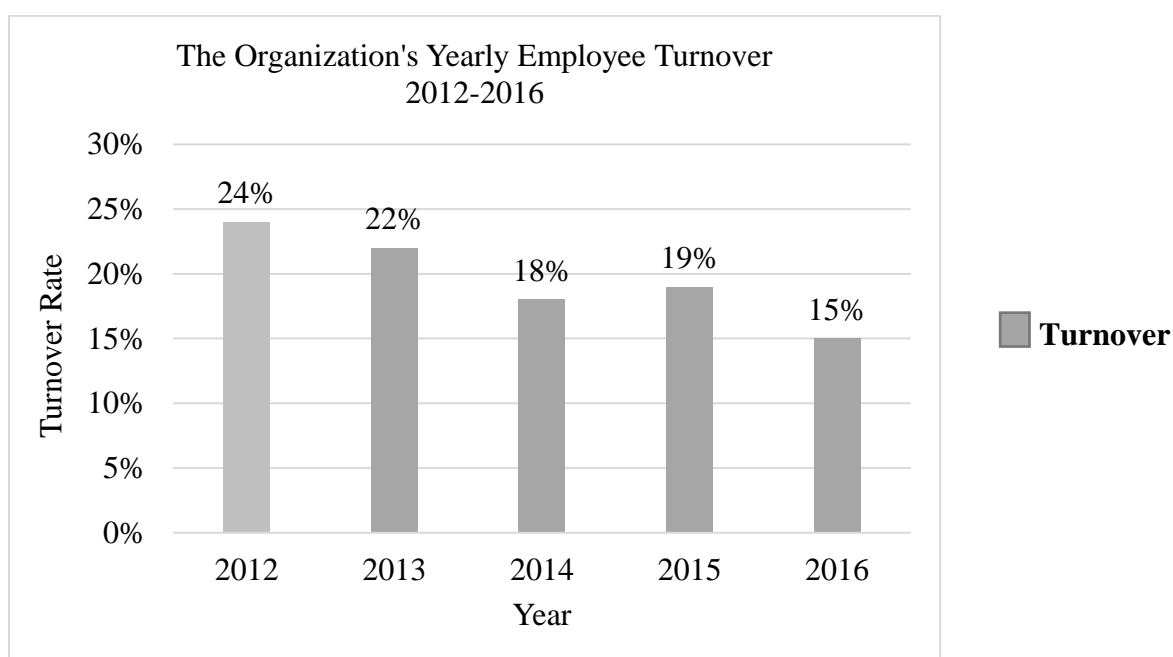


Figure 1. Yearly Employee Turnover Rates

Theme 2: Managing Personnel Scheduling Decreased Employee Turnover

Managing personnel scheduling decreased employee turnover was the second theme that emerged from an in-depth analysis of the participants' responses and a review of organizational spreadsheets, charts, and memorandums on employee turnover.

Organization leaders used the spreadsheets and charts to track the yearly employee

turnover rate for the company. The charts contained data that managers used to track the monthly and yearly percentage of employee turnover; which was a representation of the spreadsheets. I reviewed spreadsheet and charts and determined that managers were able to reduced employee turnover by 9% from 2012 to 2016. Seven of the participants shared that managing personnel scheduling was difficult since employees did not work the same shifts every day (P1, P3, P4, P5, P7, P8, and P9). P5 stated, “Our employees work non-standard shifts, some employees start working at the opening (morning) shift, the earlier afternoon shift, or the closing (evening) shift.” Based on some participants’ responses, managing personnel scheduling is challenging in the retail industry because leaders have to understand personnel requirements during different time of the day (P2, P3, P6, and P8). Managing personnel scheduling is an essential leadership responsibility; managers who are effective at managing personnel scheduling reduce employee turnover intentions (P3, P6, and P8). The findings that managing personnel scheduling decreased employee turnover were similar to Lei, Pinedo, Qi, Wang, and Yang’s (2015) and Ng’s (2016); the scholars found that effectively managing personnel scheduling resulted in a reduction of employee turnover intentions. A review of organizational tables and charts used by leaders to track employee turnover indicated that managers at this organization were effective at reducing employee turnover. Reviewing organization’s employee turnover tables and chart from 2012 to 2016 revealed a 9% reduction of employee turnover (Figure 1), which correlates with the with responses shared by P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, and P9). Based on a thorough data analysis of participants’ responses and a review of organizational spreadsheets, charts, and memorandums on employee turnover,

leaders who are effective at managing personnel scheduling can reduce employee turnover intentions.

Most participants shared that managers who know how to effectively manage personnel scheduling had lower employee turnover than managers who failed to manage employees scheduling (P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P8, and P10). P5 stated, “Our store uses a personnel scheduling software to implement the company’s employees scheduling plan, but like with most reporting and tracking softwares leaders should still collect information by interacting with their team members to compliment the software.” Other participants reported that using the company’s personnel scheduling software was helpful but was not sufficient (P3, P5, and P10). Two participants shared that developing an effective personnel scheduling plan requires open communication between managers and team members; managers need to find out what important events workers have going on in their lives (P2 and P9). P6 articulated, “Our department managers communicate with their team members to identify and resolve scheduling conflicts as the result of a personal event.” The finding that effective personnel scheduling plan requires open communication between managers and team members were similar to Agrali, Taskin, and Unal (2017); the researchers found that managers who discussed employee scheduling with subordinates improved the effectiveness of personnel scheduling.

P5 stated that five out of eight employees in her department were college students; three of the five students took classes during the day while the other two members took classes in the evening. Two of the participants mentioned that by talking to team members and making sure employees who are students have flexible schedules

the days of exams, managers can reduce employee turnover (P4 and P7). Some participants shared that by helping workers resolve scheduling conflicts, managers can reduce employee turnover (P3, P6, and P9).

P7 stated that determining how to distribute the number of hours each employee gets weekly was a challenging task in the retail industry. Talking to employees before finalizing the personnel scheduling for the upcoming weeks is an effective way because managers who communicate with employees can consider employees' upcoming events such as anniversaries, birthdays, and weddings before publishing the weekly personnel schedule (P6). While discussing strategies for reducing employee turnover, P4 made the following statement:

For me, what have worked is having an effective scheduling plan. Employees like getting their hours every week. When creating the weekly work schedule, I make sure that the employees who have the most availability and desire to work get as many hours as possible; this means that employees who are always available and have the desire to work get the most hours. On the other hand, employees who have limited availability get the least hours. Company leaders used to give employees hours based on performance, but that was difficult because employees' performance can be inconsistent.

Retail employees work non-standard shifts, and some employees' shifts start at a different time each day; retail managers struggle to improve workers' quality of life (P1, P8, and P10). The findings that working nonstandard shifts have an adverse effect on employees' quality of life were similar to the findings of Stanczyk, Henly, and Lambert

(2017); the scholars found that working non-standard shift jobs leads to a reduction of employees' quality of life because workers are not able to effectively plan activities that are important to them and their families. P3 said, "When managers spend time resolving scheduling issues, they improve workers' quality of life and reduce employee turnover." Other participants commented that by improving employees' quality of life, managers could increase employees' productivity and organization commitment, which results in reduced employee turnover (P4 and P7).

Three of the participants mentioned that the inconsistencies with the quantity of hours employees get in a week and the non-standard schedules make it difficult for leaders to promote quality of life for team members (P3, P5, and P9). Stanczyk et al. (2017) discovered that inconsistencies in employees' work schedules have an adverse effect on workers' quality of life. P8 stated, "Employees want to support their loved ones during special occasions; I take their personal issues into consideration to improve their quality of life and increase retention." By allowing employees the opportunity to spend time with their family during important events such as weddings, anniversary, and birthdays, managers can increase workers' quality of life and reduce employee turnover (P6 and P10). The findings that managing personnel scheduling decreased employee turnover were similar to Lozano, Hamplova, and Le Bourdais' (2016) and Adisa, Osabutey, and Gbadamosi's (2016); the scholars found that working non-standard hour jobs changed the temporal structure of family life and constrained the quantity and quality of time employees spent with their families, effecting the quality of life for employees. In another study, researchers found that leaders who were effective at

managing personnel scheduling improved workers' quality of life by reducing work-family conflict, which led to a reduction of employee turnover intentions (Lambert, Qureshi, Frank, Keena, & Hogan, 2017). I conducted an in-depth data analysis of participants' responses, organizational spreadsheets, charts, and memorandum on employee turnover and found that by managing personnel scheduling managers can improve workers' quality of life, which might lead to a reduction of employee turnover.

P3, P4, P6, P9, and P10 stressed the importance of managing employee scheduling as a way for managers to promote workers' quality of life and reduce employee turnover. The review of organizational spreadsheets and charts on employee turnover revealed a 9% reduction of employee turnover from 2012 to 2016 (Figure 1), which indicates that by managing personnel scheduling managers had a positive effect on employee retention. The data analysis from organizational spreadsheets, charts and participants' responses also showed that by managing personnel scheduling managers were able to improve workers' quality of life, which led to a reduction of employee turnover.

Based on the responses from all participants, managing employee scheduling is difficult in the retail industry but essential to improving workers' quality of life, which increases employees' productivity and organizational commitments and reduces employee turnover. P4 said, "Because I care about the quality of life of my team members, managing personnel scheduling is one of my top priorities; as a leader, I must take care of my people and make things as manageable as possible for them." The finding that improving workers' quality of life increase employees' productivity and

organizational commitment were similar to Burns' (1978) transformational leadership theory; Burns proposed that transformational leaders focus on the management of organizational resources to achieve the organization's mission. Personnel are an important resource; therefore, managing personnel scheduling is essential to the daily operation and success of retail organizations. Theme 2 also relates to the transformational leadership theory because Burns (1978) found that leaders who understood employees' needs were effective at improving workers' performance and increasing organizational commitment, which reduced employee turnover intentions. By managing personnel scheduling managers help employees improve their quality of life, which in turn improve productivity and performance, promote organizational commitments, and reduce employee turnover.

Theme 3: Competitive Compensation Reduced Employee Turnover

Competitive compensation reduced employee turnover was the third theme that emerged from a detailed data analysis of participants' responses and a review of organizational spreadsheets, charts, and memorandums on employee turnover. Although I did not review employees' compensation packages, participants provided valuable information to support why they considered offering competitive employee compensation was an effective strategy to reduce employee turnover. Employee compensation or total employee compensation is a term which encompasses all benefits that workers receive from an employer (Muthusi-Nzyoka, 2016). Some participants articulated that their company offers a balanced compensation package for full-time employees that includes a base hourly wage for team members and a base salary for managers and assistant

managers, commission, paid sick leave, retirement benefits, bonuses, and paid leave (P1, P4, P7, and P8). Saleh (2017) found a significant relationship between employee commitment, job satisfaction, employee performance, employee turnover, and a well-balanced compensation package. By offering a well-balanced compensation package leaders can improve employee commitment and increase job satisfaction, which reduces employee turnover (Saleh 2017). Part-time workers receive an hourly wage, commission, and bonuses (P1 and P7). P8 said, “The base hourly wage and base salary are low in the retail industry, but unlike some retailers our employees still have a pay check in the event they do not make a sale.” Offering employees a base hourly wage and base salary is an effective strategy retail leaders can use to reduce employee turnover (P1, P4, and P9). Based on the responses from some participants, compensation at this organization is better than at other competitors (P1, P2, P5, P6, P8, and P10). The findings that competitive compensation reduces employee turnover were similar to Muthusi-Nzyoka’s (2016) and Aziz, Hasbollah, Yaziz, and Ibrahim’s (2017); the researchers found a direct correlation between competitive compensation and employee turnover. Some scholars discovered that as compensation increases, employee turnover intention decreases (Aziz et al., 2017; Muthusi-Nzyoka, 2016)

Several participants expressed that the leaders at this organization reward top performers well by offering various incentives to motivate employees to be productive (P1, P2, P4, and P8). Employees receive commission and bonuses based on their overall performance; the more employees sell, the higher the commission and bonuses they receive (P1 and P3). P8 mentioned, “The reason I like to work in the retail industry is

because I get paid based on my performance; the more I sell, the higher my monetary reward; I can honestly say that in this company income can be unlimited if you are a top performer.” Other participants mentioned that by rewarding workers for their performance, managers can improve employees’ commitment to the institution, which leads to a reduction of employee turnover intentions (P3, P5, P8, and P9). The findings that rewarding employees for exceptional performance reduced employee turnover were similar to Nazir, Shafi, Qun, Nazir, and Tran’s (2016), the researchers found that rewarding top performers increased employee organizational commitment, productivity, and job satisfaction, which led to a reduction of employee turnover intentions.

Three participants shared that most employees’ desires to work for a company come from the total compensation they receive for their contributions (P4, P5, and P7). Although healthcare and retirement benefits are important, immediate monetary compensation such as bonuses, wage or salary, and commissions are the most important factors in reducing employee turnover (P8). P8 said. “Most retail employees are motivated by compensation and the potential to make unlimited income; that is the main reason I decided to make a career in the retail industry.” The findings that competitive compensation reduces employee turnover were similar to Bryant and Allen’s (2013) and Chew, Ng, and Fan’s (2016); the scholars found that competitive compensation had a positive effect on employee turnover; as compensation increased, employees experienced reduced employee turnover intentions. Bryant and Allen (2013) found that by offering a competitive compensation package, retailers could increase employees’ desires to work for their organizations and improves organizational commitment, resulting in a reduction

of employee turnover (Bryant & Allen, 2013; Ng et al., 2016). Based on the findings from analyzing the participants' responses and document on employee turnover, offering employees a competitive compensation package is an effective strategy to reduce employee turnover in the retail industry. When answering what strategies were effective to reduce employee turnover, P5 made the following statement:

Although, I do not determine employees' compensation, I talk to employees to find out what is important to them; many of my team members seems to be motivated by how much money they make. By understanding that monetary compensation is important to employees and helping them achieve their sale goals, managers can help organization increase employee retention. Managers who understand what motivates employees can better assist employees to achieve their financial goals, which increases organizational commitment and reduces employee turnover intentions.

In addition to offering competitive compensation, leaders at the partner organization also have monthly recognition events to recognize top performers (P1 and P8). Company managers celebrate employees' birthdays and the achievements of new milestones such as being an employee for a year, being the employee of the month, and exceeding sale quotas as an individual or department (P2, P5, and P9). P1 said, "Employees in my department appreciate that leaders care about their success and celebrate their achievements and milestones." Two of the participants shared that celebrating team members for their accomplishments improves employees'

organizational commitment, increases productivity, and reduces employee turnover (P2 and P5).

Several participants shared that employees are often looking for higher paying jobs (P1, P3, P7, and P9). According to P8, when organizations offer a balanced compensation package, managers are more effective at reducing employee turnover. P8 stated, “Some retail workers are young and they care about how much money they can make, but for employees with families, competitive compensation seems to be the best of both worlds.” When employees’ compensation is not competitive, workers are always looking for higher paying jobs; failure to provide competitive compensation has an adverse effect on the retention of top performers (P1 and P7). Since top performers are critical to the success of retail organizations, it is essential that organizations offer competitive compensation as a way to increase the retention of top talents (P1, P4, and P8).

Other participants articulated that competitive compensation was important to the overall success of the organization’s retention strategy (P3, P6, and P9). P3 shared that by talking to employees about compensation managers can get a better understanding of employees’ perceptions as it relates to employee turnover intentions. P6 shared, “I talked to my team members in a regular basis about compensation and they seem to be happy with the compensation we offer at our store.” According to P9, talking to employees about compensation is an effective way to understand employee turnover intentions, but managers often overlook it. Based on the responses from some participants (P3, P6, and P9), by understanding employees’ perceptions of competitive compensation managers

can assess if compensation is the cause of increased employee turnover at their organizations.

Three of the participants mentioned that employee compensation was better at this organization than other businesses they worked for in the retail industry (P4, P6, and P7). P6 stated, “Managers should talk to their team members about the company’s compensation, commission, and reward program as a way to promote awareness; some employees might not understand how compensation works.” Offering a competitive compensation package is essential to attract new talents and reduces employee turnover. The findings that competitive compensation reduces employee turnover were similar to Olawale and Olanrewaju’s (2016); the scholars found that competitive compensation reduced employee turnover. Olawale and Olanrewaju (2016) found that organizations with competitive compensation had a lower turnover rate than organizations with average compensation packages. By offering competitive compensation, retail store’ leaders can reduce employee turnover. Based on participants’ responses and organizational documents on employee turnover, I was not able to confirm or disprove the transformational leadership theory.

Applications to Professional Practice

Since employee turnover adversely affects productivity, managing employee retention is essential to the survival of retail organizations (Ugoami, 2016). Losing talented workers affects more than productivity, it also weakens the overall organization’s survivability strategy as the result of loss knowledge and reduced performance (Ahammad, Tarba, Liu, & Glaister, 2016). Leaders and managers must take

an active role in managing employee turnover because failure to retain key employees can lead to organizational failure (Gonzalez, 2016). Implementing effective employee turnover reduction strategies helps leaders and managers promote organizational growth and productivity, which increases the chances of survivability for their businesses (Ahammad et al., 2016; Gonzalez, 2016; Ugoami, 2016). A review of the literature showed that by reducing employee turnover, managers and leaders could increase productivity, which leads to organizational expansion as the result of increased performance.

Business leaders can use effective employee turnover strategies to help their organizations retain knowledge through the preservation of skilled workers who are often difficult to replace (Larkin & Burgess, 2013). Although most leaders are aware that employee turnover has adverse effects on an organization, managers can still benefit by getting new insight on strategies other leaders considered effective in reducing employee turnover. While there are numerous strategies managers use to increase retention, participants stated that being a supportive manager, managing personnel scheduling, and offering a competitive compensation package, were effective strategies to decrease turnover. Understanding the benefits associated with using effective strategies can save organizations money and time. More importantly, retail store managers can use the findings of this study to gain new knowledge, which might be beneficial in the implementation of a company's employee retention plan.

The information shared by the research participants might provide retail store managers, leaders, and other business professionals with valuable information they can

use to reduce employee turnover at their organizations. In addition, the strategies shared by the research participants are an inexpensive way managers can use to increase productivity and improve sustainability and survivability. Employee turnover is higher in the retail industry than in other sectors (Ahammad et al., 2016; Gonzalez, 2016; Ugoami, 2016), which is another reason I recommend managers consider the feasibility of implementing new strategies to reduce employee turnover. My goal is that the findings from this study might provide retail store managers and leaders with new insight and hopefully shed some light on some effective strategies to reduce employee turnover.

Implications for Social Change

This qualitative case study on employee turnover is meaningful to social change because retail store leaders can use the findings to reduce employee turnover through the implementation of effective strategies. The primary objective of this research was to explore effective strategies used by managers to reduce employee turnover in the retail industry. The retention of workers continues to be of increasing concern for retail store leaders because organizations with high employee turnover experience decreased productivity and profitability (Bothma & Roodt, 2012; Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013). In addition to understanding the importance of implementing effective strategies, leaders must be able to identify which strategies are most effective for their type of organization (Hom et al., 2012). Managers can use the strategies that emerged from the data analysis in the implementation of an effective employee turnover reduction strategies to promote expansion and organization's growth, which in term might lead to new employment opportunities and promote prosperity for local families and the community.

Reducing employee turnover helps organizations' leaders create opportunities that bring positive social change for the communities they serve (Steiner & Atterton, 2014). Also, successful organizations are a force of social change in many ways, such as creating jobs, contributing to non-profit organizations, and donating to programs and activities that can benefit the entire community (Steiner & Atterton, 2014). Employee turnover threatens organizations' profitability and sustainability, which affects companies' ability to contribute to their communities (Bothma & Roodt, 2012). Moreover, employee turnover reduces profit margins of retail businesses and consumes revenues intended for other organizational activities, such as expansion, facility updates, and future investments (Hom et al., 2012). Reducing employee turnover enables organizations' leaders to be catalysts of positive social change as the result of enhanced sustainability, improved organizational growth, and increased profitability, which in turn leads to new employment opportunities and promotes prosperity for local families and communities.

Recommendations for Action

Retail store managers can use the information in this study to implement effective strategies to reduce employee turnover at their organizations. By employing some of the strategies shared by participants, managers can decrease employee turnover, which might help improve profitability, productivity, and sustainability. The knowledge shared in this research may help contribute to the success of retail organizations experiencing a high employee turnover rate and provide managers with new strategies other managers considered effective to reduce employee turnover. In addition, by reducing employee

turnover, retail managers can promote organizational growth and expansion. The findings from this study also provide retail store managers experiencing high employee turnover with essential information, such as how to use supportive leadership, personnel scheduling, and competitive compensation to reduce employee turnover. Implementing effective strategies to reduce employee turnover may assist in retaining skilled professionals who are hard to replace because of decades of experience and knowledge. I recommend retail store leaders and managers review the findings of this study and adopt some of the strategies that are feasible for application in their businesses.

To promote distribution of the findings of this study, dissemination of this research will occur through numerous methods. Leaders from the partner organization and all participants will receive a 2-page summary of the findings to disseminate among peers and other business managers and leaders. This study will also be available through the ProQuest/UMI dissertation database for future scholars and others organizations. I will also seek opportunities to share the findings of this study with business related forums, organizational training, and leadership conferences.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this study was to explore effective strategies retail store managers from El Paso, Texas use to decrease employee turnover. Although the findings of this study extend to existing research on employee turnover, employees' reasons for leaving their jobs are not always the same. Since employee turnover is a complex business problem, future qualitative researchers should explore strategies employees consider effective to reduce employee turnover. Interviewing employees to explore their

perceptions of effective strategies might provide valuable insight on this topic.

Recommendations for further qualitative research also include exploring effective strategies in different geographical locations and different type of retail stores (i.e. electronics, clothes, foods, etc.). By exploring employee turnover in different types of retail stores and different geographical locations, scholars might contribute to the understanding of employee turnover.

Since there are numerous variables that affect employee turnover, quantitative researchers should examine the relationship between different variables and employee turnover. Future quantitative researchers should consider examining the relationship between employee turnover and other variables such as employees' compensation, advancement opportunity, managers' leadership style, organization's ethics, employees' recognition (rewards), and organizations' developmental programs. Future research in such areas might provide managers and leaders with new insight to reduce employee turnover, which in turn might promote productivity, sustainability, and survivability. Moreover, future research could add to the limited scholarly knowledge and understanding of effective strategies used by managers to reduce employee turnover.

Reflections

Reflecting on the doctoral journey provided me with an opportunity to consider multiple stages of the doctoral study process including the prospectus, proposal, and the data collection and analysis stages. During the prospectus stage, I built the foundation for conducting this study and gained valuable knowledge to increase my understanding of the research process. Although I had experience understanding some of the effects of employee

turnover from my previous military career, I eliminated my personal biases to increase the reliability and quality of the findings.

Since I was the data collection instrument for this study, one of the challenges I faced was preventing my personal biases from effecting the results of the research. As a retired military leader, I had preconceived ideas of effective strategies to reduce employee turnover. To restrain from personal biases, I adhered to ethical requirements and remained aware of my personal biases throughout the research process. I rehearsed the interview questions with family members to practice not interfering with the interview process. After some practice, I was able to create an environment where participants were able to openly share their experiences without interruption. To eliminate biases during the participant collection process, I e-mailed an invitation to all managers who met the criteria for the study; all managers who volunteered to participate were able to share their experience. In addition, I used an interview protocol and asked the approved questions in the same order to eliminate biases. By being aware of my personal biases, providing the same opportunity to all prospective participants who met the criteria for this study, and asking the approved interview questions in the same order during the interview, the findings of this study are the perspectives of participants.

The realization that completing a research was going to be difficult happened in all stages of the doctoral study process. At the beginning of the journey, I experience frustration because of my failure to make progress. Although the doctoral journey was difficult, I quickly realized it was a rewarding experience. The biggest challenge was remembering that conducting a research was not about me, but rather about exploring

unbiased knowledge and sharing participants' experiences with the world. I also learned that creating a healthy researcher-participant relationship was essential during the data collection process and motivated participants to be open and honest during the interviews. Having a healthy relationship with participants also increased participants' willingness and desire to take part in the member checking process. I discovered that interviews were effective for collecting qualitative data and led to valuable discoveries and a deeper understanding of the research problem. The broadening of perspectives and understanding from the interviews was somewhat an unexpected learning experience. As attested by the responses obtained from the interviews, participants showed interest and willingness to share their experiences and provided more data than what I expected to obtain from asking seven interview questions. Although the experience was unexpected, participants' willingness to participate in the study and openly share their experiences highlighted the need for organizations to support and encourage employees to participate in research.

After completing this study, changes in thinking included the realization that employee turnover is a complex business problem that researchers need to continue to explore and that supportive leadership is an inexpensive way for leaders to reduce employee turnover. Since there are numerous variables that effect employee turnover; managers experiencing high turnover rates must understand the need of their employees when implementing strategies to reduce employee turnover. Managers should take a closer look at their leadership styles. Promoting supportive leaders among department

managers is an effective and inexpensive strategy senior leaders can use to decrease employee turnover.

Conclusion

The findings from this case study revealed that retail store managers could reduce employee turnover by using a supportive leadership style, managing employees' work schedules effectively, and offering competitive compensation. Based on the participants' experiences, managers should implement the above strategies into the overall organization's employee turnover reduction strategy. The findings of this study also indicated that by applying the strategies that emerged from the participants' responses, organizational leaders can increase productivity and organizational commitment. Most importantly, since implementing these strategies is inexpensive, managers should integrate these recommendations into the overall organizational retention strategy.

Since reducing employee turnover improves productivity and profitability, the implementation of effective employee turnover strategies is critical to the survival of organizations in today's competitive marketplace. When organizations have high employee turnover rates, the future of the organization is at risk because employee turnover can lead to reduced profits as the result of loss of productivity and loss of knowledge. I recommend that retail store leaders, scholars, and practitioners use the findings and recommendations of this study to gain new insight on effective employee turnover reduction strategies and to improve business practices.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Letter for Study Participants

[Date]

Re: A Research Study That May Interest You

Dear [Name]:

My name is Alexandro Beato, and I am currently a graduate student at Walden University pursuing a doctoral degree in business administration (DBA). I am conducting a study to gain insight on effective employee turnover strategies used by retail store leaders to reduce employee turnover. The title of this study is: “Effective Strategies Employed by Retail Store Leaders to Reduce Employee Turnover.”

I am interested in interviewing retail store leaders who meet the following criteria:

- Have managerial experience in the retail industry
- Work as a retail store manager in El Paso, Texas
- Have experience implementing effective strategies to reduce employee turnover.

Since my intent is to interview participants who have experience implementing effective employee turnover strategies, employees in non-managerial positions are not eligible to participate in this study. Employees under the age of 18 are also excluded from participating.

I expect that retail store managers who meet the criteria for this study might provide information on effective strategies that can help other retail store managers reduce employee turnover. I will conduct face-to-face interviews to collect data to get a thorough understanding of the problem under exploration. Once the research is complete, I will share results and findings with the participants and the research community.

Individuals who are interested in participating and meet the above criteria can contact me at alexandro.beato@waldenu.edu. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you are interested and you received an e-mail please reply with “I consent.” Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Alexandro Beato
DBA Candidate
Walden University

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview: Exploring effective strategies retail store leaders from El Paso, Texas use to decrease front-line employee turnover

A. The interview session began with salutations, personal introductions, and an overview of the research topic.

B. I thanked participants for volunteering to participate in the study

C. Participants had an opportunity to read the consent form and ask any questions before signing the consent form.

D. I gave participants a copy of the consent form for their personal records.

E. I ensured the primary and alternate audio recorders were turned on, and noted the date, time, and location of the interview.

F. I coded participant's identifiable information; I used "Participant 1 through 10" for sequential interpretation of the interviews.

G. I documented on the audio recorder that the participants signed a copy of the consent form before the interview began.

H. Interviews lasted approximately 30-40 minutes for responses to the seven interview questions, including any additional follow-up questions.

I. When interviews ended, I reminded participants that I will meet them at a later date to verify the interpretations for errors.

J. At the end of the interview, I thanked the research participants for taking the time to participate in the study.

Interview Questions

1. How do you gather the necessary information to implement strategies to reduce employee turnover?
2. What strategies have you used to reduce front-line employee turnover?
3. What strategies were effective in reducing front-line employee turnover?

4. How did your front-line employees respond to these strategies?
5. What are some of the benefits of implementing a viable front-line employee turnover reduction strategy?
6. How do you measure the effectiveness of your front-line employee retention strategies?
7. What else would you like to share about your successful strategies for reducing front-line employee turnover?

Appendix C: E-mail to Request to Collect Research Data

[date]

Potential Organization,

I am a doctor of business administration (DBA) student at Walden University. One of the requirements of the doctoral program at Walden University is completing a research that addresses a current business program. I am conducting my doctoral study on the topic “Effective Strategies Employed by Retail Store Leaders to Reduce Employee Turnover” I consider this study important because employee turnover impacts profitability and sustainability, which are important to the survival of retail organizations.

I kindly request your permission to interview managers at your organization to gather information that will help me understand effective strategies to reduce employee turnover. To complete my study, I must interview managers and review employee turnover documents. I plan to start the data collection process between 30-60 days. As a researcher, I am responsible for ensuring that the data I collect does not affect the organization or the research participants. Since my objective is to explore the business problem (employee turnover), I will not mention the names of the store and the names of participants in my findings because it is a violation of ethical research and Walden University’s policies. All information collected will be strictly confidential and purely for academic purposes. I hope my findings might help retail store managers with the implementation of effective retention strategies. I will be happy to share my findings with your organization. Feel free to contact me if you would like more information. I can also provide contact information for my school if necessary.

I would like to thank you in advance for your support. I look forward to your favorable response.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Alexandro Beato

DBA Candidate

Walden University

Appendix D: Literature Review Sources

Table 1

Literature Review Sources

Sources	Literature review sources 2013 or later	Literature review sources prior to 2013	Total
Non peer-reviewed or books	6	4	10
Peer-reviewed articles	244	15	259
Dissertations	5	0	5
Total	255	19	274
Percentage of total	93%	7%	100%

Appendix E: Mobley's Turnover Decision Making Process

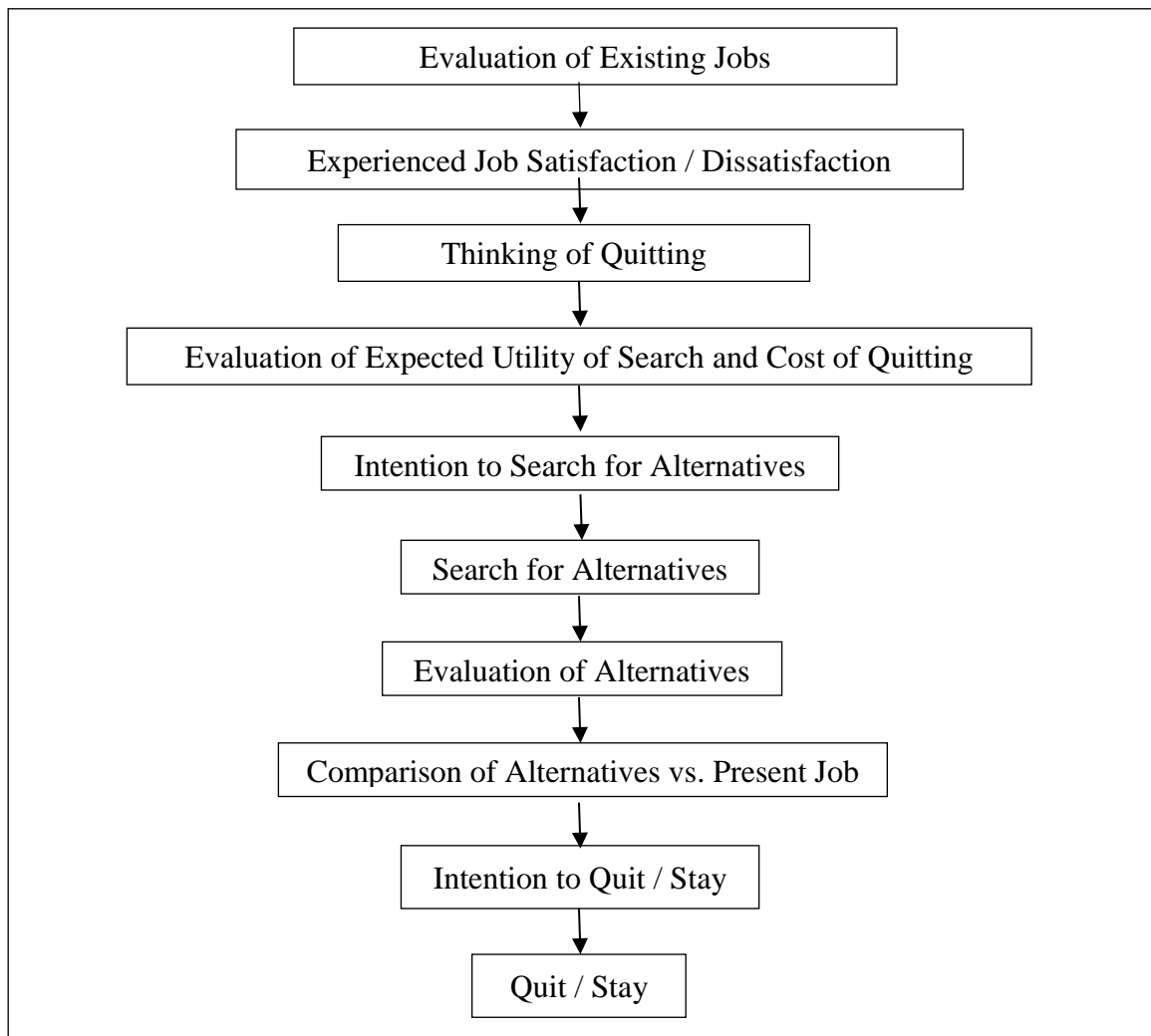


Figure 2. Graphical representation of Mobley's turnover decision making process model