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Strategies for Retaining a Multigenerational Workforce

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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2017

Abstract

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Abstract

As organizations become more age diverse, some business leaders face challenges managing a multigenerational workforce. The purpose of this single case study was to explore strategies that leaders at a university in Northwest Florida implemented to retain their age-diverse workforce. The targeted population was higher education business managers who had success with retaining an age-diverse staff. The conceptual framework of the study was Herzberg's 2-factor theory of motivation. A significant tenet of this theory is that employees explain satisfying and dissatisfying experiences based on intrinsic and extrinsic factors related to their job functions. The data collection process included face-to-face interviews with 4 participants and a review of company documents, including the university's strategic plan and diversity and inclusion initiatives. Through coding and thematic analysis, 7 themes emerged that could help leaders retain a multigenerational workforce: foster a diversity-friendly workplace culture, implement effective interpersonal communication strategies, employ a formal approach, encourage a healthy work-life balance, value employees and their differences, offer professional growth opportunities, and eliminate negative generational stereotyping. Developing and cultivating retention strategies may contribute to social change by helping managers and leaders enrich retention rates, thereby increasing employment stability, improving productivity, and enhancing organizational and community relations.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to my amazing husband and wonderful children who have wholeheartedly supported me throughout this journey. Thank you for being so patient with me, for keeping me encouraged, and for never giving up on me. I also dedicate my doctoral study to my mom for having such unwavering confidence in me. I truly love and appreciate all of you.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The landscape of employment is changing due to increasing levels of age diversity in the labor force (Holian, 2015). Although many businesses rely on a multigenerational workforce for sustenance and advancement, failing to adjust their organizational culture to overcome challenges of a cross-generational workforce can result in high turnover and low retention rates (Carpenter & Charon, 2014; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2013). The basis of the current study was the economic significance of retention strategies of a multigenerational workforce to higher education institution managers, as well as managers in other business industries. Comprehending the varying attributes and characteristics of the four generational cohorts, as well as the impact of these differences in the workplace, was the focus of this study. Generational concerns are valid diversity issues that companies need to recognize and address; it is essential for managers of multigenerational workers to implement successful strategies to retain their multigenerational staff (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). With traditionalists and baby boomers remaining in the workforce past retirement age, all four generations (traditionalists, baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y) will work side by side (Zopiatis, Krambia-Kapardis, & Varnavas, 2012). Each generation has different characteristics that influence their professional views, values, beliefs, and motivators. It is imperative for managers to identify and address generational diversity to mitigate conflict and to motivate and retain key staff (Kleinhans, Chakradhar, Muller, & Waddill, 2015). Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, and Pemberton-Jones (2015) confirmed that a company's culture

and business operations should include employee retention strategies because they are critical to the growth and success of most organizations.

Background of the Problem

The four generations that constitute today's workforce include traditionalists (born between 1925 and 1945), baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), Generation X (born between 1965 and 1981), and Generation Y (born between 1982 and 2000), also known as millennials (Schullery, 2013). According to Cloutier et al. (2015), differences among the four generational cohorts can cause challenges for business leaders to develop successful strategies to retain a multigenerational staff. The generational differences that managers find challenging includes attitudes, beliefs, values, work ethics, workplace perceptions, and workplace expectations (Moore, Grunberg, & Krause, 2015). Additionally, intrinsic and extrinsic factors can affect the motivation levels of generational employees, which can strongly influence their workplace expectations (Lester, Standifer, Schultz, & Windsor, 2012).

Gaining a keen understanding of how to manage differences among multigenerational employees is vital to an organization's success (Bennett, Pitt, & Price, 2012). Leaders of multigenerational staff tend to treat all workers the same, regardless of their cohort classification, instead of focusing on individual characteristics and traits of generational employees and treating them according to their needs (Nelsey & Brownie, 2012). Establishing a workplace environment that is diversity friendly can encourage innovation and teamwork between generational employees, which could have a positive effect on productivity and retention (Bourne, 2015). Al-Asfour and Lettau (2014)

asserted that it is essential for organizations to examine their leadership styles and level of understanding of the differences that exist among generational workers so that leaders can address workplace diversity, which can reduce generational conflict and improve employee retention.

Problem Statement

Diversity in the workplace increases as baby boomers delay retirement and join the other generations in the labor force (Bennett et al., 2012). Differences in age, intrinsic and extrinsic motivator preferences, and characteristics of generational workers can lead to challenges for business managers in retaining their multigenerational staff (Zemke et al., 2013). By 2023, the workforce will reach an estimated 163.5 million people with the traditionalists representing 8% of the workforce, the baby boomers representing 22% of the workfore, Generation X representing 20% of the workforce, and Generation Y representing 50% of the workforce (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013; Willyerd, 2012). The general business problem is that some business managers do not recognize the differences among multigenerational workers, which can adversely affect employee retention. The specific business problem is that some business managers lack strategies to retain a multigenerational workforce.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore retention strategies business managers use to retain their multigenerational workforce. The targeted population consisted of department managers from an education institution located in Northwest Florida who had success in retaining a multigenerational workforce.

According to Hannay and Fretwell (2011) and Matz-Costa and Pitt-Catsouphes (2009), academic administrators can experience workplace conflict and retention dilemmas if managers do not identify and address the differences that exist among multigenerational workers. Therefore, an academic population was suitable for this study. The implications for positive social change include the opportunity to share strategies that could help organizations increase their retention rates of generational workers, as well as promote organizational unity across generations. Managers, administrators, and other individuals who hold authoritative positions could use the findings of this study to increase the retention rates of generational workers, thereby creating employment stability, improving productivity, and enhancing both organizational and community relations.

Nature of the Study

Researchers who decide to collect information and seek a richer understanding from people who have firsthand knowledge of a phenomenon tend to select a qualitative approach as their preferred method of study (Andrews, 2012). A qualitative approach was suitable for this study because it allowed me to explore the retention strategies business managers applied to retain their multigenerational employees. A quantitative approach involves examining and explaining the relationships among variables through observations and statistical measurements, and a mixed-methods approach combines qualitative and quantitative methods (Hamer & Collinson, 2014; Hese-Biber, 2015). My research question did not involve examining the relationships among variables; therefore, a quantitative or mixed-methods approach was not appropriate for the current study.

According to Yin (2014), case studies contain *why* and *how* research questions, focus on present-day events, and do not require the researcher to have control of behavioral events. Researchers use a phenomenological design to explore the lived experiences regarding a phenomenon and the meanings behind those experiences. A researcher applying the phenomenology design will seek to explain the shared experiences of an event to develop a description of the essence or universal meaning of the phenomenon from the participants' perspectives (Petty, Thomson, & Stew, 2012). University business managers' development and implementation of strategies to retain their multigenerational workforce is not an experience or event that warranted a phenomenological design. Scholars who implement an ethnographic design seek to explore the culture of individuals who share behavior patterns and beliefs (Petty et al., 2012). An ethnographic design was not appropriate for the current study because the focus was not on the culture of individuals or groups. Researchers who use a narrative research design seek to gain insights into people's life experiences regarding an event or events described in the form of a story (Petty et al., 2012). A narrative design was not suitable for this study because the purpose did not require an analysis of stories shared by participants. A case study was the most appropriate design for this research project because the research question and the focus of the study aligned with Yin's (2014) conditions for conducting a case study.

Research Question

The central research question was the following: What retention strategies do business managers use to retain their multigenerational workforce?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use to retain your multigenerational workforce?

2. What specific procedures or business practices have you implemented to ensure the retention of your multigenerational workforce?

3. What strategies have you found to be most effective in retaining your multigenerational workforce?

4. What strategies have you found to be the least effective in retaining your multigenerational workforce?

5. What challenges did you encounter when you implemented the strategies, and how did you overcome the challenges?

6. What advice would you share with other business managers about developing and implementing strategies to help retain their multigenerational workforce?

Conceptual Framework

Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation (also referred to as Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory) was the conceptual framework for the current study. Njoroge and Yazdanifard (2014) communicated that for organizations to maintain employees in a multigenerational workplace, management needs to determine how best to use intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to retain their talented workers who can rise to the challenges of a quickly evolving age-diverse workforce. I used Herzberg's two-factor theory as a guide for my research in exploring the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that leaders use to retain their multigenerational workers. For the current study, the emphasis was on the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the two-factor theory of motivation, as well as on how

these motivators affected employee retention from the perceptions of leaders who are responsible for increasing multigenerational workers' retention rates.

Herzberg (1966) discovered that employees have a tendency to explain experiences that are satisfying to them based on intrinsic factors related to their job functions. Herzberg labeled these factors as *motivators*, which include recognition, professional advancement, and achievement (Sandhya & Kumar, 2011). Sandhya and Kumar (2011) noted that Herzberg labeled the dissatisfying experiences of employees as *hygiene* factors, which are extrinsic non-job-related factors such as salary, leadership styles, coworker relationships, policies, and procedures. Sandhya and Kumar (2011) suggested that using the intrinsic and extrinsic principles of Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation can help leaders enhance the basic modifications of an employee's job through job enrichment, which could increase employee retention and improve productivity. Herzberg also contended that retaining employees requires keeping them motivated (Sandhya & Kumar, 2011). The significance of hygiene and motivation factors will differ among employees based on their needs, values, and characteristics. Therefore, Herzberg advised that it is essential for managers to identify the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of jobs that are important to workers and employ practices or opportunities to retain key staff (Hunt et al., 2012).

The two-factor theory was appropriate for this qualitative case study because the growing life expectancy and increased delays in the retirement of baby boomers have resulted in the coexistence of older generations and younger generations in the workplace (Zopiatis et al., 2012). Each generation has certain experiences and characteristics that

affect professional values and beliefs, which can cause generational conflict. Zopiatis, Krambia-Kapardis, and Varnavas (2012) posited that workplace conflict could initiate problems resulting in higher levels of turnover, lower employee retention, decreased motivation, and lower productivity. It is imperative that managers not only recognize but also address the differences that exist among generational workers (Outten, 2012). Establishing effective retention strategies reflecting these differences can help managers attract and retain multigenerational employees, which can improve competitive advantage and increase productivity.

Operational Definitions

Generational cohort: A generational cohort is a group of individuals who experience identical social, economic, political, and cultural events, and who share similar values and attitudes about life, work, and education (Fernandez-Duran, 2016).

Traditionalists: Traditionalists are individuals born between 1925 and 1945 who compose approximately 5% of today's workforce (Schullery, 2013; Wiedmer, 2015).

Baby boomers: Baby boomers are people born between 1946 and 1964 who compose approximately 30% of the population (Schullery, 2013; Wiedmer, 2013).

Generation X: Generation X constitutes nearly 34% of the population and includes individuals born between 1965 and 1981. The Generation X population is also known as the Xers, the 13th generation, and the latchkey generation (Eastman & Lui, 2012; Schullery, 2013).

Generation Y: Generation Y, also known as the millennials, consists of individuals born between 1982 and 2000. These individuals compose almost 12% of the population (Allison, 2013; Schullery, 2013).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

In a research study, assumptions are the essential perspectives or perceptions that the investigator considers true but cannot verify (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). The assumptions are the claims that support a strong and logical justification for the study. The first assumption was that each participant would answer the interview questions honestly, truthfully, and with integrity. Ensuring participants' confidentiality was necessary so that they would be more willing to respond to inquiries in a truthful and objective manner. To aid in validating the results and to encourage an open and honest dialogue, I informed participants that their interview responses would be strictly confidential. A second assumption was that the sample for this study was appropriate for exploring themes and concepts that involved retaining a multigenerational staff in higher education institutions.

Limitations

Leedy and Ormrod (2013) explained limitations of a research study as possible weaknesses that are beyond the control of the researcher. One limitation of this case study was that the findings included only the perspectives of the university business managers who participated. The responses provided by the participants may not reflect the replies that business managers in other organizations would provide. The data from

this study did not include the university's entire managerial population retention strategies of multigenerational employees. Not including entire categories of individuals when doing research could hinder a holistic view of the true scope of the problem (Palmer, Thomas, McGregor, von Wagner, & Raine, 2015). A second limitation of the current study was that even though the collected data reflected strategies business managers from a university use to retain their multigenerational staff, evaluating those strategies to determine which are most effective was not a part of this study. A third limitation was personal bias. Personal bias could have an effect on the data during the interviewing and analysis process. Moustakas (1994) commented that identifying or exposing personal views or opinions could reduce bias when interviewing participants. The level of personal bias in research influences the perceived credibility of the findings (Tuohy, Cooney, Dowling, Murphy, & Sixmith, 2013). Regardless of the efforts taken to identify personal views or opinions to mitigate personal bias, I was unlikely to eliminate it.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the boundaries and limited scope of a research study, set by the researcher, to ensure that research goals are realistic and obtainable (Schwarzfeld & Sperling, 2014). The first delimitation was that participants must have been in a management position for a minimum of 2 years, and they must have managed a staff consisting of three of the four generational cohorts while retaining employees for a minimum of 2 years. I interviewed only individuals who met these requirements. The second delimitation was the sample size of four participants. Including a larger sample

size would have required more time regarding the data collection and data analysis process. A third delimitation was the geographical location chosen for the population. Finally, I limited my inquiry to strategies for retaining a multigenerational workforce to include traditionalists, baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y, though other generations may be present in today's workforce and the presence of traditionalists in the workplace may be minimal.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

Some baby boomers have decided to defer retirement due to poor economic conditions or to take advantage of the opportunities available to them by the elimination of the default retirement age (Heyler & Lee, 2012). The coexistence of several generations in the workplace poses challenges for organizations due to generational workers' characteristics and differences (Amayah & Gedro, 2014). The demands, communication preferences, values, and characteristics of multigenerational workers can result in misunderstandings and miscommunication between staff and management, and can negatively influence employee retention, motivation, and workplace productivity (Ozcelik, 2015). These challenges can also lead to retention and turnover issues for managers. The recommendations from the current study could be of value to businesses because, according to Bourne (2015), management and administration need to consider the needs of workers from each generation to establish effective strategies that will increase retention among multigenerational employees. The findings from this study

could be significant to business practices through enabling business managers to identify and execute effective strategies for enhancing retention of a multigenerational workforce.

Implications for Positive Social Change

A multigenerational workforce includes different generation of employees working side by side in the workplace. Managing such diversity in the workplace is a challenging task for managers. Cloutier et al. (2015) concluded that leaders who do not recognize diversity in the workplace may negatively influence retention rates among multigenerational employees. Managers and leaders of higher education institutions and other types of organizations could implement the findings of this study to help retain their multigenerational workforce, thereby contributing to social change. The use of such retention strategies could also improve harmony among the different generations of workers, which could enhance the unity of an organization (Cloutier et al., 2015). Managers, administrators, and other individuals who hold authoritative positions could use the findings of this study to increase the retention rates of generational workers, thereby creating employment stability, improving productivity, and enhancing organizational and community relations.

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A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

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The content of the literature includes how other scholars have explored generational differences in the workplace, identified gaps in the research, and provided ideas for future research directives. This is the first time in history that the workforce has experienced four generations working simultaneously, and many leaders lack the knowledge and proficiency to manage the diversity of multigenerational workers (Soto &

Lugo, 2013). According to Holian (2015), results of a survey conducted in 2014 by the

Australian Human Resources Institute indicated that 77% of 1,931 supervisors lacked

training on how to manage a multigenerational workforce. Herzberg's two-factor theory

of motivation (also referred to as Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory) was the

conceptual framework for the current study. Njoroge and Yazdanifard (2014) affirmed

that for organizations to retain their talented generational staff, it is essential for

management to identify and comprehend the diversity among generational workers to

establish effective procedures that will keep them engaged and motivated. In the current

study, I sought to describe retention strategies used by managers to retain their

multigenerational workforce. The literature review includes older and more recent studies

about each generational cohort (traditionalists, baby boomers, Generation X, and

Generation Y).

A search for peer-reviewed journal articles and books began with Walden

University's databases including ERIC, Academic OneFile, Academic Search Complete,

Business Source Complete, and ProQuest. Primary terms used to find relevant literature

about the characteristics and values of a multigenerational workforce included

traditionalists, *silent generation*, *veterans*, *depression babies*, *baby boomers*, *Generation*

X, *The 13th generation*, *latchkey generation*, *Generation Y*, *Gen Y*, *millennials*, and the

trophy kids. A secondary search for generation work values and work ethics included

employee engagement, *employee motivation*, *intrinsic* and *extrinsic motivators*, *employee*

job performance, and *generational workplace environment*. A third search included

generational theory, *Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation*, *employee retention*

theories and *strategies*, and *employee motivation theories* and *strategies*. Other search mechanisms included Google Scholar and SAGE Full-Text Collection. In the literature review, I provide findings from recent and older studies of the topic as well as a chronological synopsis of the four primary generations of workers present in the workforce. The literature review includes journal articles, books, and dissertations related to qualitative studies that contributed to the knowledge of multigenerational employee differences, characteristics, and values. Table 1 contains the resources used throughout the current study with a date range of 1943 through 2017; 86% of the sources were peer-reviewed, and 88% of the total sources had a publication date within 5 years of my anticipated completion date and CAO approval.

Table 1

List of Sources

Reference type	Total	<5 Years	>5 Years
Peer-reviewed journals	221	201	20
Non-peer-reviewed journals	16	15	1
Books	20	11	9
Dissertations	2	2	0
Total	259	229	30

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore retention strategies business managers use to retain their multigenerational workforce. The targeted population consisted of four managers from an education institution located in Northwest Florida who had success in retaining a multigenerational workforce. According to

Hannay and Fretwell (2011) and Matz-Costa and Pitt-Catsouphes (2009), academic

administrators can experience workplace conflict and retention dilemmas if managers do

not identify and address the differences that exist among multigenerational workers.

Therefore, an academic population was suitable for this study. Diversity in the workplace

increases as baby boomers delay retirement and join the other generations in the labor

force, presenting unique challenges for some managers (Bennett et al., 2012; Rajput,

Marwah, Balli, & Gupta, 2013). Cloutier et al. (2015) suggested that it is necessary for

leaders to acknowledge diversity in the workplace to prevent a reduction in retention and

to mitigate negative effects on multigenerational employees.

Conceptual Framework Theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation, from an intrinsic motivator and

extrinsic motivator perspective, was the conceptual framework for this study. The two-

factory theory came about when Herzberg (1964) collected data from interviews of 200

accountants and engineers from several industries in the Pittsburgh area. During the data

collection process, Herzberg (1964) asked his participants to explain periods of

satisfaction and dissatisfaction on their jobs. The results of the study revealed that job

satisfaction and dissatisfaction derives from two factors that he labeled motivation factors

(intrinsic elements) and hygiene factors (extrinsic elements). According to Herzberg

(1966), the intrinsic factors of motivation that can lead to increased retention are job

satisfaction and enhanced motivation. Herzberg (1966) further stated that job satisfaction

and motivation could encourage superior work performance and increased efforts from

employees. Intrinsic motivators tend to represent more emotional but less tangible needs,

such as project accomplishments, recognition for achievement, level of responsibility, growth and advancement opportunities, and the work itself (Herzberg, 1986). Extrinsic factors of motivation correlate with job dissatisfaction and can lead to an increase in turnover, which will negatively affect retention rates (Herzberg, 1966; Sankar, 2015). Extrinsic factors are those that employees expect to be present and, if absent, can cause high levels of dissatisfaction. Examples of extrinsic factors include working conditions, authority or status, job security, company policies, leadership, and interpersonal relationships (Herzberg, 1986). Herzberg (1986) concluded that intrinsic motivators are the primary cause of job satisfaction, and extrinsic motivators are the main cause of unhappiness in the workplace. To improve job attitudes, increase productivity, and lengthen employee commitments, it is essential for managers to identify and apply intrinsic and extrinsic elements of Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation (Herzberg, 1959).

Selesho and Naile (2014) conducted a mixed-methods study using Herzberg's two-factory theory to examine intrinsic and extrinsic factors that affect retention rates of academic staff at universities in South Africa. The questionnaire included questions about job satisfaction and pay factors, and qualitative data analysis involved the interactive model to examine and interpret the data (Selesho & Naile, 2014). The results of the study indicated that intrinsic and extrinsic factors are important in retaining staff and that academic staff viewed job satisfaction as the primary intrinsic aspect of their job. The results of the study also indicated that salaries, advancement, and professional development are the most important intrinsic and extrinsic aspects that, if not met, will

cause job dissatisfaction. Intrinsic and extrinsic factors are necessary to increase motivation among staff and should be the foundation for developing and implementing strategies to retain employees (Selesho & Naile, 2014).

Vasquez (2014) conducted a phenomenological study to explore reasons and motivating factors of why some hospitality workers remain in the hospitality industry despite the high rate of turnover in the field. Vasquez used semistructured interviews to collect data on the lived experiences of the research participants to determine the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of motivation that were the cause of employee retention in the hospitality sector. The sample included 12 South Florida hotel employees. The results indicated that salary, leadership, relationships with management and coworkers, rewards, organizational culture, and training and advancement opportunities are the primary intrinsic and extrinsic factors that are vital to workers staying in the hospitality industry (Vasquez, 2014). To lower turnover in organizations, industry leaders need to understand that even though intrinsic and extrinsic factors of motivation are independent of each other (one factor does not need to increase for the other to decrease), both factors are necessary for the development and implementation of successful retention strategies (Vasquez, 2014).

Due to four generations simultaneously constituting the workforce, such diversity requires an in-depth comprehension of what motivates workers of differing ages and characteristics so that organizations can successfully retain them (Catania & Randall, 2013). Hyun and Oh (2011) suggested that motivation factors affect the actual job tasks that workers do; therefore, the jobs should consist of intrinsic and extrinsic factors to

cultivate motivation within the workforce. Developing and implementing strategies that incorporate a balance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors based on the needs and characteristics of their staff could help managers mitigate turnover and enhance workplace retention (Kim, 2015).

Supporting and Contrasting Theories

      Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow (1943) argued that individuals aspire to self-actualize through a series of needs. Maslow's theory of motivation supports Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation in that they both emphasize the needs of employees and how meeting those needs could help managers increase employee motivation and retention. Through clinical observations, Maslow discovered that hierarchy is the best way to describe or outline the motivational needs of an individual (Kennedy & Daim, 2010). Maslow (1943) argued that once a person satisfied a need, that need would no longer be a source of motivation for that individual. Maslow named his model of motivation the *hierarchy of needs theory*, which included five levels of needs: (a) physiological or basic needs, (b) safety needs, (c) social needs, (d) esteem needs, and (e) self-actualization needs (Rahman & Nurullah, 2014). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory consists of three assumptions: (a) a person's needs are arranged in order of importance, (b) individuals will not have the motivation to pursue satisfying higher-level needs until they satisfy their lower-level needs, and (c) people have five need classifications (Rahman & Nurullah, 2014).

      Based on Maslow's (1943) motivation theory, employees will always want more from their employers. Both Maslow and Herzberg focused their theories on the different

needs of individuals, which if met would lead to higher motivation levels and an improved ability to retain workers (Kennedy & Daim, 2010). Additionally, Herzberg identified motivators (intrinsic and extrinsic) as the needs of people at a higher level of the hierarchy of Maslow's theory of motivation (Kennedy & Daim, 2010). Maslow suggested that it is necessary for management to identify and comprehend the needs level at which each employee is operating, and to use these needs as levels of motivation to enhance retention and productivity (Rahman & Nurullah, 2014). Herzberg suggested that to motivate and retain employees, managers should provide hygiene factors to mitigate dissatisfaction among employees, and should provide elements (motivator factors) that are intrinsic to the job responsibilities for employees to feel satisfied with their jobs (Herzberg, 1968; Kennedy & Daim, 2010).

Vroom's expectancy theory. Vroom (1964) focused on the effort-performance relationships, performance-reward relationships, and rewards and personal goals relationship. Vroom's expectancy theory differs from Herzberg's and Maslow's theories of motivation because Vroom separated effort, performance, and outcomes in his theory. However, Maslow and Herzberg focused their theories on the relationships between intrinsic and extrinsic needs and the efforts expended by the employee and employer to fulfill those needs (Herzberg, 1959; Maslow, 1943). Vroom assumed that behavior is the result of conscious choices among alternative decisions where the purpose is to maximize pleasure and minimize pain. Vroom recognized that individual factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experiences, and abilities are what determine an employee's performance, not his or her needs. Vroom suggested that effort, performance,

and motivation correlate with an employee's level of expectancy. Vroom (1964) used three variables as the foundation of his theory, (a) expectancy, (b) instrumentality, and (c) valence. Expectancy is the belief that an employee's effort will result in the desired goal, instrumentality is the thought that workers will receive a reward if they meet performance expectations, and valence is the value that employees place on the reward (Sweeny & Dillard, 2013). Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation is about the expectations that employees have regarding expected outcomes and the contributions the workers feel they can make toward those outcomes.

The purpose of this doctoral study was to explore strategies that managers use to retain a multigenerational workforce. I used Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation, from an intrinsic motivator and extrinsic motivator perspective, as a mechanism to explore strategies that managers use to retain their multigenerational workers. Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation contains the premise that motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, can improve the fundamental changes of an employee's job, and that employees' perceptions of importance regarding needs, values, and characteristics will differ (Hunt et al., 2012). Herzberg emphasized that it is imperative that leaders accurately identify the intrinsic and extrinsic content of jobs that are essential to workers, and implement strategies to positively affect employee commitment, which could improve employee performance and retention (Herzberg, 1968; Hunt et al., 2012). Motivation and job satisfaction are vital elements to retaining employees (Sankar, 2015). Most leaders use intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to reduce turnover and to establish strategies to improve employee retention (Campbell, McAllister, & Eley, 2012; Sandhya

& Kumar, 2011). Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic motivators) was most suitable to help me explore retention strategies business managers use to retain their multigenerational workforce.

Background on Generations

In the 1920s, Karl Manheim introduced the concept of generation as a realistic addition to the examination of social stratification in modern sociology (Eyerman & Turner, 1998). The sociology of generations can directly arrogate theories that surround the idea of social class, yielding a range of ideas such as generational conflict, generational mobility, and generational ideologies (Eyerman & Turner, 1998). Eyerman and Turner (1998) defined a generation in terms of years and origination. The meaning of generational cohorts improves generational sociological substance, which could place emphasis on the problem of the final dissolution of a generational cohort as its members evolve through retirement and physical decline. Time identifies multigenerational variances because periodization encapsulates the strategic opportunities and complications that relate to precise generations (Eyerman & Turner, 1998). The researchers indicated that different generations survive by preserving collective memory of its origins, historic struggles, political and historical events, and ideologists and leading characters.

Generational Cohorts and Age Groups

Becton, Walker, and Jones-Farmer (2014) found that a generation, often referred to as a cohort, is a similar group of individuals that share birth years, age, and meaningful life events at critical stages of development. These people within the different cohorts

acquire similar personalities and characteristics because of their shared experiences (Kupperschmidt, 2000; Lyons, Schweitzer, Ng, & Kuron, 2012). Society delegates these generational personalities and characteristics into stereotypes, which align with the environmental influences that affect their beliefs, values, personalities, and expectations. The generational cohort that individuals affiliate with can influence the views and attitudes related to leadership, management, work values, intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, and work ethic (Colette & Stein, 2014). Colette and Stein (2014) further highlighted how multigenerational workers view the workplace as well as the motivation influences that can promote retention and productivity. With the level of diversity in the business environment, it is essential for managers to identify and comprehend the rudiments that keep employees motivated to promote loyalty and increase retention.

With the changing structure of the workplace, multiple generations are now working side by side instead of operating as separate units (Jora & Khan, 2014). The difference in values, beliefs, historical experiences, and social experiences that generational cohorts working simultaneously bring to the workplace will affect their professional interactions. These interactions can have an undesirable effect on individual performance and retention rates (Ledimo, 2015). Wang and Peng (2015) revealed that generational classifications utilize a categorical approach, creating subjective instead of scientific timelines to identify the cohorts. The subjectivity of categorizing the generations will not be an issue for the current study because the minimal variation of the birth years has no bearing on the generational descriptions.

The current business environment primarily includes four generational cohorts: (a)traditionalists, born between 1925 and 1945, (b) baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, (c) Generation X, born between 1965 and 1981, and (d) Generation Y (millennials), born between 1982 and 1999 (DeVaney, 2015). Individuals within these cohorts share external historical events or life experiences that took place during their formative years (Duh & Struwig, 2015). In sharing significant life events, the four generations are susceptible to certain values and expectations that will contribute to how they perceive their work environment (J. Bell, 2013). Workplace diversity is now custom in most companies due to the four generational cohorts coexisting in the workforce. The members of the four cohorts establish and determine their workplace beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, and expectations based on shared generational qualities (Hendricks & Cope, 2012).

Some organizations are modifying their processes and expectations due to baby boomers remaining in the workforce (Wok & Hashim, 2012). Younger generations joining the baby boomers in the workplace change the demographics of the business environment as the baby boomers become the subordinates of the younger generation of workers (Gursoy, Chi, & Karadag, 2013). To remain in alignment with the presented literature about generations, I will apply descriptions discussed in the following sections to explain each cohort.

Traditionalists (1925-1945). The traditionalist cohort includes individuals born between 1925 and 1945. Although the majority of the traditionalists have retired since reaching retirement eligibility, a small percentage remains in the workforce (Coulter &

Faulkner, 2014). The Great Depression, World War II, and Pearl Harbor are the events

that help shape and influence the lives of the traditionalist generation in the United States

(Bourne, 2015). Reinbeck and Fitzsimons (2014) informed that traditionalists currently

hold three-quarters of the nation's wealth and helped shape the United State's military

and economic power. They are or have been executive leaders of some of the most

prosperous United States companies, and are not quick to speak up or share their ideas.

Traditionalists are hardworking and tend to favor military-like management that follows a

top-down or chain of command style (Reinbeck & Fitzsimons, 2014). This generation

sacrifices and follows authoritative commands without question (Ferri-Reed, 2013).

Individuals of this generation are loyal to their employer and will often work for the same

organization for much of their career (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). Additionally,

traditionalists have respect for tradition and do not waiver from established rules. Their

Great Depression experience caused the traditionalist generation to plan for financial

security, and they are monetarily conservative, making them the wealthiest of the four

generations (Bourne, 2015).

  Baby boomer generation (1946 -1964). The baby boomers are the largest and

most popular generation in United States history, with a surge of their births taking place

during and after The Great Depression and World War II (Benson & Connell, 2014;

Tavener, Byles, & Loxton, 2014). Loroz and Helgeson (2013) reported that

approximately 76 million boomers were born between 1946 and 1964. Also known as the

forgotten generation or the Woodstock generation, the boomers experienced postwar

stress and radical social changes such as the Civil Rights movement and the Women's

movement (Srinivasan, 2012). Kaifi, Nafei, Khanfar, and Kaifi (2012) explained that parents of baby boomers raised them up in two-family households during a time of prosperity. Kaifi et al. (2012) also posited that the main events that significantly influenced this generation are the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Srinivasan (2012) stated that baby boomers are self-absorbed, less loyal, lack respect for authority, and that money and self-realization are their primary motivators. The geographical dynamics of the workforce is changing due to baby boomers choosing to remain in the workforce beyond retirement age and eligibility (Roodin & Mendelson, 2013). Understanding desired career paths of the baby boomer generation is important because this segment of the generational population will continue to impact the economy (Boveda & Metz, 2016). Rice (2015) advised that the baby boomer generation has the desire for promotions in the workplace but experience restrictions because they lack technology skills. Nevertheless, some managers prefer to retain older workers, such as baby boomers, because organizations can benefit from their wealth of knowledge and professional expertise (Salb, 2015).

Generation X (1965-1981). Generation X, also acknowledged as the X'ers and the 13th generation, are currently between the ages of 35 and 51 as of 2016. Organizational downsizing, industrial restructuring, and increasing rates of temporary and part-time employment are events that fostered members of the Generation X cohort (Krahn & Galambos, 2014). They also endured the country's political problems as well as the rejuvenation of the economy (Zopiatis et al., 2012). DeVaney (2015) mentioned that Gen X members lived in single parent households or households with dual income

earners that alternated childcare responsibilities. Generation X'ers are known as *latchkey* people because they would normally let themselves into the house after school, did their homework by themselves, and watched television unsupervised until a caregiver returned home (DeVaney, 2015). The lifestyle preferences and attitudes of Generation X'ers shows that they tend to favor the ability to balance work with their family and life interests. Al-Asfour and Lettau (2014) articulated that individuals of this generation have a more progressive outlook on life, and are tech-savvy because of their experiences with technology advancements such as the rise of the Internet. With the Generation X population having a strong focus on maintaining a work-life balance, being familiar and comfortable with technology can help empower them to realize and enhance the balance between work, family, and lifestyle (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014).

Researchers often depict Generation X characteristics from a negative viewpoint; however, the elements that make them distinctive emphasize a more positive perspective. The Generation X cohort is skeptical about politics, and are independent, self-reliant, teamwork oriented, and values workplace flexibility (Keys, 2014). Additionally, authority does not intimidate them, they are outspoken, results and goal oriented, prefers multiple work assignments to keep them motivated and engaged, and desires consistent training and development opportunities to enhance their skills (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014).

Generation Y (1982-2000). Bolton et al. (2013) stated that both managers and academics are curious and fascinated about the Generation Y cohort. Society perceives Generation Y or the *Millennials* as digital natives because they are the first generation to spend their entire lives in the digital era (Bolton et al., 2013). In 1982, 3.7 million

members of Generation Y were born making them the second largest generational cohort in American history (Allison, 2013). Of the four generations, members of Generation Y will most likely suffer the most from the housing market collapse and higher college tuition costs, which are aftereffects of the September 11 terror attacks (Allison, 2013). Kamau, Njau, and Wanyagi (2014) posited that in addition to Millennials having an entitlement mentality, they are also the most ethnically diverse, creative, and multitasking generation ever to exist. Although they are the most educated cohort to exist and are selfish and narcissistic, they are also very optimistic and technology savvy (Towns, 2013). Generation Yer's experienced very structured type lifestyles and experienced helicopter-style parenting (terms used to describe parents that are overly involved and hover over their children) as parents became as actively involved as possible in their children's lives (Hutchinson, Brown, & Longworth, 2012). Holt, Marques, and Way (2012) advised that the 75 million members of the millennial generation will most likely lead the global labor force through the complexities and chaos of cyber-socialization.

The Millennials acquire their knowledge and capabilities by using networks and technology, and are more challenging in the workplace than the older generations (Akkucuk & Turan, 2016; Kian, Fauziah, Yusoff, & Rajah, 2013). Over 90% of this generation is involved in online networks and social outlets due to their high comfort levels with technology, and they welcome new and challenging opportunities and finding ways to develop their skill sets (Young & Hinsley, 2012). Murray (2015) suggested that millennials' can-do attitudes are like a breath of fresh air to the workforce. This generation is goal-driven and innovative, and prefers to work jobs that are meaningful

with companies that value them (Murray, 2015). Members of Generation Y are not fond of companies that have a culture based on a need-to-know basis and prefer to work for transparent business entities that share the organization's values, mission, expectations, goals and objectives, and workplace conflicts with all employees (Ferri-Reed, 2014). Work values are essential to learning and understanding how best to manage Generation Y because their work values are what make them unique and different from the older generational cohorts (Winter & Jackson, 2016). The Generation Y cohort is known as the *trophy generation* or the *trophy kids* because of the emerging trend in competitive sports and other events that give rewards for participating rather than for winning (Kaifi, Nafei, Khanfar, & Kaifi, 2012). Many of the Generation Y'ers watched their parents suffer stress caused by the dot.com downfall and increased rates of layoffs and divorces, which shaped the generations views on long-term commitments and flexible careers (Kaifi et al., 2012).

Generational Studies

Generational differences and miscommunications can impede an organization's retention and productivity, which can affect the transmission of knowledge from the veterans or baby boomer to the younger generations (i.e. X & Y) of workers (Kuyken, 2012). The process of understanding generations involves comparing the perception of generational values at a specific chronological age, such as how youth of previous generations compare to today's youth (Pritchard & Whiting, 2014). Researchers have spent years trying to gain a better comprehension of the distinctive characteristics of generational cohorts and have advocated for generational studies to have a prominent

place in the social sciences (Srinivasan, 2012). Seipert and Baghurst (2014) stated that employee expectations, such as values, commitment, motivators, loyalty, work, life values, and personality affect each generation from conception, which could produce generational differences.

An abundance of literature and research exists on the four generational cohorts (Joshi, Dencker, & Franz, 2011). In previous years, the focus of research was on the characteristics of Generation X and the baby boomer generation. Because these two cohorts make up a significant portion of the labor force, their characteristics are likely to dominate in the workplace (Burch & Strawderman, 2014). Twenge, Freeman, and Campbell (2012) led three different studies to evaluate generational differences of generation X and baby boomers regarding life goals, concerns for others, and civic orientation. Combined results of the studies indicate that generation X, in comparison to baby boomers, consider extrinsic goals (money, appearance) more essential than goals that relate to intrinsic values (relationships, accomplishments). Generational studies (Marjanović, 2014; Morrissey, 2014) frequently mention Mannheim in support of their research, as he is the scholar who suggested that generations are cohorts that consist of people who share characteristics based on their birth years (Timonen & Conlon, 2015). Cogin (2012) mentioned that limited empirical literature regarding work differences of the four generations in the workplace exists, and therefore, led a study to examine the work values of the four generational cohorts across five countries, and concluded that generational differences do exist in the workplace. Cogin (2012) further indicated that traditionalists and baby boomers place value on hard work and asceticism more than the

younger generations; however, Generation X and Generation Y acquire higher levels of job satisfaction and job security than the older generations.

Constanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt, and Gade (2012) implied that generational membership is not the only cause of generational differences among employees. Constanza et al. (2012) reviewed 18 studies, both published and unpublished, about traditionalists, baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Constanza et al. concluded that insignificant differences in work-related variables, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, exist between generational cohorts and workplace perceptions. Bennett et al., (2012) explored generational characteristics to develop strategies to help managers manage workplace productivity more efficiently. Bennett et al. posited that it is critical for business leaders to modify the culture of the organization to meet the demands and expectations of a multigenerational workforce. Organizations improve their ability to attract and retain high performing employees when they embrace generational differences and construct new strategies to address workplace diversity (Bennett et al, 2012).

Standifer, Lester, Schultz, and Windsor (2013) conducted a survey to determine whether age similarity preference (ASP) among employees intensifies workplace difficulties in an age-diverse environment. The participants included 262 employees from the financial industry located in the Midwest of the United States. Standifer et al. (2013) proposed that as ASP increases among cohorts that various types of conflict would also increase. Preceding research specifies that when members in a generational group view differences, the probability of conflict intensify as those people become knowledgeable

and more sensitive to the differences in others (Standifer, Lester, Schultz, & Windsor, 2013). Standifer et al. concluded that when age variances are apparent based on generational cohorts, an employee's attention to age-related differences heightens, increasing the potential for workplace conflict. The results of the study indicate that age similarity preferences do exist and have a direct influence on conflict. Results also indicate that ASP directly impacts the amount of total conflict conveyed by participants and that interpersonal generational differences had the most impact, which lead to relationship conflict. Uncertainty also affects work-related outcomes as conflict, in relation to ASP, intensified with the increase of uncertainty in the workplace environment (Standifer et al., 2013). The participants' uncertainty could suggest that by treating multigenerational employees as unique individuals and by clarifying workplace expectations, managers can lessen the uncertainty employees experience when working with colleagues of all ages. Existing research on generational diversity implies that the differences perceived among the generational cohorts considerably outnumber the actual differences reported, which can cause misconceptions (Lester et al., 2012). If managers can identify potential misconceptions, they can inform employees about the needs and values of older and younger generation of workers through ongoing discussion and training, which could help managers retain their generational staff (Lester et al., 2012).

Sparks (2012) conducted a study to explore connections between job satisfaction, generational cohort, and psychological empowerment of Generation X and the baby boomers. The participants for the analysis included 451 registered nurses employed at five different hospitals in West Virginia. Sparks advised that generations acquire different

work styles, such as autonomy, work ethics, values, and leadership styles that will determine their overall job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a primary predictor of retention, which could affect the way that nurses and other professions perceive their workplace environment (Sparks, 2012).

Sparks (2012) concluded that baby boomer nurses had more work-related experience but had less education than Generation X nurses. These results could indicate that dissimilar educational backgrounds might have a bearing on how the generational cohorts view and value their jobs; however, the researcher found that the variances in education did not influence the job satisfaction levels of the baby boomer or the Generation X workers. Sparks noted that baby boomer nurses' psychological empowerment scores were significantly greater than Generation X nurses, denoting that psychological empowerment might increase as one progresses in age. Generational variances in psychological empowerment could affect how nurses perceive their work environments. Therefore, it is essential for nurse managers to establish strategies that could increase the positive outlook and satisfaction that nurses have about their job and work environment, which could in return enhance the retention of generational nurses (Sparks, 2012).

Moore, Grunberg, and Krause (2015) conducted a research study and examined generational cohort differences in workplace expectancies between professional workers and production workers of a large manufacturing company located on the West coast of the United States. Moore et al. (2015) surveyed 2,799 union workers from three generational cohorts (baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y) employed by the

same organization and compared the workers past expectations with their current

expectations. Moore et al. posited that workplace expectations are the beliefs that a

person has about what he or she feels the organization will provide them in terms of pay,

benefits, career development, job security, and job training. Constructs, such as intrinsic

and extrinsic motivational drivers, values, desires, and workplace necessities, are salient

factors of the psychological contract that have shifted over time (Moore et al., 2015). The

psychological contract, as mentioned by Moore et al., is the expectations that individuals

regard as what their employer will provide in exchange for the workers' contributions to

the business entity and acknowledged as a vital component that shapes job-related

behaviors and attitudes.

Moore et al. (2015) discovered that expectations for career development and job

training, when the workers initially began the job, were significantly higher for

Generation Y participants when compared to baby boomers. Additionally, research shows

that Generation Y has greater expectations for rapid career advancement than the baby

boomers and Generation X. The investigators further concluded that within generational

cohorts, essential and systematic developmental and workplace experiences could

influence worker expectations differently. The overall research results indicated that as

time progresses, occupation-specific experiences, such as career development, job

training, advancement, and occupational status might override the viewpoint that

generational differences are the sole cause of workplace expectations. Nonetheless,

leaders should educate themselves on the different expectations that generational workers

have about their work environment so that they are better prepared to satisfy employees' demands and retain talented and motivated workers (Moore et al., 2015).

Mencl and Lester (2014) investigated the differences and similarities regarding the importance that generations place on the presence of numerous workplace characteristics. Five hundred and five employees of a mid-western community's local Chamber of Commerce received a survey that comprised of a series of related questions about the worker's perceptions of their organization's work factors. The variety of perspectives within a generational workplace can help corporations fabricate well thought-out decisions as well as enhance responsiveness to consumers. However, the existence of such diversity can make it difficult for management to meet employee needs if generations desire different things from their workplace environment (Mencl & Lester, 2014). The writers' objective of the study was to examine workplace characteristics associated with organizations appearing on lists of *best places to work*, and to provide an improved understanding of what the actual generational differences mean for employee outcomes. Mencl and Lester (2014) selected ten workplace elements from the best places to work list that were likely to be desirable to multigenerational workers regardless of age. Those factors included teamwork and collaboration, flexible work arrangements, challenging work assignments, involvement in decision-making, a financially rewarding job, work-life balance, a climate of diversity, continuous learning, career advancement, and immediate feedback and recognition (Mencl & Lester, 2014). Past researchers (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Twenge, 2010) suggested that the level of congruency between what employee's value and what employers provide to them is directly related to several

employee attitudes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions (Mencl & Lester, 2014).

Mencl and Lester (2014) determined that the different generations of workers share more similarities than differences concerning the degree of importance of specific work factors. The conclusion derived from the results is that the most substantial generational differences emphasize career advancement opportunities, which Generation Y values more in comparison to the baby boomers. Multigenerational differences and similarities in the work environment could be complex for managers and can profoundly influence the retention of generational employees, productivity, attitudes, behaviors, and workplace perception (Mencl & Lester, 2014).

Generational Diversity

Some employees have made a habit of recruiting and hiring young people. Still, retaining experienced and knowledge-rich employees is of increasing importance in a globalized economy (Swan, 2012). Retaining employees with knowledge and experience could be of mutual benefit to hiring older workers along with younger workers, and doing so could help develop a positive business stance that is not politically driven. A specific benefit of age diversity is the massive amount of skill sets acquired by employees. Swan (2012) revealed that companies that employed primarily young workers found it to be detrimental to the business. Organizational leaders felt that hiring older workers could provide better emotional intelligence in handling business-client relationships.

The demographical changes of the workforce, along with high ethical standards and the pressure of maintaining a competitive advantage in a global marketplace are

inducing more businesses to address employee diversity (Ravazzani, 2016). Heyler and

Lee (2012) stated that education, training, and employment providers would need to

respond to generational differences by investigating the attributes of all parties, their

development and life needs, the requirements of potential employers, and what the

employers can offer to workers. Some business leaders are embracing the

multigenerational workforce and are taking advantage of the benefits that the cross-

generational workforce brings (Heyler & Lee, 2012). DeMeulenaere, Boone, and Buyl

(2016) suggested that age diversity could have both positive and negative effects on labor

productivity. The positive aspect of age diversity is the large amount of knowledge that

exists between the different generation of employees, and the negative aspect is the lack

of unity and collaboration that age-related differences can cause, which can hinder

performance. Organizations are establishing ways to harness the skills of their older

workers to develop the skills of their younger generation of employees (Heyler & Lee,

2012).

Most leaders of organizations are aware that different generations require

different management styles to elicit their performance and to avoid potential problems

with retention and motivation (Swan, 2012). Swan (2012) stated that multigenerational

management is not only good management, but it is sound business practice.

Psychological benefits of a multigenerational workplace include a better company

culture, increased motivation, loyalty, workplace satisfaction, and an improved image for

the enterprise. Employers need adequate measuring systems in which they can verify the

benefits of employing across generations, which is usually the bottom-line figures on the

revenue spreadsheet (Hart, 2016; Swan, 2012). Economic benefits of a multigenerational workplace are better training results, increased productivity, and a reduction in early retirement costs. Comprehending that a multigenerational workforce can increase a company's competitive edge is the key to persuading businesses to take it seriously.

Generational Stereotypes

Riggio and Saggi (2015) affirmed that the belief in generational differences has been around since the twenty-fifth century, BC. Even during the twenty-fifth century, BC, the perception was that variances among generations could cause threats to production, so the older generations worked to mold the young generation to mirror their image (Riggio & Saggi, 2015). Although a person is aware of the similarities and differences that exist within the generational cohort that he or she identifies with, such diversity may not be as obvious to individuals from other generations which can lead to age-related stereotyping and assumptions (Dow, Joosten, Biggs, & Kimberley, 2016). However, Constanza and Finkelstein (2015) asserted that limited empirical evidence exists to support generational-based differences. Riggio and Saggi (2015) suggested that the dominant belief in generation based variances is due to systematic predispositions in social perception. The social identity theory, developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), strengthens the significance of inter-cohort awareness of values between generations. The social identity theory purports that a person's view changes based on identified social categorizations across several constructs (i.g. beliefs, values, occupational types), which defines essential aspects of the individual (Heritage, Breen, & Roberts, 2016). For the social identity theory to apply to research regarding values and generational cohorts, it is

essential for individuals to comprehend the way that generational cohorts perceive the value preferences of other generational cohorts (Heritage et al., 2016). In-group and out-group (social categorizations) biases can cause each generational cohort that has power and control in the workforce (today would be the baby boomers) to look at succeeding generations from a primarily negative perspective (Riggio & Saggi, 2015). Consequently, the younger generations perceive work-related behaviors from a problematic viewpoint and are seen as distracted, unmotivated, lacking work ethic, and disloyal. Riggio and Saggi (2015) mentioned that members of the dominant generation pursue and decipher evidence that is consistent with stereotypes due to confirmation biases. Stereotypes are difficult to disregard because it is simple to see substantiation of what is accurate, but this could be the result of how generational cohorts process inherent biases and social information (Riggio & Saggi, 2015). Actual and perceived generational differences are present among older and younger generational cohorts. Zacher (2015) stated that because there is a lack of generational theory and methods available, it could be useful to organizational managers to further invest in the investigation of generational differences in the workplace.

Rentz (2015) advised that numerous publications related to the varying generations in the workforce have emerged since the start of this millennium, when researchers initially began to document that millennials or Generation Y demonstrate consistent disparities from the other generations. No published studies exist that examine Generation Y employees in specific workplace environments (Rentz, 2015). The investigator examined the extent to which the expected Generation Y traits appeared in a

specific corporation to fill the gap in existing generational literature. The findings from the current study indicate that certain millennial attributes normally deemed as unfavorable, such as lack of motivation and disloyalty, in the workplace are continuous even in the best organizational setting; however, some are not.

Stereotypes regarding boomers, Generation X and Generation Y are highly common (Cox & Coulton, 2015). Numerous stereotypes, such as the credence that baby boomers are worriers and avaricious and that members of Generation Y are disparaging but tech-savvy, do exist. These traits emerged from experiences that generational cohorts have within their historical context, which creates steady individual differences that characterize generational cohort members (Cox & Coulton, 2015). Notwithstanding the little empirical evidence that supports such experiences that predict individual differences, there is extensive acceptance of generational dissimilarities. Because of this acceptance, there is an abundance of existing literature written by scholars (Constanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt, & Gade, 2012; Mencl & Lester, 2014) that mangagers use to look for information that can help them identify and comprehend the individual traits and characteristics of generational workers (Cox & Coulton, 2015). Thus, supervisors can impute the behavior of employees to generational differences regardless of the deficiency of empirical reasoning for doing so (Cox & Coulton, 2015).

A generation is a group of people that belong to the same cohort, age group, and those that share experiences of common events (Wang & Peng, 2015). In this regard, generational differences function as a categorical variable. In fact, some scholars (Allison, 2013; DeVaney, 2015; Schullery, 2013) ascribe members into generational

categories based on their birth year. Wang and Peng (2015) contended that an aged-based categorical approach to generational differences could be problematic for two reasons: (a) a categorical approach does not provide a precise picture of generational categories (birth year and age), and (b) the mechanism by which generational differences can lead to different employee behaviors and attitudes, such as life experiences and events. To overcome these issues, Wang and Peng (2015) suggested an alternative approach, which is to treat generational differences as a subjective and persistent social identity. Wang and Peng (2015) stated that the social identity method will allow individuals rather than researchers to choose the generation of which they identify, and allow people to rate the degree to which they identify with each category. Enhancing the conceptualization and measurement of generational differences should mitigate generational stereotyping and produce accurate predictions of generational variations that relate to employee behaviors and attitudes (Wang & Peng, 2015).

Generational Differences in Work-Related Values and Attitudes

Today's workforce consists of four different generations working side-by-side. Each generation acquires unique values, skills, and characteristics, which causes many challenges for managers (Gursoy et al., 2013). Work values are the primary source of significant differences among generations, as well as the reason for conflict in the workplace. However, research indicates that if properly managed, those differences can help determine strengths and opportunities (Gursoy et al., 2013). Gursoy et al. (2013) argued that it is essential for managers to comprehend the foundation of each generation and their value differences if management wants to establish and maintain a work

environment that promotes leadership, motivation, communication, and generational synergy. Additionally, the results of studies suggest that understanding the work values of a multigenerational workforce can help managers identify motivators to combine with the strategies they implement to retain employees (Gursoy et al., 2013).

The array of differences that exist among generations in the workplace has gained interest with organizations, researchers, and practitioners (Constanza et al. 2012). As the generational workforce continue to shift, organizations will experience predictable and evolving issues related to the differences that exist among generational cohorts (Na'Desh, 2015). The characteristics and experiences that generational cohorts share are what interest researchers and professionals because comprehending such information can help administrators manage generational workers more effectively (Constanza et al., 2012). Many organizations have executed programs and interventions to help capitalize on generational differences. Constanza et al. (2012) posited that such programs and interventions could cause detrimental outcomes instead of positive results if prematurely implemented. Constanza and Finkelstein (2015) affirmed that a more useful approach might be to conduct needs assessments that will address generational differences among individuals, and to establish interventions based on characteristics identified through the assessment process.

Parry and Urwin (2011) stated that due to the differences in tastes and preferences between generations, management consultants and professionals offer advice on how to manage generational differences at work. Mannheim emphasized the importance of generations and the age-related influences that effect generational work values, which can

affect production levels and motivation levels of generational cohorts (Parry & Urwin, 2011). Reis and Braga (2016) added that the motivation and preferences regarding work could differ for each generation, and might require modifications to recruitment and retention management practices.

Campbell, Campbell, Siedor, and Twenge (2015) posited that there is a dynamic and mutually constitutive relationship between generations and culture. Categorizing a person as a member of a generation is simple because all you need is the person's birth year; however, the challenge is defining the generational boundaries (Campbell, Campbell, Siedor, & Twenge, 2015). Campbell et al. (2015) stated that there are a couple of ways to measure generational differences: (a) compare generations cross-sectionally on any variable in a survey, and (b) compare generations cross-temporally using samples of people at the same age and at different times. Research tends to emphasize dissecting the different variances that underlie the generational differences found by using generational cohorts and generational factors (Campbell et al., 2015). The period and the cohort variance are meaningful for comprehending generational change, therefore, considering generational change as a combination of time plus cohort effects.

Campbell et al. (2015) suggested that time and generational effects likely drive the majority of cultural change. Three popular models of generational change are the Strauss and Howe's (1991) cyclic model, the modernization model, and the rising extrinsic individualism model (Campbell et al., 2015). To understand generational change is to understand cultural change, because as culture changes so do the generations of

people that are born into that culture. Campbell et al. further implied that the three things that alter culture are technology, cultural contracts, and economic changes.

The presence of aging trends, deteriorating economic conditions, and skill shortages are an indication that older generational workers are likely to remain in the workforce past retirement age (Rose & Gordon, 2015). Managing diversity requires a variety of skills and can cause challenges to current leadership styles. Distributed leadership should be a lens or framework for pondering and analyzing leadership. Rose and Gordon (2015) further articulated that effective leadership is not only the responsibility of individual leaders and that sharing leadership obligations can help an organization identify their leadership strengths. Distributed leadership is an approach that can help managers recognize, develop, and empower a workforce by identifying how employees across the organization engage in their work tasks as a group rather than individually (Rose & Gordon, 2015). Supervisors who manage an age-diverse workforce will gain knowledge about age-related cognitive changes by examining leadership styles through the lens of distributed leadership (Rose & Gordon, 2015). Furthermore, an awareness of age-based modifications in cognition should alert the manager of the strengths and development opportunities for individuals. Wesolowski (2014) advised that a multigenerational workplace could be advantageous as the knowledge and experience move onward to the next generations while senior generations can better adapt to social and collaborative technologies. The Wesolowski (2014) also noted that technology is a factor that can help organizations capitalize on the benefits of demographic changes. Skills that generational workers gain from the new knowledge and experiences will help

the employees approach challenges and solve convoluted business problems by utilizing new and creative processes (Wesolowski, 2014). If leaders do not manage a multi-generational workforce properly, organizations could experience low employee performance and higher employee turnover.

Communication is vital when presented with workplace diversity. Enabling successful communication by use of technology among members of all four generations will help implement an office culture that allows staff at all levels to share concerns (Wesolowski, 2014). Advanced technologies can make it possible for organizations to enhance their employee's work-life balances while allowing them to reach their full potential at home and work without having to sacrifice either. Significant technological changes are taking place in organizations while the workforce is becoming more multigenerational. Learning to manage technological changes can be beneficial for organizations in retaining their key employees (Wesolowski, 2014).

The diversity of today's workforce has enhanced greatly due to the simultaneous presence of four different generations of workers. Some organizational leaders managing an age diverse workforce tend to treat their employee population the same regardless of their generational membership (Nelsey & Brownie, 2012). Managers will need first to identify and comprehend generational differences and then implement strategies and policies to improve communication and inclusion among generational staff (Phillips, 2016). These efforts can also significantly improve retention and productivity. Corporate leaders should review their leadership styles and understanding of generational differences to ensure that they are adequately ready to address the generational diversity

of their staff to mitigate miscommunication and conflict (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014).

Conflicts among the generational cohorts are a result of generational diversity. Leaders

must comprehend the different generational characteristics, so the workplace

environment can be one that exhibits high job satisfaction, work performance,

productivity, attendance, and retention (Nelsey & Brownie, 2012).

Retaining and Motivating a Multigenerational Workforce

The role of management in retaining employees is to encourage the talent to stay.

Understanding why people leave organizations is imperative, but it is more critical to

determine the organizational characteristics that make people stay with business entities

(George, 2015). It is essential for corporations to retain the best professional talent as it

eliminates the recruiting, selection, and hiring costs replacing key employees (George,

2015). James and Mathew (2012) defined workplace retention as a deliberate move by an

agency to establish an environment that promotes long-term employee engagement.

George (2015) shared that a favorable work environment, as well as management and

leadership styles, social support, development opportunities, autonomy, compensation,

and work-life balance, are critical factors in employee retention.

Implementing a flexible workplace for employees is necessary for managing

talent across all four generations. Eversole, Venneberg, and Crowder (2012) explained

that for a flexible workplace program to work favorably for the employees and the

organization, managers must be competent in the mechanics of work and family

programs to operate the programs efficiently and to enforce the rules and guidelines.

Organizations that can recruit and retain top performing employees will enhance workplace motivation and reduce turnover.

Flexible and adaptive leadership entails managers appropriately altering their behavior to fit the situation. Yukl and Mahsud (2010) mentioned that flexible leadership and adaptive leadership could take place at any time, and are becoming more important for managers and administration as the pace of change affecting organizations increase. A more diverse workforce is a critical change that has increased the need for flexibility, adaptation, and innovation by leaders. Yukl and Mahsud (2010) posited that contingency theories tend to provide insight regarding how to diagnose the situation and identify forms of behaviors that are likely to be effective for leaders.

The main responsibility of a manager is to have a business that function effectively by the subordinates working efficiently, and producing results that are beneficial to the organization (Pandta, Deri, Galambos, & Galambos, 2015). Pandta, Deri, Galambos, and Galambos (2015) stated that motivation is one of the primary factors that determine the employees work performance and intentions to stay with the organization. One of the most influential theories of motivation, which can help improve employee retention and productivity, relates to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs where Maslow articulated that only an unsatisfied need can motivate the behavior with the dominant need being the primary factor for behavior motivation (Sandrick, Contacos-Sawyer, & Thomas, 2014).

Factors that convey the importance of employee retention includes costs associated with turnover, company information loss, interruption in customer service, and

a company's good will (Sandhya & Kumar, 2011). By maintaining higher employee retention rates, organizations can motivate talented employees to join the company by establishing a secured environment. Sandhya and Kumar (2011) mentioned that employee motivation is an important factor that can help organizations enhance employee retention and organizational performance.

According to Kuyken (2012), there is a specific economic impact with an organization when critical employees leave an organization; especially taking into consideration the knowledge lost when employees depart. The concept of knowledge management is that people have critical skills, experience, and knowledge, and therefore, hold a significant amount of organizational value. Frederick Herzberg (1966) discovered that employees tend to describe satisfying experiences regarding intrinsic factors about the job itself. Herzberg identifies these factors as motivators (Hyun & Oh, 2011). There is more to motivating employees other than compensation and proper working conditions. Hyun and Oh (2011) suggested that for an employee to be retainable and truly motivated, the employee's job must contain some fulfillment by providing the worker with opportunities for achievement, recognition, advancement, and responsibility.

Researchers (Maslach & Leiter, 2008; Upenieks, 2002) agree that a relationship exists between empowerment, workplace satisfaction, and employee engagement (Tillott, Walsh, & Moxham, 2013). When employees feel empowered, organizations will more likely experience high levels of productivity and lower turnover. Tillott, Walsh, and Moxham (2013) mentioned that researchers have concluded that engagement and positive workplace culture are essential concepts for improving staff recruitment and retention.

High employee turnover results in increased costs of resources, recruiting, and time when replacing vacant positions. Employee retention strategies are a crucial element of an organization's vision, mission, values, and their policies, and should be a part of an organization's principles and operations (Cloutier et al., 2015). Many organizational leaders fail to comprehend the reason for their high turnover rates, and only contribute turnover to poor relationships with subordinates and leadership (Cloutier et al., 2015). However, studies show that the main reasons for low retention rates are the lack of opportunities for professional growth, unfair treatment, poor work and life balance, and low wages. Leaders are failing to recognize diversity in the workplace, thereby, adversely affecting production and retention rates among multigenerational workers. Cloutier et al. (2015) posited that training and development opportunities motivate employees and influence them to remain loyal to the organization. Rahman and Nas (2013) advised that necessary training and development practices are significant to the success of business entities and that employees serve as the essential sources of consistent competitive advantage. When organizations provide employees with development opportunities, the workers will usually reciprocate in positive ways by exhibiting job attitudes that commensurate with the amount of obligation that the companies offer in return (Rahman & Nas, 2013). Employee development programs can provide immediate benefit to organizations by increasing motivation and reducing employee turnover.

Although most organizations incur high costs with turnover, the costs associated with high-performing employee departure are more significant (Voigt & Hirst, 2015). Such turnover not only leads to the loss of the most talented employees but also incurs

costs associated with recruitment and training. Voigt and Hirst (2015) stated that research has consistently found a negative relationship between performance and turnover, which indicated that as production decreases employees are more likely to leave a company. Strategies to retain top performers by using financial incentives might not be the most efficient organizational development process to keep talented employees (Voigt & Hirst, 2015). Developing strategies to execute increased performance ratings, commitment, and promotion can have a positive effect on an employee's intention to remain working with an organization (Voigt & Hirst, 2015). Leaders who build an emotional attachment to an organization and focuses on achieving hopes and aspirations in their top performers are more likely to reduce costs associated with turnover of high-performing employees.

Ertas (2015) conducted a research study to compare turnover intentions and work motivations of millennials and older generational employees. Ertas (2015) suggested that Millennial and older generations of employees differ in their work values and motivation and that failure to address these differences could lead to employee conflict, lower production levels, and increased turnover. Motivation is an essential element of employee productivity and includes intrinsic and extrinsic factors. A high turnover rate could indicate that employees are not happy with their current position or organization. These individuals will typically lack motivation, which will negatively affect their productivity and increase the employee turnover rates of organizations. The research findings conclude that intrinsic and extrinsic motivator factors, such as satisfaction, creativity, professional development, promotion based on merit, and having a good relationship with co-workers impact turnover intentions of employees regardless of their age. Ertas (2015)

further emphasized that younger generation of workers do not differ significantly from older generations in relation to work motivations and assessments. Ertas (2015) concluded that organizations that implement a work environment that offer recognition and rewards, opportunities for challenges and training, flexible work hours, and assignments that make employees feel like they are contributing to society and the organizations are most likely to attract, retain, and motivate all four generations of workers.

The presence of more generations in the workplace poses challenges for human resources and other administrative professionals (Amayah & Gedro, 2014). Amayah and Gedro (2014) suggested that the reason for the managerial challenges of generational workers is due to HR and administrative professionals not comprehending that they must acknowledge and leverage the generational differences that exist among personnel. Customizing training, development opportunities, and reward and recognition programs to fit each generation can help managers value and retain generational workers.

Different generations perceive the value of employee rewards differently. Therefore, organizations need to develop specific reward strategies to promote, attract, and motivate staff (Bussin & van Rooy, 2014). Establishing a one-size-fits-all approach to reward strategy can be detrimental to organizations because this can lead to direct or indirect financial implications for businesses. Bussin and van Rooy (2014) articulated that most managers feel that the most effective way to attract and retain staff is to offer rewards with greater benefits. Rewards can be financial and non-financial and the values of generational workers will determine what motivates them from a reward perspective.

The generational mix that plagues most businesses today requires managers to adapt and reinvent their retention and compensation strategies to take into consideration the different values, needs, and work ethics of the generational workforce. It is imperative for managers to consider the preferences and motivations of generational workers to attract and retain good quality employees and to enhance productivity (Bussin & van Rooy, 2014). It is beneficial for organizations to find a way to segment the workforce based on reward preference in a way that will provide a balance between the worker's needs and organizational efficiency.

One of the most vital and emerging issues that inundate the field of human resource development is how to assist organizations with changing workforce demographics successfully and effectively (Eversole et al., 2012). It will be difficult for businesses to retain a competitive advantage if they are unable to recruit and retain talented workers. Comprehending the needs of employees and creating or modifying organizational cultures are essential tools in talent management. Dwyer and Azevedo (2016) asserted that to encourage an organizational culture that embraces a multicultural approach, adopting programs that emphasize diversity as well as including diversity in an organization's mission statement are necessary. The newer generation of workers entering the workplace is different from the older generations that are leaving the workforce due to retirement; therefore, leadership needs to focus on retaining workers of all generations for organizations to remain successful in the future (Eversole et al., 2012).

Alexander, Havercome, and Mujtaba (2015) pronounced that retaining employees of all generations is a priority in most business sectors. It costs approximately $65,000 to

replace an employee in the healthcare field in addition to the cost of compensating for an absent staff member, which can cause financial burdens for organizations (Dols, Landrum, & Wieck, 2010). Quality also becomes an issue, as a well-functioning team working cohesively over time results in safer care and better communication. Employees of all ages value managers that are supportive and dependable. Therefore, it is imperative that supportive and knowledgeable managers be available to mentor and lead nurses of all generations.

Duxbury and Halinski (2014) articulated that baby boomers are currently the largest population cohort in the United States workforce. Population aging will affect the economy and labor force as baby boomers retire while the number of employees to potentially replace them consistently decline (Duxbury & Halinski, 2014). Nonetheless, organizations can mitigate the economic impact of aging workers if they can encourage the baby boomers to remain active in the workforce. The upward trend in the employment rate of baby boomers is due to employers need for talent and the baby boomers requiring a continuous income stream. These trends will encourage organizations and public policy makers to determine how best to retain committed boomers. The aging of the workforce and the impending labor force shortage at the skilled end of the labor market increases the need for business entities to comprehend how to re-engage boomers that display low commitment, and lessen the turnover intentions of committed older knowledge workers (Duxbury & Halinski, 2014).

This literature review of the current study included several sections starting with a consecutive history of generations in the workforce: traditionalists, baby boomers,

Generation X'ers, and Generation Y'ers. To provide information on the characteristics, attitudes, values, behaviors, and work ethics of the four generational cohorts, the literature review contained sections about the theory of generations, generational cohorts and age groups, studies, stereotypes, values, attitudes, and retaining and motivating a multigenerational workforce. The literature review also included the chronological history of the four generations and age groups, a summary of the arrival of each generation into the labor force, and events and social experiences that affected the beliefs and values of each generation. The generational studies section contained several investigations formerly conducted on traditionalists, baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. The values and attitudes section contained information about the distinctive values and attitudes that each generation acquires. The stereotype section was a synopsis of current studies, and how each generation perceived each other and how those perceptions could influence employee attitudes and behaviors. This literature review comprised an overview of diverse topics on the four generational cohorts, and the information could support future research directives on generations that can help leadership establish methods to retain a multigenerational workforce.

Transition and Summary

Section 1 introduced the business problem under study regarding the exploration of strategies that managers use to retain a multigenerational workforce. Diversity in the workplace is increasing due to four generation of workers simultaneously working side by side. The diversity that exists among the generational workers in the workplace can make it difficult for managers to develop strategies to retain their multigenerational

workforce. Section 1 included a summary in chronological order of the four primary generations in the workforce, as well as a review of past and current literature about each generational cohort.

In Section 2, I elaborate on the role of the researcher, the method and design chosen for this study, the participants, the ethics of research, and the data collection and data analysis processes and procedures. Section 3 concludes the doctoral study and contains an in-depth presentation of the research findings. Additionally, section 3 entails a discussion of the applicability of the research findings to the professional practice of business, as well as a dialogue on the implications for social change and recommendations for further research.

Section 2: The Project

Hillman (2014) contended that in the workforce, generational diversity causes problems for most organizational leaders. For the first time in history, the modern workforce comprises four generations working side by side (Soto & Lugo, 2013). Leaders experience challenges with managing a highly diverse workforce due to the varying values, beliefs, characteristics, and expectations. Holian (2015) implied that intergenerational problems are a new type of concern for leaders, and difficulties resulting from generational differences are hindering effective collaboration among generational staff.

Many scholars (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Twenge et al., 2012) examined generational differences, and more researchers are gaining interest in investigating the generational differences that relate to workplace behaviors and attitudes. Developing a detailed understanding of the core values, beliefs, characteristics, work preferences, motivators, and work ethics of each generational cohort could empower organizational leaders to establish proactive strategies that can enhance synergy among generational workers, mitigate miscommunication and conflict, and increase employee motivation and retention. Section 2 includes the procedures used to conduct the current study. The section commences with the purpose of the study, the role of the researcher, and information about the participants. Section 2 also includes a description of the research method and design, population and sample size, data collection instruments, techniques, organization and analysis, and steps I took to ensure ethical research. Section 2 concludes with the reliability and validity of the current study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore retention strategies business managers use to retain their multigenerational workforce. The targeted population consisted of department managers from an education institution located in Northwest Florida who had success in retaining a multigenerational workforce. According to Hannay and Fretwell (2011) and Matz-Costa and Pitt-Catsouphes (2009), academic administrators can experience workplace conflict and retention dilemmas if managers do not appropriately identify and address the differences that exist among multigenerational workers. Therefore, the academic population was suitable for this study. The implications for positive social change include the opportunity to share strategies that could help organizations increase their retention rates of generational workers, as well as promote organizational unity across generations. Managers, administrators, and other individuals who hold authoritative positions could use the findings of this study to increase the retention rates of generational workers, thereby creating employment stability, improving productivity, and enhancing organizational and community relations.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is an essential instrument in qualitative research. Therefore, the researcher must clarify his or her role in the qualitative research process. I served as the primary data collection instrument and participated in every aspect of the study. Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Sho-ghi, and Cheraghi (2014) articulated that researchers take part in all phases of the study from defining a research concept to designing,

interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, authenticating, and reporting the study's themes. Sanjari et al. (2014) suggested that human beings are an essential part of the research process whenever instruments are involved because they possess the responsiveness, flexibility, and sensitivity needed to conduct scientific inquiries.

As the primary research instrument for this qualitative case study, I developed interview protocols as the basis for the semistructured interview questions. Semistructured interviews, according to Cridland, Jones, Caputi, and Magee (2015), are beneficial in helping the researcher answer the research questions and comprehend the participants' experiences. As the researcher, my role was to oversee the study by accomplishing the following tasks: (a) researching and evaluating current literature on the topic, (b) recruiting participants, (c) establishing a sequence of relevant interview questions, (c) conducting interviews, (d) collecting and analyzing data, and (e) evaluating the findings to draw conclusions and make recommendations for future research efforts.

Simundic (2013) articulated that it is necessary for researchers to be mindful of all potential sources of bias and to take precautionary measures to mitigate bias. Bias exists more frequently in the data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation stages of a study, and can negatively affect the validity and reliability of the results (Roulston & Shelton, 2015). Qualitative researchers are prone to bias, which could influence the researcher's perceptions of the interview data (Hammersley, 2013). Because I hold a managerial position, interviews took place only with participants in management positions to mitigate bias. The data collection process did not include subordinates. To avoid conflicts of interest and to ensure my actions throughout the research process were

ethical and professional, I made sure no personal or professional relationships existed

between the participants and me. The Belmont Report recommended ethical principles to

protect human research subjects (Haahr, Norlyk, & Hall, 2014). To comply with the

Belmont Report's guidelines, I respected the autonomy of all research participants. I also

employed methodological triangulation, which involves multiple methods of data

collection or data sources to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon

and to mitigate researcher bias (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville,

2014). Applying the triangulation strategy can enhance the validity and reliability of

results (Prion & Adamson, 2014). To improve the validity and reliability of my research

data and results, I analyzed electronic company documents regarding diversity and

inclusion strategies that managers could implement to manage and retain their

multigenerational workforce.

Participants were the primary data sources for this study, and participants met

eligibility criteria for responding to the semistructured interview questions. Researchers

can identify their personal views and perceptions through a personal lens process, and

doing so can enhance their listening skills throughout the interview process and help

them gain a clearer understanding of participant views and opinions (Batura et al., 2014).

My working knowledge and experience leading subordinates of the four generational

cohorts afforded me the ability to understand some of the differences that exist among

multigenerational workers and some of the challenges that dissimilarities can cause for

managers. I implemented the personal lens process before each interview to help me

mitigate bias, and to help enhance my listening and comprehension skills. There were no

preexisting relationships between the participants and me; however, it was possible that the participants shared a working relationship with each other.

I conducted an exploratory case study using semistructured interviews with managers who met participation requirements. During interviews, it is important for the researcher to follow the same protocol and to remain focused throughout the interview (Haahr et al., 2014). I used the interview protocol outlined in Appendix C to ensure the interview technique with each participant was consistent.

<div style="text-align:center">Participants</div>

According to Yin (2014), researchers may conduct qualitative studies by using multiple participants from a single unit or division. This study included a purposeful sample of four managers of a higher education institution. The selection of participants took place irrespective of race and gender. Purposeful sampling is a widely-used technique in qualitative research and involves identifying and selecting research participants who are knowledgeable of and experienced with particular occurrences and interests (Palinkas et al., 2015). The participants for this study included four managers of academic and nonacademic units or departments from an educational institution located in Northwest, Florida. The traditionalist generation constitutes a small percentage of the workforce due to aging and retirement (Wiedmer, 2015). To account for this, participants could take part in the study if they had experience with managing and retaining employees of the baby boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts. Participants included managers who had a minimum of 2 years of experience in a management position, and who managed a staff including three or four of the generational cohorts

(traditionalists, baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y) for at least 2 years. Cleary, Horsfall, and Hayter (2014) posited that researchers use purposeful sampling to pursue information by conducting an in-depth examination of the data. I used purposeful sampling to select managers who had experience retaining several generations in the workplace so I could answer the research question.

I used information provided by the Department of Institutional Research to determine potential participants who met the requirements for the study. I adhered to the organization's process for receiving permission and consent for participants to take part in the study (see Appendix B for the approval memorandum). Participants who met the requirements to take part in the study received the consent document and an explanation of confidentiality before the interview. I provided the consent form to each participant via an invitation email to ensure that the participants comprehended the process before they confirmed and signed the agreement. In addition to being knowledgeable and experienced, participants must be available and willing to take part in the study (Palinkas et al., 2015). Participants responded to the email using the words *I consent* to confirm their willingness to take part in the study, and I made sure that each participant understood the purpose of the study and the interview protocol that I would follow. Additionally, I had frequent dialogue with participants to determine a convenient time for the interview. I interviewed the participants at their personal office space to ensure confidentiality, convenience, accessibility, and limited disruptions. Bristowe, Selman, and Murtagh (2015) articulated that keeping the information shared by participants confidential is vital to the integrity of a study.

White and Hind (2015) noted that establishing good rapport with participants is vital to generating a productive qualitative study. To build a working relationship with participants, I explained the purpose of the study and the research procedures, and I made sure to address any questions or concerns that participants had. The ethic-of-care approach involves connecting with participants by use of constant communication and upholding the researcher's responsibilities to the participants (White & Hind, 2015). To develop a working relationship with participants, I communicated with them by phone and email to make them feel comfortable with their decision to be in the study. Patton (2015) mentioned that building mutual trust and appreciation and showing interest in the participants' experiences could strengthen working relationships. To enhance my working relationship with participants, I reminded them that all communication would remain private and confidential. I also expressed my gratitude to them for their willingness to participate in the current study. Rubin and Rubin (2012) suggested that people are more willing to participant in research when the project involves solving a problem. To establish a working relationship with the participants, I began a dialogue with them by emphasizing how helpful and beneficial their participation could be to helping managers in the higher education community and other businesses learn strategies to retain their multigenerational workers.

Research Method and Design

Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods are three common types of research used to develop a thesis or dissertation (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). I chose a qualitative method and a case study design based on the conceptual theory of

constructivism. Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, and Robertson (2013) asserted that case studies allow the researcher to investigate a phenomenon while focusing on the dynamics of the case within its real-life context. Bailey (2014) suggested that researchers use a qualitative methodology when looking to explore and explicate human behavior. The method and design chosen were appropriate to help me achieve the goal of this study, which was to explore strategies that managers use to retain a multigenerational workforce.

Research Method

An advantage that researchers reap from using a qualitative method is the greater scope in research topic selection. The purpose of qualitative researchers is to answer *what*, *why*, and *how* inquiries, instead of *how many* or *how often* (Mukhopadhyay & Gupta, 2014). Mukhopadhyay and Gupta (2014) affirmed that qualitative research takes place in real-world conditions and involves studying the meaning of the experiences of individuals by using several sources of data. Qualitative methods are beneficial for generating in-depth information that would be hard to quantify, such as interpretations, opinions, views, and experiences (Bristowe, Selman, & Murtagh, 2015). Researchers using a qualitative method will typically collect verbal data from a small number of participants to determine specific patterns. I chose a qualitative method because the purpose of the study was to explore strategies that managers use to retain a multigenerational workforce.

Trafimow (2014) asserted that quantitative researchers typically use statistical data, in addition to large and random representations. Barczak (2015) contended that in

quantitative studies, the researcher will focus on measuring and examining the casual

relationship between variables, and a qualitative researcher will concentrate on

investigating or exploring the research problem. Taking a quantitative approach to this

study would have necessitated a larger selection of participants and would entail testing

hypothesis that would not complement the purpose of this research (Yoshikawa, Kalil,

Weisner, & Way, 2013). The use of quantitative methods would have made it difficult for

researchers to explore ideas and themes of a phenomenon, as well as gain an

understanding of participants' experiences through face-to-face dialogue (Moustakas,

1994). Mixed methods research could constrain the researcher's ability to collect

sufficient data and produce accurate research results due to a lack of data and adequate

survey responses (Mukhopadhyay & Gupta, 2014). Mixed methods help researchers

examine the problem instead of understand the problem by using a combination of

qualitative and quantitative research methods (Sparks, 2012). I did not choose a

quantitative or a mixed methods approach to facilitate the current study because they

were not suitable to achieve the research purpose. My intent was to focus on exploring

strategies that managers of higher education institutions use to retain their

multigenerational workers; thus, taking a qualitative approach was more appropriate to

accomplish the purpose of this research study.

Research Design

Determining a research design consists of developing a research question that

aligns with the purpose of the study, and choosing appropriate questions and strategies

that will help the researcher address the research problem (Yin, 2014). Phenomenology

and case study are suitable strategies cogitated for investigating generational differences and strategies that managers can execute to motivate and retain a multigenerational workforce (Ezeobele, Malecha, Mock, Mackey-Godine, & Hughes, 2014; Yin, 2012). Yin (2012) stated that case studies include collecting detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures over a certain length of time. The focus of a case study is on a particular phenomenon or issue of concern regarding the experiences of a person or group of people (Ingham-Broomfield, 2015). Scholars using a case study research design will strive to chronicle participants' realities and experiences the participants share during interviews; the researcher will then analyze and interpret the data they collect to establish a better understanding of the phenomena (Raeburn, Schmied, Hungerford, & Cleary, 2015). Qualitative case studies are helpful in exploring and gaining a better comprehension of new or current phenomena within the management field (Hauck, Ronchi, Lourey, & Lewis, 2013). Therefore, I used a case study design to explore strategies that managers use in the workplace to retain their multigenerational workers.

Ingham-Broomfield (2015) asserted that phenomenology researchers seek multiple meanings that attribute to a phenomenon and attempts to provide a comprehensive description instead of an explanation. Phenomenology is a research method that researchers use to help them establish a better comprehension of convoluted issues, and the essence and meaning of the phenomenon within the lived experiences of participants (Moustakas, 1994). During the phenomenology interview process, the researcher will seek to discover the logic and the interrelationships of the phenomenon

under study (Ejimabo, 2015). The purpose of the current study did not warrant the use of

a phenomenological design because I was not seeking to determine descriptions or

interrelationships of phenomenon. An ethnography research design entails gathering

observations, interviews, and documentary data to develop thorough and comprehensive

accounts of a variety of social phenomena to help study the culture and social interactions

of groups (Reeves, Peller, Goldman, & Kitto, 2013). The cost and time involved in

applying ethnography makes the design less suitable for this study. I was not observing

the culture and interactions of individuals or groups, so for this reason, ethnographic

research was not the best design to employ. The purpose of a narrative design is to gain

an understanding of the details of ones' life experiences regarding an event or group of

events that individuals share in the form of a story (Petty et al., 2012). The purpose of the

current study did not warrant an analysis of stories told by participants about an event or

group; thereby, employing a narrative design was not appropriate.

Scholars applying a qualitative research design often experience the dilemma of

data saturation when interviewing case study participants and must determine how many

interviews are enough to reach data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Interviews are

useful in reaching data saturation (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). Although researchers can

attain data with interviewing small samples, it is imperative to comprehend that data

saturation is about depth and not the number (Fusch & Ness, 2015). O'Reilly and Parker

(2013) affirmed that if an investigator reaches the point of no new data and reaches the

point of no new patterns or themes, then they have most likely achieved data saturation. I

achieved data saturation after completing interviews with 4 participants. The interview

questions were the same for each participant to help achieve data saturation through the development of themes and patterns. Asking participants different questions will make it difficult to achieve data saturation because the data will be difficult to decipher (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Additionally, incorporating the use of a personal lens to identify my own personal views and perceptions of the research topic would help to mitigate bias and achieve data saturation. Fusch and Ness (2015) commented that the better researchers are at recognizing their personal views of world issues and acknowledging the presence of a personal lens, the better they can listen to and decode the thoughts and behaviors of research participants, which will help researchers achieve data saturation.

Population and Sampling

The population for the current study consisted of administrators who worked at an education institution in northwest Florida that had success in retaining a multigenerational staff, and the sample included four managers. Selecting a large number of interviewees is not necessary to realize equilibrium and thoroughness when conducting a qualitative case study (Shahgholian & Yousefi, 2015). Azaroff et al. (2013) wrote that sample sizes of participants are much smaller for qualitative case studies than the sample sizes of participants for quantitative case studies because qualitative research is about meaning and quantitative research is about formulating generalized hypothesis statements. I used purposeful sampling to determine the four participants based on their characteristics and experiences. Purposeful sampling allows investigators to choose a small number of participants based on their experiences, characteristics, attitudes, and beliefs (Suri, 2011). Jones (2014) posited purposeful sampling is necessary when a

researcher is interested in a group of individuals with certain characteristics. Researchers can use a chain method process named *snowballing* to gain additional information from participants to achieve data saturation (Fehr, Solberg, & Bruun, 2016). The snowball sampling is beneficial to qualitative research when participants are a part of a population that is difficult to access or are less in number (Valerio et al., 2016). The use of purposeful sampling helped me recruit potential participants, of which I reached out to by email and telephone. I targeted participants who were managers of a Northwest, Florida educational institution who had experience retaining multigenerational employees.

Interviews took place in the personal offices of participants at their convenience. I extended my gratitude to all participants for taking part in the research study. Research participants consisted of full-time managers who worked at an education institution in Northwest, Florida. The managers had a minimum of 2 consecutive years of experience in a management position, and managed a staff inclusive of three or four of the generational cohorts (traditionalists, baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y) for at least a 2-year period. I used the institution's Office of Institutional Research and the snowball method to help me identify potential participants that met participation requirements. I conducted interviews in a professional office setting at the participant's convenience, and held interviews behind closed doors for privacy, confidentiality, and to mitigate disruptions. The participants had a total of 60 minutes to respond to all interview questions.

Participant interviews continued until I reached data saturation. Data saturation is the point where the researcher determines that they are not receiving new or different

information from participants and that the data collection process is no longer necessary

(Oberoi, Jiwa, McManus, & Hodder, 2015). Achieving data saturation can help

researchers enhance the validity of their research and mitigate the moral and social

implications of research data (Gergen, Josselson, & Freeman, 2015).

Ethical Research

Qualitative researchers frequently conduct studies in an environment where a

relationship exists among the members or participants, which could expose the researcher

to ethical challenges (K. Bell, 2013; Haahr et al., 2013). Researchers could also face

ethical challenges when trying to gain knowledge through a rigorous research process.

Roberts (2015) mentioned that ethical research practices are necessary for investigators to

abide by to protect research participants. The moral principles that researchers should

consider when conducting ethical research are justice, autonomy, respect for persons, and

beneficence and vulnerable populations (Roberts, 2015).

The intent of the current study was to explore strategies managers use to retain

their multigenerational employees. The Research Ethics Committees, also known as

Institutional Review Boards (IRB), include expert panels that review protocols and

procedures for research on human subjects before researchers begin collecting data to

guarantee the protection, safety, and wellbeing of participants (Jacobsen, 2011). The data

collection process or contact with participants did not begin until I received IRB approval

from Walden University. The Walden University IRB approval number for the current

study is 03-21-17-0525893. The IRB approval number certifies that I conform to the

ethical requirements of the University. I also completed my place of employment's

human subjects application and submitted to their IRB to receive permission to conduct research on the institution's premises. The memorandum granting me permission to conduct research on site at the university is available for review in Appendix B. Appendix A comprised the letter of consent that I provided to participants by email, after I received approval of my research proposal from the Walden University IRB, requesting their participation in the research study. Participants who agreed to take part in the study replied to the email with the words *I consent* to confirm their willingness to participate in the study. In addition to providing participants with a letter of consent form that includes information about the nature and purpose of the study, it is also important that participants understand their free will to withdraw from the study at any time (Tam et al., 2015). Participants had the option to withdraw from the study at any time by providing a written statement informing me of their decision to withdraw. The consent process should also include information about participant incentives for taking part in the research (Jennings et al., 2015). I eliminated the possibility of coercion by not offering any incentives to the participants for taking part in the study. An ethical responsibility of a researcher is to guarantee the privacy and confidentiality of research participants (Adams et al., 2015). Utilizing a specific alphanumeric coding system would protect the identity of participants and their information. I assigned each participant an alphanumeric code, beginning with MP1 (participant 1) and ending with MP4 (participant 4) to secrete their identities. All raw data will reside in a fireproof safe in my personal home office for a minimum of 5 years. I will shred and destroy documents and electronic records 5 years after the completion of the study.

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection methods that qualitative researchers use entail in-person

interaction where the researchers interview participants to enhance their understanding of

the contributor's views and perspectives on a particular issue (Damianakis & Woodford,

2012). Parker (2014) stated that there are three types of interviews that qualitative

researchers can utilize: (a) structured interviews, which entails a list of questions that the

researcher asks in a particular order that will provide a limited number of responses; (b)

unstructured interviews, which consists of informal dialogue with research participants;

and (c) semistructured interviews, which involve inquiries prepared in advance and the

researcher will have the flexibility to analyze the interview responses of the participants.

Semistructured interviews will permit researchers to ask participants several open-ended

questions that will not yield predetermined responses (Panagiotakopoulos, 2014).

Neuman (2014) asserted that the individual using a qualitative method of research is the

primary person that collects data. I was the primary data collection instrument for the

current qualitative case study, and I used semistructured face-to-face interview questions

to gain knowledge of strategies higher education managers use to retain their

multigenerational staff. The four participants for this study had experience managing

three or four of the dominant generations in the workforce, which included traditionalists,

baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Yin (2012) advised that interviews are

beneficial in research because they help the investigator comprehend participants'

experiences and perceptions about certain actions or events. Drew (2014) articulated that

conducting semistructured interviews is the most efficient approach to explore

experiences because interviewees are then able to explain their experiences and perspestly.

Prior to carrying out the semistructured interview process for a qualitative study, it is important to establish a protocol to ensure a general approach to the interview process (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Using an interview protocol will also help the researcher maintain focus on the selected topic and identify potential problems (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I used the interview protocol (Appendix C) to help guide my research and interviews with participants. Before the start of each interview, I reiterated with participants that taking part in the research was strictly a voluntary decision, they had free will to withdraw from the study at any time, and that their identities would remain confidential. Gibbons (2015) suggested that it is pertinent for the researcher to allow participants to ask for clarification if needed during the interview process. Hence, I advised each participant that it was acceptable to ask for clarification of the interview questions (Appendix D).

Case study research allows investigators to collect data from additional sources other than interviews (Gibbons, 2015; Yin, 2014). Methodological triangulation is a process that permits researchers to use more than one method to gather research data (Yin, 2014). In addition to semistructured interviews, I also retrieved and reviewed electronic documents from the participants' employer's HR website about diversity and inclusion initiatives, strategies, and policies that managers could implement to manage and retain their multigenerational workforce.

To attain a concrete understanding of participant responses to interview questions, researchers can employ the members checking process to clarify participants' replies and to confirm the accuracy of the data collected (Harvey, 2015). The use of members checking can enhance the reliability, validity, and accuracy of participant responses and research findings (Harper & Cole, 2012). Member checking involves the researcher comparing their comprehension of the interview responses with the participants to ensure an accurate representation of the participant's views and perceptions (Yilmaz, 2013). To enhance the validity and reliability of the current study's data collection instrument, I utilized the member checking process and compared my notes and understanding of the interview replies with each participant to confirm that my notes correctly reflected each participant's opinions and insights about strategies to retain generational workers. I also implemented a method of *epoché* to enhance the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument and to reduce bias. Researchers use the epoché method to help mitigate bias when collecting research data (Moustakas, 1994). Epoché is a systematic method where the researcher suspends or reduces her or his judgment about a phenomena or belief and analyzes the phenomena from an original unbiased view (Moustakas, 1994). When the researcher understands and identifies potential bias, they are better able to remove their bias views and approach the phenomena studied from an impartial perspective. Moustakas (1994) implied that implementing epoché could increase academic rigor of a study.

Data Collection Techniques

Researchers who use a case study research design utilize techniques that will allow them to investigate a phenomenon while focusing on the dynamics of the participant's experiences in a real-life context (Raeburn et al., 2015). The use of semistructured interviews was the data collection technique executed for the current study because the interviews made it possible to collect information about the strategies that managers employ to retain a multigenerational staff (Randles, 2012). The interview protocol (Appendix C) included the interview process utilized to retrieve data for the current research study. Doody and Noonan (2013) asserted that interviewing participants involves more than simply collecting information to transcribe, but the interviews should equally entail investigators actively listening for details that will help capture the different views and perspectives of interviewees. Yin (2014) posited that semistructured interviews are open-ended and in-depth in nature and requires the researcher to follow the protocols for the qualitative case study and to ask straightforward questions in a manner that mitigates bias and helps the researcher to follow the outline of the protocols.

Bryman and Bell (2015) suggested that conducting semistructured face-to-face interviews is advantageous because doing so allows the researcher to collect in-depth data that could help with the emergence of concepts and themes. Face-to-face semistructured interviews can also give the researcher the advantage of observing the facial expressions and body language that could add meaning to participants' interview responses (Babbie, 2015). Baskarada (2014) mentioned that using semistructured interviews could allow flexibility for researchers during the interview sessions to probe participants for

clarification or for more information to comprehend better the interviewees' views and perspectives.

Baskarada (2014) argued that using interviews as a data collection tool can increase the researcher's risk of developing inadequate research results. With semistructured interviews, the researcher can also experience a risk of participants not responding to the questions honestly, which can lessen the reliability of the research findings (Yu, Abdullah, & Saat, 2014). Researchers also run the risk of not collecting sufficient data to develop patterns and themes if participants do not provide information openly and honestly (Yu et al., 2014). Baskarada (2014) stressed that researchers need to be aware of the common disadvantages that can hinder the success of semistructured interviews, which include (a) inaccurate interpretations or comprehension of interview questions and responses, (b) the risk of asking misleading or convoluted questions, (c) researchers inserting comments that could add bias to participant responses, (d) only paying attention to interviewees' responses that are easily understandable, and (e) assuming that participant responses will be similar to those of other participants.

However, by using qualitative research methods, a researcher can draw upon the value of psychological techniques to seek, explore, and understand human behavior due to the large amount of data obtained from interviews (Bailey, 2014). If participants truthfully answer the interview questions, and the researcher retrieves reliable and relevant responses, the investigator can easily analyze the information to help establish themes and patterns of the phenomena (Bailey, 2014). The use of face-to-face,

semistructured open-ended interviews was most suitable for the qualitative case study based on the research question and chosen data collection process.

The member checking process allows the researcher to establish accuracy of participant interview responses and enhances the validity and reliability of research findings (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). For member checking, participants of the current study had the opportunity to review their responses to the interview questions to ensure accurate representation of their experiences and perspectives. Yilmaz (2013) stated that member checking is an essential step in the data collection process, and the researcher should ensure to correctly document and understand participant's answers to the interview inquiries. Triangulation and member checking can increase the rigor and credibility of research results (Prion & Adamson, 2014).

According to Gibbons (2015) and Yin (2014), case study research allows the researcher to gather data from other sources besides interviews, such as procedures or historical data. Yin (2014) advised that methodological triangulation is a process in which researchers use more than one method to gather research data. Methodological triangulation entails collecting, exploring, and examining multiple data sources frameworks, and methodological patterns to develop a deeper understanding of a phenomenon and the results of the research study (Walsh, 2013). Walsh (2013) also mentioned that an advantage of methodological triangulation is that using multiple sources of data can improve the validity, confirmability, and accuracy of study results. To help gain a deeper comprehension of the phenomenon under study, I applied methodological triangulation by retrieving and reviewing electronic documents from the

participants' employer's HR website about diversity and inclusion initiatives, strategies, and policies that managers could integrate into their managerial practices to help them retain multigenerational workers.

Reviewing and evaluating company documents is a data collection technique that can help the researcher gain a deeper understanding and practical knowledge about the phenomenon under study (Bowen, 2009). Examining the organization's documents about diversity and inclusion assisted me with validating research results and reducing potential bias. Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas (2013) articulated that analyzing the content of documents could help researchers in their search and development of themes and patterns. Most company documents reside on a public domain and are easily accessible. Another advantage of using company documents as a data collection technique is that retrieving and analyzing the documents is more time efficient because the process entails data selection and not data collection (Bowen, 2009). The main disadvantage of using company documents as a data collection technique is the possibility of insufficient details or inaccurate information (Casey & Murphy, 2009). The efficiency and cost-effectiveness of retrieving and analyzing company documents could be valuable to researchers during the data collection and data analysis process.

Data Organization Techniques

In qualitative research, it is common for researchers to use diaries or reflective journals to help them accurately recall their research experiences and participants' interview responses (Radcliffe, 2013). I utilized a reflective journal to document interviewees' inquiry responses. I also compared the audio recordings of participant

interviews to the responses documented in the reflective journal to ensure that my

comprehension of participants' views, opinions, and perceptions were accurate. By using

a reflective journal, the qualitative researcher can mitigate personal beliefs and meanings,

and can enhance their ability to remain impartial about the phenomena they are

researching (Ponterotto, 2014). Nguyen (2015) advised that data organization procedures

consist of providing notice to participants that the research will involve note-taking and

audio recordings of the interview dialogue. Although the letter of consent (Appendix A)

included a statement about the audio recording of the interviews, I reminded each

participant before the start of the interviews that their sessions would include me taking

notes and audio recording the interview process.

Establishing a coding structure that will keep participants and their information

confidential is necessary to gain the contributors' trust and to make them feel comfortable

about participating (Ranney et al., 2015). Theron (2015) informed that data and

participant coding are necessary steps in the analysis process. It is the obligation of the

researcher to be clear about their chosen coding procedures to help the reader

comprehend the research data (Turner, Kim, & Andersen, 2013). The coding system and

data organization technique for the current study entailed assigning participants an

alphanumeric code to ensure the confidentiality of their identities. The alphanumeric

codes ranged from MP1 (participant 1) to MP4 (participant 4).

The data organizing process can help researchers identify themes, patterns, and

contradictory information or interpretations of the data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). I used

TranscribeMe to assist me with data transcription. I then transferred the data into NVivo

software, which assisted me with identifying themes and patterns for further analysis and understanding. Herranz and Nin (2014) recommended that investigators safely store all research data in a secure area to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants' identity and their contributions to the research project. All data collected from the interviews and throughout the research process will rest on a password-protected computer and in a secure safe for 5 years. After the 5 years, I will have all information shredded and properly discarded.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the most significant phase in qualitative research (Potestio et al., 2015). Qualitative data analysis provides the investigator with the opportunity to gain information and gather insights that otherwise could overlook traditional data analysis techniques. Lawrence and Tar (2013) posited that data analysis in qualitative research entails working with data, organizing it, synthesizing it, and searching for themes and patterns. Thematic analysis, as defined by Percy, Kostere, and Kostere (2015), is the most known form of qualitative analysis and the process involves identifying patterns and themes of data. Mabuza, Govender, Ogunbango, and Mash (2014) shared five stages of qualitative case study data analysis: (a) familiarization of qualitative data, (b) coding the data, (c) grouping the data into themes and categories, (d) interpreting the themes and categories, and (e) present research findings. I used a thematic analysis method based on Mabuza et al.'s (2014) data analysis process to analyze and organize the research data into categories and themes concerning retention strategies. I first collected the data using face-to-face semistructured interviews. I then transcribed the data, transferred the data

into a computer software to help me group and regroup the data into themes and patterns, assessed the information, and developed conclusions to establish research results.

Walsh (2013) defined triangulation as a process of collecting, exploring, and examining multiple data sources and methodological patterns to develop a deeper understanding of a phenomenon and the results of the research study. There are four types of triangulation that researchers can use in case studies: (a) data triangulation, (b) investigator triangulation, (c) theory triangulation, and (d) methodological triangulation (Patton, 2005). Yin (2014) advised that methodological triangulation is a process in which researchers use more than one method to gather research data. The appropriate type of triangulation to use for the current study is methodological triangulation. I employed methodological triangulation by retrieving and reviewing electronic documents from the participants' employer's HR website about diversity and inclusion initiatives, strategies, and policies that managers could integrate into their managerial practices to help them retain multigenerational workers.

Due to the large amount of information retrieved from qualitative case studies, it is beneficial for researchers to utilize computer-assisted data analysis software to assist with sorting, coding, and deciphering data (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012). I used a digital recording device to record the participant's interviews. I uploaded transcriptions of the interviews into TranscribeMe software and then transferred the information into NVivo to assist with the development of patterns and themes. I also input relevant information that I obtained from participants' employer's human resources website about workplace diversity and inclusion into NVivo and analyzed it along with the data from participant

interviews. NVivo computer software can assist researchers with storing and managing research data (Marshall & Friedman, 2012). Therefore, I used NVivo software to store and manage the data that I collected from participant interviews. Additionally, I used NVivo software to capture broad concepts, patterns, and themes to systematically analyze and interpret the data that I collected from the semistructured interviews. The TranscribeMe software and the NVivo software were suitable for me to achieve the goals of the current study. To properly analyze the participants' interview responses, I remained consistent with the study's research question, interview questions, and conceptual framework.

My research question and interview questions, which stemmed from my conceptual framework, were about strategies that managers use to retain their multigenerational workforce. Interviewing participants along with triangulation can enhance the researchers understanding about the problem under examination (Varaki, Floden, & Kalatehjafarabadi, 2015). I focused on key themes and patterns from the information I obtained from my data collection instruments that aligned with my conceptual framework, and correlated those themes and patterns with my literature review sections to help me answer my research question. I disregarded any patterns and themes that were not relevant to my research question.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are essential to ensuring that researchers adhere to the highest standards of academic research (Noble & Smith, 2015). Validity in qualitative research refers to the researcher assuring that the methodology, design, and data

collection tools and techniques are suitable to answer the research question (Leung, 2015). Leung (2015) further suggested that reliability in qualitative research is dependent upon consistency of research procedures. Displaying reliability and validity in qualitative studies by employing principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability can confirm the rigor of the research process (Auer et al., 2015; Valizadeh et al., 2012). Hence, to uphold the highest standards of academic research and to establish rigor, I applied the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability throughout the current qualitative case study.

Reliability

It is critical for qualitative research to encompass trustworthiness. From a traditional quantitative perspective, the criterion of reliability suggests the possibility of other independent researchers replicating or repeating a study that produces the same or similar findings (Singh, 2014). Repeating a research study does not guarantee the production of similar results, which can cause doubt in the stability of the research. Hence, the principle of reliability for qualitative research depends on consistency (Leung, 2015). Singh (2014) stated that researchers should document the research steps and procedures to prove reliability. To address the reliability issues of the current study, I clearly and explicitly documented and explicated the data collection procedures so that other investigators can apply the same case study process and achieve similar results.

Dependability in qualitative research involves making sure that the researcher is knowledgeable of changes that occur that could affect the research process, and ensuring accurate documentation of the modifications (Munn, Porritt, Lockwood, Aromataris, &

Pearson, 2014). Qualitative researchers will often apply processes to assist with ensuring dependability of their research design and methods to affirm the integrity of the research data and results (Hazavehei, Moonaghi, Moeini, Moghimbeigi, & Emadzadeh, 2015). Munn, Porritt, Lockwood, Aromataris, and Pearson (2014) mentioned that member checking, along with transcript reviews, are effective in confirming the dependability of qualitative research. Member checking is the process of the researcher interpreting each participants' responses to the interview questions and then sharing the interpretation of interview replies with the participant to ensure an accurate reflection and representation of the interviewees' opinions, views, and perceptions (Hazavehei et al., 2015). To apply member checking, I reviewed my notes taken during each interview session, interpreted the data to the best of my abilities, and then shared my interpretations with each participant separately during each interview to guarantee that the data I collected was an accurate reflection of each participant's responses. Transcribing interviews involves transcribing verbatim what participants share during the interview process (Todd et al., 2015). I used transcription software to transcribe each participant's interview word-for-word, and then I used this information to develop relevant themes and patterns. Chowdhury (2015) asserted that storing coded and transcribed data provides the investigator with detailed accounts of the participant's interviews. Transcribed data from the interviewees will reside in an electronic database on a password-protected computer. Maintaining recordings of the interview sessions will guarantee the accuracy of the interview dialogue and participants responses.

Validity

Validity in qualitative research refers to the appropriateness of the research design, method, and data. Validity entails verifying (a) whether the research question is valid for the desired results, (b) whether the choice of research methodology is suitable for responding to research inquiries, (c) whether the design compliments the research method, (d) whether the sampling and data analysis is fitting, and (e) whether the findings are credible (Leung, 2015). Alternative criteria to assess validity in qualitative research include credibility, confirmability, transferability, and data saturation (Prion & Adamson, 2014). Credibility is a form of internal validity and determines the value and trustworthiness of the findings. Triangulation and member checking are methods that can enhance the credibility of research results (Prion & Adamson, 2014). Methodological triangulation involves the use of several sources to gather data. Comparing the data will provide evidence of consistency, which increases confidence in the credibility of the results (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). I employed methodological triangulation by retrieving and reviewing electronic documents from the participants' employer's HR website about diversity and inclusion initiatives, strategies, and policies that managers could integrate into their managerial practices to help them retain multigenerational workers. Member checking involves the researcher sharing their notes and interpretation of interview responses with participants to allow the participant to verify accurate representation of their interview responses (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). I utilized member checking to guarantee that the data I collected was a precise reflection of each participants' responses.

Confirmability and transferability are also necessary for qualitative research because confirmability indicates the neutrality and accuracy of the research data, and transferability is the potential for the reoccurrence of a study's effectiveness in a different setting (Burchett, Dobrow, Lavis, & Mayhew, 2013; Houghton et al., 2013). To strengthen the confirmability of the qualitative data, researchers can use a rigorous audit trail (Singh, 2014). A rigorous audit trail involves outlining the decisions made throughout the research process that provides reasoning for the methods used and interpretations of the data. For the current study, I used NVivo software to help me achieve and maintain a good comprehensive audit trail of decisions made throughout the data collection and data analysis process. The software has a *query tools* feature that allowed me to audit results and identify excessive emphasis on infrequent findings that could benefit and support my research efforts to identify strategies that managers can execute to retain a multigenerational workforce.

In qualitative research, transferability depends on the ability to transfer the findings to a similar environment or situation while maintaining the significance and inferences of the completed research study (Houghton et al., 2013). Documenting the research process, such as providing specific descriptions of the research population and the demographic and geographic boundaries of the study, can support the transferability of research study results (Griffith, 2013). To make it possible for other scholars to follow my research procedures to generate similar or identical results, I thoroughly explained the research context and assumptions. I also ensured that the current study included precise information about the research participants, population sample, demographical and

geographical inclusions, research method and design, data collection instruments and techniques, data organizational techniques, and data analysis. Scholars applying a qualitative research design often experience the dilemma of data saturation when interviewing case study participants, and must determine how many interviews are enough to reach data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Although researchers can attain data saturation interviewing small samples, it is imperative to comprehend that data saturation is about the richness and not the quantity (Fusch & Ness, 2015). O'Reilly and Parker (2013) affirmed that if an investigator reaches the point of no new data and reaches the point where no new patterns or themes are developing, then they have most likely achieved data saturation. For the purpose of data saturation and transferability, it is vital to conduct interviews until the development of new or different themes and patterns ceases (Murgatroyd, Lockwood, Garth, & Cameron, 2015). For the current study, I pursued data saturation by interviewing participants until no new data and themes emerged, and until I collected enough data to make it possible for other investigators to replicate the study. I incorporated the use of methodological triangulation to help me reach data saturation, and applied the personal lens process to identify my own personal views and perceptions of the research topic to mitigate bias and to achieve data saturation. Fusch and Ness (2015) suggested that when researchers recognize their personal views of world issues and acknowledge the presence of a personal lens, they may be able to listen and decode better the thoughts and behaviors of research participants, which could lead to data saturation. I attained reliability and validity for the

current qualitative case study by achieving data saturation, and by using the interview protocols (Appendix C), the member checking process, and methodological triangulation.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 of this doctoral study presented an overview of ethical research, data collection instruments, data collection techniques, data organization techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity. Ethical guidelines in research are in place to protect human participants and to provide consent and confidentiality procedures. Appendix A comprised the letter of consent provided to participants, Appendix B includes the approval memorandum from the interviewees' human subjects committee, Appendix C is the interview protocol and research processes, and Appendix D is the research interview questions.

Applying the qualitative method and case study design will allow participants to share retention strategies they use to retain their multigenerational workforce through semistructured interviews. Section 2 included the state in which the research would take place, in addition to the proposed population sample. Details about the data collection methods, analyses, and techniques also reside in Section 2, along with discussions regarding reliability, validity, and data saturation. To enhance the dependability and creatability of findings, I applied member checking and reviewed interview transcriptions to ensure that I accurately captured and documented the interviewee's responses and perspectives. Section 3 concludes the doctoral study and entails a summary of the research findings. The final section includes recommendations for future research,

and a dialogue of how the results of this study can benefit business industries and

positively affect social change.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore retention strategies business managers use to retain their multigenerational workforce. I conducted semistructured interviews with four managers from a University in Northwest Florida, and I used my interview protocol to guide the interview process. I triangulated data obtained from participant interviews and electronic university documents. In using methodological triangulation, I identified seven themes that I assembled into three thematic categories. The first thematic category, which contains strategies that leaders implement to retain a multigenerational workforce, consists of three themes: (a) fostering a diversity friendly workplace culture, (b) deploying effective interpersonal and communication strategies, (c) and adopting a structured approach for managing diversity. The second thematic category contains the procedures or business practices that managers use to ensure retention of their multigenerational workforce, and includes three themes: (a) encouraging a healthy work-life balance, (b) valuing and appreciating employees and their differences, and (c) offering learning and professional growth opportunities. The third thematic category consists of a common challenge that leaders experience when employing retention strategies, and includes one theme: eliminating negative generational stereotyping.

Presentation of the Findings

The central research question for this qualitative single case study was the following: What retention strategies do business managers use to retain their

multigenerational workforce? To help me answer the research question, I conducted semistructured interviews with four business leaders purposefully selected based on their success with developing and implementing strategies to retain a multigenerational workforce. In preparation for the interviews, I had the participants decide on a convenient date, time, and location to share information with me about their retention strategies without interruptions. I used my interview protocol to guide the interview process. Participant interviews consisted of six open-ended interview questions, and each interview took place within the allotted 60 minutes. Each participant provided informed consent agreeing to take part in the study prior to participating in the interview process. For the coding process, I used NVivo to aid in the development of themes and categories. I followed Mabuza et al.'s (2014) five-step process for reviewing and analyzing qualitative case study data. I used a Sony digital voice recorder to record the interviews. I incorporated member checking into the interview process to allow each participant to validate their responses to ensure that I understood their responses and that I accurately represented each participant's views and perceptions. Harvey (2015) explained that using the member checking process improves the credibility and validity of research data.

After analyzing and coding data from the participant interview responses and electronic university documents, I identified seven themes. I provided an analysis of the correlation between the developed themes and the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework for the current doctoral study was Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation.

Thematic Category 1: Strategies to Retain a Multigenerational Workforce

Thematic category 1 comprises strategies that leaders use to retain their

multigenerational workforce. I reviewed data collected from participants' semistructured

face-to-face interviews and university documents, and identified codes on strategies that

leaders use to retain their multigenerational workforce. I used NVivo coding and query

tools to sort through the data. From the coding and analysis process, three themes

emerged in relation to strategies that managers use to retain their multigenerational

workforce. Figure 1 shows the thematic category and the three themes for strategies to

retain a multigenerational workforce.

Thematic Category 1: Strategies to retain a multigenerational workforce		
Theme 1: Foster diversity friendly workplace culture	Theme 2: Effective interpersonal and communiation strategies	Theme 3: Adopt and employ a formal approach

Figure 1. Thematic Category 1 and related themes.

Theme 1: Foster a diversity-friendly workplace culture. It is no longer

possible for leaders to disregard the pervading impact of diversity in organizations.

Kundu and Archana (2017) articulated that the concept of workplace diversity is now a

strategic priority for management instead of a legal or governmental obligation. Theme 1,

fostering a diversity-friendly workplace culture, emerged as a strategy that managers use

to retain their multigenerational workforce. MP1 mentioned "a key strategy for managing

and retaining a multigenerational workforce is creating an organizational culture that

embraces inclusion and diversity." MP1 reported that for a department or an organization to achieve success from establishing such a culture, business leaders must imbed inclusion and diversity into their business operations to convert the ideals of inclusion and diversity into primary business principles.

MP2 shared that team-building exercises are useful in fostering a diversity-friendly workplace culture, and these exercises are great strategic tools to help retain a multigenerational workforce. MP2 added that team building is a form of diversity training that helps to simplify cross-cultural communication, which can have a positive effect on multigenerational employees' motivation and productivity levels. According to MP4 "team building is an effective approach towards adopting an organizational culture that fosters inclusion and diversity." MP4 further explained that team building could bring together individuals of different ages and those with different skills, characteristics, experiences, values, and expectations. MP4 articulated "team-building exercises are instruments that managers can use to emphasize inclusion and diversity to all employees, as well as promote and establish a diversity-friendly workplace culture." MP4 added that team-building exercises can also encourage interaction between the generation of workers, which can lead to multigenerational staff feeling included and accepted.

MP3 mentioned the university's diversity and inclusion initiatives and indicated that diversity and inclusion have been a part of the university's philosophy for many years. An excerpt from the University's diversity and inclusion initiatives contains the following statement:

The benefits of a richly varied community arise not only from the diversity of people it includes, but more importantly from intentional efforts to create a strong sense of belonging that encourages deep and high quality connections to work tasks and to the goals and objectives of the organization.

MP3 asserted "developing a culture to ensure that individuals feel included and that they belong conforms to the university's diversity and inclusion statement, initiatives, and philosophy." MP3 noted that making people feel included and connected to their work and the goals of the organization can help foster a diversity-friendly workplace culture that respects, includes, and accepts all faculty and staff, which can help in the retention of multigenerational employees.

Participant responses regarding the need for managers to foster a diversity-friendly workplace culture as a successful strategy for retaining a multigenerational workforce confirmed the findings of Bennett et al. (2012) who explored generational characteristics to develop strategies to help leaders better manage retention and productivity of an age-diverse workforce. Bennett et al. expressed the importance of business leaders modifying their organizational culture to meet the demands and expectations of a multigenerational workforce. By developing strategies that will allow management to embrace generational differences and create a workplace culture that encourages diversity, organizations can enhance their ability to manage and retain their multigenerational workforce (Bennett et al., 2012).

Theme 2: Effective interpersonal communication strategies. The dissimilarities in skills, preferences, values, priorities, interactions, and perceptions that

are inherent to the different generational cohorts might lead to miscommunication and misunderstandings among management and generational staff. Moore, Everly, and Bauer (2016) posited that effective communications is essential to the success of an organization, and that establishing and implementing communication strategies can impede miscommunication and misunderstandings among management and generational employees. MP1 stated "effective communication and interaction is key when leading a diverse workforce." MP1 further stated "using effective communication tactics and skills proactively could be a sure way to lessen miscommunication and misinterpretations between management and staff, and amongst the different generations of employees." MP2 expressed that effectively communicating and interacting with a multigenerational workforce is vital to keeping staff informed about relevant company issues related to changes in policies, procedures, and current or impending projects. MP2 added "communicating and interacting with a multigenerational workforce or staff should be consistent, as doing so can help employees feel more included."

MP3 shared that consistent communication is effective communication. MP3 stated "when leading a staff of multigenerational workers, it is important to have an all-encompassing mind-set when applying effective communication strategies in the workplace." MP3 further explained that leaders of organizations could prove their transparency to workers by consistently communicating with staff inclusive of all generational cohorts. MP4 indicated that a lack of communication and interaction with a multigenerational staff can lead to distrust in management, and can cause some multigenerational employees to feel excluded. MP4 affirmed "a lack of communication

and interaction from leadership could cause an atmosphere of secrecy and uncertainty, especially in generational workers who prefer a transparent organization." Communication is a key focus area in both the university's strategic plan and diversity and inclusion initiatives. Included in both documents are the following words:

Initial and on-going communication is essential in helping faculty and staff understand how diversity and inclusion benefits them and the University. Effective and on-going communication is necessary to successfully manage diversity, and to prevent conflict and misunderstandings between management and subordinates.

MP3 advised that managers should develop and implement persistent and effective interpersonal and communication strategies to establish an organizational culture that promotes transparency. MP4 asserted that business managers or leaders' transparency of organizational information with generational workers is a way for leaders to show their respect for the employees, which can have a positive effect on retaining multigenerational workers.

Based on participant responses, implementing effective interpersonal communication is a strategy that leaders can employ to increase retention of a multigenerational workforce. The conclusion of participant findings from Theme 2 confirms the findings from studies addressed in the literature review. According to Ozcelik (2015), the demands, communication preferences, and characteristics of multigenerational workers can result in misunderstandings and miscommunication between staff and management, which can negatively influence employee retention.

Phillips (2016) found that leaders of a multigenerational workforce must implement strategies and policies to improve interaction and communication between management and staff, and that doing so will significantly improve retention and productivity.

Theme 3: Adopt and employ a formal approach. Adopting and employing a formal approach to retain a multigenerational workforce is necessary if organizations want to be successful in their diversity and inclusion efforts (Ravazzani, 2016). MP1 stated "it is vital for any type of organization to have formal policies and procedures in place for management to comply to and use in their management and retention efforts of a multigenerational workforce." MP2 noted that the university has a solid statement on diversity and inclusion, and that the statement includes information on how the organization will continue to enhance the policies and guidelines for managing workplace diversity. According to the organization's strategic plan and diversity and inclusion initiatives,

> Human Resources and the Center for Leadership & Social Change will revamp and improve diversity and inclusion training materials that will provide more strategic procedures for managing diversity in the workplace. These training materials will be available on the HR's website for interested parties to review. The Diversity and Inclusion Council also offers a diversity & inclusion certificate series, which creates an opportunity for faculty and staff to explore strategic areas around diversity, and to learn more about ways in which they can manage better a diversified workforce.

MP3 also mentioned the university's diversity and inclusion statement, and stated "the institution's HR department has good strategies in place for managers and leaders to refer to and use in the management of a multigenerational workforce." MP3 mentioned that the strategies that HR outlines for managing a diverse staff are on the HR's website, and that the strategies are helpful in improving the retention and productivity of a diverse workforce. Several strategies mentioned on the website are as follows:

> To treat all staff members the way they prefer to be treated while ensuring that their needs and expectations are being met, recognize that each employee is different and learn to value those differences, frequently assess employees' attitudes and how they work with others, and to encourage employees to interact with others of different backgrounds and generations.

MP4 affirmed "having specified rules or strategies in place for managing a workforce that consists of employees from different generations is extremely helpful in motivating and retaining the generational workers." It is imperative for organizational policies about managing diversity to include guidelines for establishing a work environment that includes and respects all employees (Lub, Bal, Blomme, & Schalk, 2016). Findings for Theme 3 confirmed findings from previous studies. Cloutier et al. (2015) found that employee retention strategies are a crucial element of an organization's vision, mission, values, and formal policies, and should be a part of an organization's principles and operations. Dwyer and Azevedo (2016) observed that to promote an organizational culture that embraces an all-inclusive approach, it is necessary for leaders

to espouse programs that emphasize diversity and to include diversity in their

organization's policies and mission statement.

Thematic Category 2: Business Practice to Ensure Retention

Thematic category 2 consists of business practices that managers use to retain a

multigenerational workforce. I analyzed data from participant interviews, university

documents about diversity and inclusion, and literature. Three themes materialized from

the coding and analysis process relating to procedures or business practices that can lead

to increased retention of a multigenerational workforce. Figure 2 depicts the three themes

for procedures or business practices that can improve retention of a multigenerational
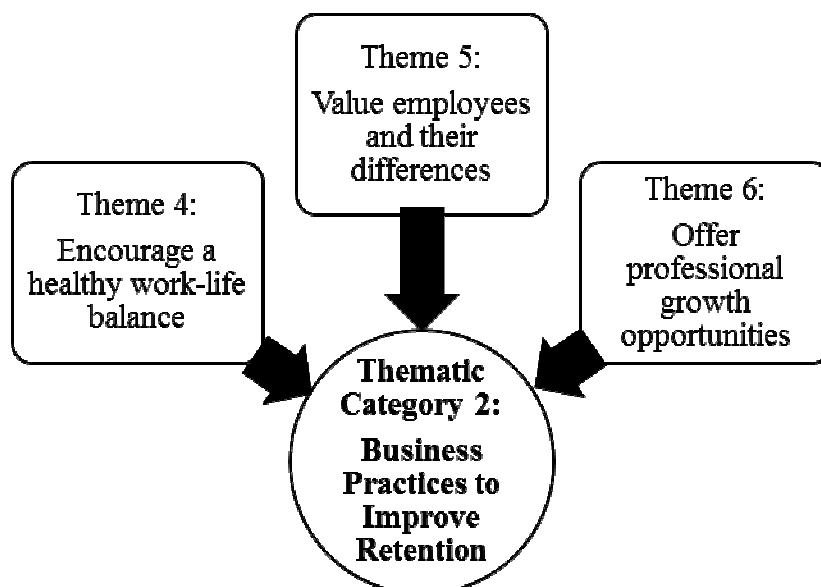
workforce.

Figure 2. Thematic Category 2 and related themes.

Theme 4: Encourage a healthy work-life balance. Balancing the demands of

work life and personal life can be challenging. However, establishing a healthy work-life

balance for employees is essential in cultivating engagement and job satisfaction of a

diverse staff, which could lead to increased retention of a multigenerational workforce (Kaliannan, Perumal, & Dorasamy, 2016; Saltmarsh & Randell-Moon, 2015). MP1 said "supporting and nurturing a healthy work-life balance is a business practice that is vital to retaining a generationally diverse workforce." MP3 posited "creating a culture of care through the practice of encouraging a healthy work-life balance for a diverse workforce is critical to keeping the different generation of workers productive and motivated, which can have a positive impact on retaining them." I found an excerpt from the university's strategic plan that contains the following words "establishing programs and policies that encourage balance between work and family or personal responsibilities can help all faculty and staff balance their professional and personal lives, therefore resulting in higher recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce."

MP2 declared that leading a multigenerational workforce includes being mindful that each employee's personal and work lives differ. MP2 further stated "acknowledging the work-life differences means that enforcing a healthy work-life balance with an age-diverse workforce is an appropriate and necessary business practice for retaining a multigenerational workforce." MP4 explained that being aware and sensitive to the needs of an age-diverse workforce means to make sure that staff is happy, and that they stay motivated and productive. MP4 posited further "keeping a multigenerational staff motivated and productive by being aware and sensitive to the employee needs includes a business practice that tailors to a healthy work-life balance." MP4 concluded that a business practice that conforms to a healthy work-life balance could have a positive impact on the retention of a multigenerational workforce.

Findings from previous research support the research findings in Theme 4. Eversole et al. (2012) confirmed that implementing a flexible workplace for employees is necessary for managing talent across all four generations. George (2015) concluded that a favorable work environment and a healthy work-life balance are critical factors in employee retention.

Theme 5: Value employees and their differences. Managing diversity in the workforce can be an arduous task that requires a complex approach. Ewoh (2013) articulated that each organization should embed their organizational diversity and inclusion initiatives into the institution's business operations and strategies to establish an organizational environment where each person feels valued, accepted, and respected. Based on an excerpt found in the university's strategic plan and diversity and inclusion initiatives, the institutions' leadership believes the following:

> In the context of the workplace, valuing diversity means creating a workplace that respects and includes differences, recognizes the unique contributions that individuals with many types of differences can make, and creates a work environment that maximizes the potential of all employees.

MP1 indicated that implementing business practices that allow leaders and managers to show appreciation to employees could be very helpful in retaining an age-diverse workforce. MP1 mentioned "letting your staff know that you appreciate and value their hard work, innovative ideas, work styles, and overall differences will enhance self-esteem and productivity of an age-diverse staff and will make it easier to retain a multigenerational workforce." MP2 said "nurturing the skills of all generations, young

and old, is a necessary business practice that leaders need to use to improve retention of their multigenerational workforce." MP2 also mentioned that valuing employees along with their differences is crucial as all employees of an age-diverse workforce play an intricate role in the sustainability of a business. MP2 concluded that a multigenerational workforce represents a team of individuals inclusive of various talents, skills, ideas, preferences, needs, and goals. Therefore, according to MP2 "to retain a multigenerational staff, management will need to use business practices that will help them value each employee as well as acknowledge and value each of their differences."

MP3's perception of business practices that will help retain a multigenerational workforce includes first identifying the differences that exist between the generation of workers, and then creating ways based on each employee's preference to show how much they are valued and appreciated. MP4 affirmed "an effective business practice to retain a multigenerational workforce entails management consistently showing each employee that management values him or her by means of verbal or non-verbal gestures." MP4 also feels that management should notify employees of an age-diverse staff that all their differences are instrumental in the success of the organization. Past researchers (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Twenge, 2010) suggested that the level of congruency between what employees value and what employers provide to them is directly related to several employee attitudes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions (Mencl & Lester, 2014). Gursoy, Chi, and Karadag (2013) posited that it is critical for managers to comprehend the foundation and value differences of each generation if management wants to establish and maintain a work environment that

promotes leadership, motivation, communication, and generational synergy. Ertas (2015) concluded that managers who implement a work environment that offers a variety of recognition and rewards will convey to generational workers that the company values them and their differences, thereby, improving retention of an age-diverse workforce.

Theme 6: Offer professional growth opportunities. To enhance the retention of an age-diverse workforce, employers need to offer their employees professional learning and growth opportunities through organizational education and training programs (Chawla, Dokadia, & Rai, 2017). MP1 is a fan of providing learning and professional growth opportunities to retain an age-diverse workforce. MP1 said "offering growth opportunities through education and training programs can make individuals feel more valued and will increase employees' interest in their job tasks, which will lead to retaining the workers longer." Included in the organizations strategic plan are the following words:

> The University promotes and celebrates the personal and professional development of all employees. We are proud to offer a wide-range of professional development opportunities through many of our departments and campus-wide affiliates. These opportunities are categorized into professional competency areas and will assist staff in obtaining continued development in areas specific to their individual needs and interests. Staff will be recognized for their progress and participation throughout the year.

MP2 informed "offering advanced training and professional growth opportunities will enhance employees' skill set and knowledge base, which will increase their interest

in growing professionally and promoting within the institution." MP3 insinuated that requiring each employee of a multigenerational workforce to create an individual development plan is a business practice that will help retain a multigenerational staff. MP3 informed that personal development plans usually include professional learning and growth goals, and allows the employee to see the institution's growth opportunities for an age-diverse workforce. MP4 stated "implementing an individual department policy to include rewarding staff for meeting or exceeding education and training goals is a successful business practice that will improve retention of a multigenerational workforce."

The research findings for Theme 6 are in sync with findings of preceding research about offering a multigenerational workforce professional growth opportunities to retain them. Employee development programs can provide immediate benefits to organizations by increasing motivation and reducing employee turnover. Cloutier et al. (2015) suggested that training and development opportunities motivate employees and influence them to remain loyal to the organization. Rahman and Nas (2013) indicated that basic training and development practices are significant to the success of business entities because employees serve as the essential sources of consistent competitive advantage. When organizations provide employees with development opportunities, the workers will usually reciprocate in positive ways by exhibiting job attitudes that are commensurate with the amount of obligation that the companies offer in return (Rahman & Nas, 2013).

Thematic Category 3: Challenges When Employing Retention Strategies

Thematic category 3 consists of a primary challenge that leaders experience when employing strategies for retaining a multigenerational workforce. Successful employee retention strategies are vital to an organization's growth and stability (Cloutier et al., 2015). Although retention strategies are essential to the sustainability of a business, not all employees embrace them. One theme emerged from my analysis and coding of participant interview responses. The preceding paragraph comprises a summary of participant responses regarding challenges managers encounter when implementing strategies to retain a multigenerational workforce.

Theme 7: Eliminating negative generational stereotyping. Although individuals are cognizant of the differences and similarities that exist within the generational cohort that he or she belongs, such diversity may not be as evident to people from other generations, which can lead to age-related stereotyping (Dow et al., 2016). MP1 affirmed "although team-building exercises are effective, eliminating negative stereotyping among a multigenerational staff is the most challenging when promoting and implementing strategies to retain a multigenerational workforce." MP1 indicated that the negative stereotyping is evident because when initiating team-building exercises employees tend to group with other members of their team who are similar in age and possess similar skills, characteristics, etc. MP2 shared a similar experience as participant MP1. MP2 said "the challenge of overcoming negative generational stereotyping became obvious during team building projects and exercises."

MP2 admitted that grouping employees of different generational affiliations and skill sets together for team assignments was difficult in the beginning because employees were slow to embrace other generational cohorts and their value-added skills. MP3 experienced members of the younger generational cohorts not wanting to work with the older generational cohorts due to a stereotypical perception that older aged workers are not as skilled or do not work as quickly. MP4 admitted difficulty in implementing retention strategies of a multigenerational workforce due to the employees resisting to work as a comingled group on projects. All four participants (MP1, MP2, MP3, and MP4) commented that negative stereotyping of the different generational cohorts could make it challenging to implement or modify strategies to retain a multigenerational workforce. MP1 and MP2 concluded that the resistance of the different generation of workers does improve and promoting and implementing the retention strategies gets easier. The university's strategic plan and diversity and inclusion initiatives do not include any information that supports Theme 7.

Research findings from Theme 7 support and confirm earlier research about generational stereotypes. Cox and Colton (2015) stated that generational stereotypes are common. Stereotypes are difficult to disregard because it is simple to see substantiation of what is accurate, which could be the result of how generational cohorts process inherent biases and social information (Riggio & Saggi, 2015). Heritage, Breen, and Roberts (2016) revealed that for strategies to retain a multigenerational workforce to be effective and beneficial, individuals must comprehend how generational cohorts perceive the other generational cohorts. The research findings from Theme 7 also support current

research about the presence of negative generational stereotyping in the workplace. Weeks, Weeks, and Long (2017) conducted a quantitative study to examine generational perceptions (baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y) in the workplace, and found that strong negative stereotypes exist between the generations regarding the use of technology, work values, work ethic, communication skills, preferences, and values. Weeks et al. (2017) asserted that it is essential for multigenerational workers to be aware of their preconceptions so that they can intermingle and collaborate better with colleagues who are different or belong to a different generational cohort.

Findings Related to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory of motivation (also referred to as Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory) was the conceptual framework for this study. I used Herzberg's two-factor theory as a guide for my research in exploring the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that leaders used to retain their multigenerational workers. For the current study, the emphasis was on the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the two-factor theory of motivation, as well as on how these motivators affected employee retention from the perceptions of leaders who were responsible for increasing multigenerational workers' retention rates.

Herzberg (1959) discovered that employees have a tendency to explain experiences that are satisfying to them based on intrinsic factors related to their job functions. Herzberg labeled these factors as motivators, which include recognition, professional advancement, and achievement (Sandhya & Kumar, 2011). Sandhya and Kumar (2011) noted that Herzberg labeled the dissatisfying experiences of employees as

hygiene factors, which are extrinsic non-job-related factors such as salary, leadership styles, coworker relationships, policies, and procedures. Sandhya and Kumar (2011) suggested that utilizing the intrinsic and extrinsic principles of Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation can help leaders enhance the basic modifications of an employee's job through job enrichment, which could increase employee retention and improve productivity. Based on their needs, values, and characteristics, the significance of hygiene and motivation factors will differ among employees. Therefore, Herzberg advised that it is essential for managers to identify the intrinsic and extrinsic contents of jobs that are important to workers and employ those practices or opportunities to retain key staff (Hunt et al., 2012). The tenets of Herzberg's two-factor theory abetted in exploring and identifying strategies that managers use to retain a multigenerational workforce.

Herzberg (1959) acknowledged two factors encompassing the two-factor theory. The first factor is motivation (intrinsic elements) and includes (a) recognition, (b) level of responsibility, (c) challenging and meaningful work tasks, (d) sense of achievement and success, and (e) professional growth and learning opportunities. The hygiene factors (extrinsic elements) include (a) company and administative policies, (b) communication and interpersonal techniques, (c) salary, (d) work cultures and environments, (e) status, (f) job security, and (g) value from leadership. Themes 1 through 5 and Theme 7, along with the respective research findings for strategies that managers use to retain a multigenerational workforce, relate to the hygiene tenets (extrinisic) of Herzberg's two-factor theory. Theme 6 and the corresponding findings on strategies that managers use to retain a multigenerational workforce relate to the motivation (intrinsic elements) factors

of Herzberg's two-factor theory. Theme 1, fostering a diversity friendly workplace culture, correlates with the work cultures and environments hygiene factor; Theme 2, effective interpersonal and communicaiton strategies, links to the communication and interpersonal techniques hygiene factor; Theme 3, adopting and employing a formal approach to managing and retaining a multigenerational workforce has a parallel relationship to the company and administrative policies hygiene factor; Theme 4, encouraging a healthy work-life balance, correlates with the work cultures and environments hygiene factor; Theme 5, valuing employees and their differences, have a direct relationship to the value from leadership hygiene factor; Theme 6, offer professional growth opportunities, relates to the professional growth and learning opportunities motivation factor; and Theme 7, eliminate negative generational stereotyping, relates to the work cultures and environments hygiene factor.

Business leaders who want to manage workplace challenges caused by the rapid increase in generational diversity in the workforce might benefit from the findings of this study. The results of the current study provided strategies that leaders of higher educational institutions and other business entities can develop and implement to retain a multigenerational workforce. The research findings based on interview responses and unversity documents about diversity and inclusion confirmed and added to the information and knowledge about managing and retaining a multigenerational workforce.

Applications to Professional Practice

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore retention strategies business managers use to retain their multigenerational workforce. The targeted

population consisted of department managers from an educational institution located in northwest Florida who had success in retaining a multigenerational workforce. The population chosen for this study substantiated strategies on how to sustain or improve retention of a multigenerational workforce.

An abundance of older research exists about organizational leaders acknowledging the increase in workplace diversity, and the coexistence of generations in the workforce that offer reasons for better management and retention of an age-diverse workforce. However, minimal research studies exist on effective strategies that leaders can develop and implement to aid in the maintenance and retention of a multigenerational workforce. The dynamics of employment is changing due to an upsurge in diversity in the workforce (Holian, 2015). Soto and Lugo (2013) posited that the increase in workplace diversity can cause leaders to experience challenges with managing diversity and retaining an age-diverse workforce. Business managers and leaders at higher education institutions and other business entities can apply the findings, recommendations, and information about the generational cohorts included in this study to manage workplace diversity, enhance their knowledge base of generational differences, improve workplace cultures and environments, and to reduce negative generational stereotyping in the workplace. The themes that emerged throughout the data analysis process are applicable to higher education institutions and other business entities, and can be beneficial in helping managers develop and employ strategies to retain a multigenerational workforce. Additionally, business managers and leaders at higher education institutions and other organizations can utilize the knowledge and information

included in this study to enhance retention, equality, and inclusion of a multigenerational workforce.

Implications for Social Change

Businesses are experiencing a rise in age diversity in the workplace (Boehm, Kunze, & Bruch, 2014; Fassi et al., 2013). Due to the increase in age diversity, some managers experience challenges with managing and leading a multigenerational workforce. Many workplaces consist of three or more generation of workers, and each generation possess different and distinctive skills, values, preferences, abilities, and proficiencies (Lopes & Delellis, 2013). These differences, if not successfully leveraged, can result in multigenerational conflict that can have a negative effect on employee performance and productivity (Rani & Samuel, 2016). To foster generational synergy in the workplace, it is vital that managers comprehend the variations that exist among an age-diverse workforce. Rani and Samuel (2016) shared that developing a keen understanding of generational differences can make it easier for business leaders to develop policies that are suitable to the needs of each generation. Gaining a deeper comprehension of generational differences might assist organizational leaders in bringing about social change by enabling them to use their increased knowledge to develop workplace cultures that promotes, encourages, and celebrates individual differences. Fostering a diversity-friendly workplace culture could result in improved retention, motivation, and productivity of a multigenerational workforce (Bennett et al., 2012). Although generational differences can be challenging for managers, the differences that an age-diverse workforce possesses can be of great economic value to employers. Lopes

and Delellis (2013) informed that the human capital that employees of a

multigenerational workforce represent is essential because they significantly enhance

institutional and organizational productivity.

By utilizing the strategies from the findings of the current study, business

managers and leaders at higher education institutions and other business entities may be

able to manage age-diversity in the workplace and improve retention of a

multigenerational workforce. Business leaders' use of effective interpersonal

communication strategies to bridge generational gaps and to eliminate negative

generational stereotyping may support efforts to reduce conflict and miscommunications

between the different generations, and among management and generational employees.

Social benefits of effective retention and management of an age-diverse workforce

includes a positive impact on retention, motivation, work performance, and job

satisfaction (Lewis & Wescott, 2017). When employees experience these social benefits,

the potential for generational conflict lessens, which could improve communication and

interpersonal relationships between the multigenerational workers. Other advantages of

these social benefits are the potential for enhanced organizational and community

relations, and for leadership to establish dynamic and collaborative work groups (Lewis

& Wescott, 2017). Adopting and employing a formal approach to managing workplace

diversity and promoting diversity and inclusion is an additional strategy that management

can use to help improve the retention and productivity of a multigenerational workforce

(Ravazzani, 2016).

Implementing business practices that will allow organizational leaders to show their age-diverse staff that management appreciates and values their differences, hard work, innovativeness, and other characteristics is a strategy that can help retain, motivate, and increase productivity of a multigenerational workforce. Deploying strategies that will enable business leaders to actively and consistently express their appreciation to employees might contribute to the establishment of employment stability for employees by making them feel valued and appreciated, thereby improving retention and reducing the likelihood of resignations (Ertas, 2015). Providing employees with professional learning and growth opportunities could be a social change benefit, because the opportunities can improve retention of an age-diverse workforce and make them feel more valued for their distinctive skills, knowledge base, and experiences (Chawla et al., 2017). Offering professional learning and growth opportunities for each employee might also contribute to detecting ways to engage and retain multigenerational workers actively in the workforce and in the community.

The information that participants shared may help managers and leaders in all business industries identify and comprehend the differences that exist among generational workers, as well as acknowledge the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that the generational cohorts value and prefer. Leaders and managers of higher education institutions and other business entities may find the results of the study helpful in developing and cultivating strategies to manage and retain a multigenerational workforce. The implications for social change includes the potential for business managers and leaders to (a) enrich or increase retention rates of a multigenerational workforce, (b) create employment stability, (c)

improve motivation and productivity, (d) and enhance both organizational and community relations.

Recommendations for Action

Managers, administrators, and other individuals who hold authoritative positions could use the information, research findings, and recommendations in this study to mitigate turnover of multigenerational employees. Leaders at higher education institutions and other types of businesses can use the knowledge gained from the information in this study to (a) foster a diversity friendly workplace culture, (b) develop effective interpersonal communication strategies, (c) value generational employees and their differences, (d) develop professional learning and growth opportunities for generational workers, and (e) eliminate negative generational stereotyping in the workplace. By implementing these strategies and business practices, managers and leaders could improve retention, motivation, and productivity of a multigenerational workforce.

I may disseminate the research findings in several methods. I plan to provide each research participant with a summary of the study and research findings to share with other leaders internally and outside of the university. The ProQuest/UMI dissertation database will house a published version of the current doctoral study for review. I will present the findings of this research at leadership conferences, training colloquiums, and other avenues of interests when opportunities arise.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that business managers at a higher education institutions use to retain a multigenerational workforce. The research findings obtained from participants expands upon existing research needs for strategies that leaders can use to retain a multigenerational workforce. Minimal research exists on strategies that managers can apply to sustain or improve retention of an age-diverse workforce. Recommendations for further research include retention strategies of a multigenerational workforce of other types of business entities other than higher education institutions. Conducting a study inclusive of several organizations in different business industries can offer leaders of non-education institutions effective strategies and business practices to retain an age-diverse workforce.

Future research should consider a quantitative or mixed methods approach to examine or explore the retention strategies to determine which are most and least effective. Additionally, I recommend that researchers explore geographical locations outside of northwest Florida, and to use a sample size of more than four participants. Enlarging research efforts to cover a greater geographical area and increasing the number of research participants could generate more in-depth and efficient strategies that leaders in all industries can use to retain a multigenerational workforce.

Reflections

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore retention strategies that business managers use to retain a multigenerational workforce. The Doctor of Business Administration doctoral study process was challenging and rewarding. The

requirements, standards, and rigor of the program greatly enhanced my writing skills, knowledge base of relevant business challenges, opportunities, and business techniques and strategies to help improve business cultures and operations. Although faced with challenges, the DBA doctoral study process enriched my academic competence.

As a mid-level manager, I was aware that my experience in managing and retaining a multigenerational workforce could skew the direction and results of the current study. I remained cognizant of my views on generational differences and my perceptions of leading and managing an age-diverse workforce throughout the research process, so that I would not allow my experiences or preconceived ideas to introduce bias and influence the research process and findings. During the interview process, I followed my interview protocol to maintain focus on the selected topic and to ensure the employment of consistent interview techniques with all the research study participants. The participants openly shared in-depth information with me. They were kind and spoke with excitement and passion. They were also very confident in their responses. The information obtained from participants confirmed my views and perceptions on generational differences and on leading and managing a multigenerational workforce. The information also enhanced my knowledge of the importance of understanding the many differences that exist among generational workers, and that meritoriously managing workplace diversity is critical to organizational stability. The research findings obtained from this study include effective strategies that managers and leaders of higher education institutions and other business industries can implement to manage and retain a multigenerational workforce.

Conclusions

A significant and emerging issue that some business entities have difficulties with is successfully and effectively managing workplace diversity because managing diversity requires a wealth of skills and knowledge (Eversole, Venneberg, & Crowder, 2012). Differences in the age, intrinsic and extrinsic motivator preferences, and the characteristics of generational workers can lead to challenges for business managers in retaining their multigenerational staff (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2013). The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore retention strategies business managers use to retain their multigenerational workforce. The objective of the study was also to answer the overarching research question: What retention strategies do business managers use to retain a multigenerational workforce? Four managers of a university in Northwest Florida participated in face-to-face semistructured interviews. I applied methodological triangulation to compare participant interview data, university documents about diversity and inclusion, and past and current literature to support the research study findings. After analyzing and coding the data, seven themes emerged through thematic analysis. The key themes included: (a) fostering a diversity friendly workplace culture, (b) developing and employing effective interpersonal communication strategies, (c) valuing generational employees and their differences, and (d) adopting and employing a formal approach to retaining a multigenerational workforce. Business leaders may use the themes identified in this research study to guide their efforts in gaining additional insight on the challenges of managing and retaining an age-diverse workforce, and to establish

effective strategies to improve retention, motivation, and productivity of a

multigenerational workforce.

The results of the current study support and aligns with the evidence I found in

preceding and current research that managing effectively the diversity of a

multigenerational workforce is vital to the success of most business entities. Using data

collected from participant interviews and document review, I found that it is essential for

leaders and managers to nurture the skills and knowledge of all employees, and

encourage a diversity friendly workplace culture that embraces inclusion, diversity, and

equal and fair treatment. Similarly, business managers and leaders need to foster and

encourage effective interpersonal dialogue between the generational cohorts, and between

management and the generational workers. Additionally, business managers and leaders

should identify and understand the differences that the generational cohorts possess, and

show awareness of and appreciation for the distinct and unique traits of an age-diverse

workforce. Organizational leaders should consider adopting and implementing formal

policies and procedures to help with their management and retention efforts of a

multigenerational workforce.

The findings of the current research study may contribute to an enriched

comprehension of the varying and distinctive values, characteristics, preferences,

attitudes, and beliefs of a multigenerational workforce. Successful strategies for retaining

an age-diverse workforce in a continuous altering business environment are imperative to

the success and survival of most companies. Thus, deploying the retention strategies and

recommendations identified in this study may assist business leaders with retaining and

managing a multigenerational workforce, improving employee motivation, and enhancing

workplace productivity.

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Appendix B: Approval Memorandum

Human Subjects Committee (IRB Approval)

Office of the Vice President for Research
Human Subjects Committee
█████████████████████ █████

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 09/16/2016

To: Laurita Jones ███████████████

Address: 2550

Dept.: ████████████████████████████

From: ████████████████████

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
    Strategies for Retaining a Multigenerational Workforce

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be **Expedited per 45 CFR § 46.110(7)** and has been approved by an expedited review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

 If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects.

 If the project has not been completed by **09/14/2017** you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent

to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is FWA00000168/IRB00000446.

Cc: ███████████████████████████ **Chair**
HSC No. **2016.18968**

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Strategies for Retaining a Multigenerational Workforce

The following information constitutes the interview protocol for this doctoral study. The purpose of an interview protocol is to provide a step-by-step guide of the interview process.

Before the interview, the researcher will:
- provide each participant with a copy of the interview protocol, a consent form to read and sign, a list of the interview questions, and confirm with each participant they have read and understand each document;
- schedule time, place, and date with the interviewee;
- answer preliminary concerns and questions the participants may have.

During the interview, the researcher will
- obtain a signed consent form, if not already obtained in advance;
- confirm that each participant agrees to be recorded;
- remind the participant that their participation is voluntary;
- remind the participant of their free will to withdraw from the study at any time;
- advise each participant that the researcher will take notes in a journal;
- remind each participant that their identities are confidential;
- address with each participant any concerns regarding the consent form or interview questions;
- ask each participant the interview questions provided to them in advance.
- Apply the member checking technique with each participant to ensure accurate documentation and reflection of their interview response

After the interview, the researcher will
- thank each participant for taking part in the interview;
- transcribe the data and determine if a second interview is necessary;
- send the transcript to the participant for review;
- schedule a second interview for follow-up (if necessary);
- receive affirmation from participant regarding accuracy of the transcription and accuracy of data interpretation (via e-mail or telephone);
- convert all paper documents to digital format;
- save all files to a thumb drive and lock in a safe for 5 years; and destroy all data after 5 years.

After publication, the researcher will
- send the participant a summary of the findings;
- advise the participant of the publication.

Appendix D: Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use to retain your multigenerational workforce?

2. What specific procedures or business practices have you implemented to ensure the retention of your multigenerational workforce?

3. What strategies have you found to be most effective in retaining your multigenerational workforce?

4. What strategies have you found to be the least effective in retaining your multigenerational workforce?

5. What challenges did you encounter when you implemented the strategies, and how did you overcome the challenges?

6. What advice would you share with other business managers about developing and implementing strategies to help retain their multigenerational workforce?