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Employee Retention Strategies in Trinidadian Small Enterprises

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Walden University
2018

Abstract

Employee Retention Strategies in Trinidadian Small Enterprises

by

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MBA, Keller Graduate School of Management, 2013

MHRM, Keller Graduate School of Management, 2011

BS, Berkeley College, 2008

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

October 2018

Abstract

Organizational leaders face obstacles stemming from the lack of employee retention. An ineffective retention strategy can result in the loss of employees and the loss of institutional knowledge. Lack of appropriate retention strategies can negatively impact the reputation of the organization and ultimately affect the financial standing of an organization. Grounded by Herzberg's 2-factor theory, the purpose of this multiple case study was to explore strategies small retail business managers in Trinidad used to retain employees. I collected data through face-to-face semistructured interviews with 5 small business managers and a review of company documents. Data were analyzed using methodological triangulation, thematic analysis, and Hutchinson, Johnston, and Breckon's analytic techniques to identify patterns and themes. Member checking was completed to ensure accuracy and credibility. Five themes emerged from the data: frequent communication improved employee retention, employee engagement motivated employees, compensation considered effective retention strategy, employee recognition enhanced job satisfaction, and advancement decreased job dissatisfaction. The findings from this study may contribute to positive social change by increasing awareness of effective retention strategies. Potential insight into effective retention strategies can benefit leaders and provide stability for employees. Improvement in retention strategies can lead to stabilized employment for employees and their families thus keeping the replacement costs at a minimum and increasing organizational performance.

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Dedication

To my parents, Ann and Raj; my sister Crystal; and my puppy Bingo Singh I would like to dedicate this doctoral study to all of you. Everyone has been supportive throughout this tedious journey. I am finally finished with my Doctorate, Mom, and Dad. My sister must be relieved because now we can eat and travel the world. To my puppy, Bingo Singh, for always knowing when I needed to take a break to relieve my stress. I could not have completed this journey without my entire support system always encouraging me.

Acknowledgments

This journey has been filled with many obstacles and rewards in terms of me having the opportunity to push myself in aspects that I thought I could not accomplish. It is because of my strong support team. Without this team I would not have been able to achieve my goal. The guidance that I received at times felt strenuous, but it is because of their perseverance in steering me in the right direction I was able to accomplish this lifelong goal. I would like to acknowledge the help extended to me by my Chair, Dr. Mary Weber and my Second Committee Chair, Dr. Theresa Neal. I am very grateful to Dr. Weber, who was always a helping hand through this journey. I am thankful to Dr. Neal, who provided an alternative perspective that helped me not only view the topic through my own eyes but the eyes of the reader. Without the help from both Dr. Weber and Dr. Neal, I would not have the opportunity to call myself Dr. Singh. I am genuinely appreciative of Dr. Weber and Dr. Neal for their support and encouragement. Thank you once again for being my academic cheerleaders and rooting for me when I had doubts. There were moments where this journey seemed never-ending, but at the end of the day, there was a light at the end of the tunnel. I am proud of the work I have accomplished.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The retention of employees is crucial for the long-term health of an organization. Organizations need to understand how to motivate and retain their employees. Employees contribute to the profitability and success of an organization. Employees conduct business on behalf of an organization by having direct contact with customers and suppliers. Organizational leaders need to take a keen interest in retaining their human capital. A fluctuating human capital affects the productivity, performance and, efficiency levels of an organization (Kraemer, Gouthier, & Heidenreich, 2016). The loss of human capital amounts to extra financial costs and a loss of organizational knowledge. It is important to understand employee retention since it can hinder various aspects of an organization. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees.

Background of the Problem

Employee retention is a global concern for organizations and having the right human capital in place is essential for organizations to stay competitive (Oladapo, 2014). Effective retention strategies are necessary for retaining skilled employees who have institutional knowledge (Aamir, Hamid, Haider, & Akhtar, 2016). A low employee retention rate is a growing concern for many organizations (Presbitero, Roxas, & Chadee, 2016). Employee retention strategies should be a critical part of the organization's mission, vision, values, and policies (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Pemberton-Jones, 2015). Organizations that delay the implementation of a structured retention strategy ultimately

affect the business stability, growth, and revenue (Kucukusta, Denizci, & Lau, 2014). The life-blood of an organization is the employees.

For an organization to stay economically competitive retaining skilled employees is a challenge but necessary (Fred, 2016). For an organization to replace a valuable employee it would amount to a great loss not only financially (Guilding, Lamminmaki, & McManus, 2014). Successful employee retention strategies reduce turnover, retention costs, and maximize organizational profitability (Richardson, 2014). Retention should be a fundamental focus for an organization considering the increased risk of losing an employee in today's global market (Kraemer et al., 2016; Swarnalatha & Vasantham, 2014). Employees are directly related to the success of the team and maintaining skilled and knowledgeable employees will help the organization to prosper ahead of the competition.

Problem Statement

The loss of human capital is damaging to small businesses that have scarce strategic resources available (Onkelinx, Manolova, & Edelman, 2016). Approximately 49 million employees are projected to leave their place of work worldwide by 2021 (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016). The general business problem is some small business managers are not prepared to address retention issues. The specific business problem is some small retail business managers lack strategies to retain employees.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees. The targeted population for the study

was five business managers from five small retail businesses in Trinidad who

implemented successful strategies resulting in employee retention. The implications for

positive social change may include the potential for small business leaders to gain new

insights into strategies that can be used to stabilize employment. Stabilized employment

can lead to employee satisfaction. Employee job satisfaction can lead to prosperity and

investments in the community, thus improving the standard of living in local

communities.

Nature of the Study

I used the qualitative method for this study. The intent of the study was to explore

strategies small business managers used to retain employees. Using the qualitative

method involves interviews, and participant involvement to explore the subject matter

(Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Researchers use the qualitative method to explore

individual experiences from a cultural context (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The qualitative

method was an appropriate choice for the proposed study because a qualitative method

researcher uses open-ended questions to explore individual experiences. Researchers

employ the quantitative research method to examine the relationships and differences

among variables through hypotheses testing (Spillman, 2014). A mixed-method approach

is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala,

2013). This study did not have any variables to examine, and for this reason, a

quantitative or mixed method approach was not suitable.

I used the multiple case design for this study. The case study design is suitable to

explore an in-depth case within a real-life context (Yin, 2014). Researchers who use the

case study design explore *what*, *how*, or *why* questions to gain a real-world perspective and rounded view (Yin, 2014). Conducting an in-depth analysis of small retail business managers, and their implementation of successful retention strategies, is the intent of the study; therefore, a case study is an appropriate choice. Researchers use the case study design to analyze and gain a better understanding of a particular problem. Researchers frequently use the case study design (Yazan, 2015). Because the evidence is more compelling in a multiple case study over a single case study, the outcome can have a stronger effect (Yin, 2014). A multiple case study was suitable for this study as I intended to gather multiple sources of evidence (e.g., Yin, 2014). I selected a case study design over a phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, and narrative designs.

Phenomenology researchers examine the meaning of experiences from those living a phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994; Robertson & Thomson, 2014). Phenomenology was not appropriate for this proposed study because the focus was not on the meanings of the participants' lived experiences from a phenomenon. Ethnographers explore the culture of individuals in the field (Baskerville & Myers, 2015). Ethnography was not suitable for this proposed study because direct observations of a particular cultural group were not relevant to my study. Grounded theory researchers collect and analyze data through a systematic approach to develop theories for explaining phenomena (Engward, 2013). Grounded theory was not suitable because I was not seeking to develop theories for explaining the phenomenon. Narrative researchers focus on the collection of participants' personal stories and conversations (Loh, 2013). Narrative inquiry was not

appropriate for this study because I was not seeking to identify and explore the participants' personal stories.

Research Question

The research question for this study was:

What strategies do small retail business managers use to retain employees?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies and methods have you implemented to retain employees?

2. What obstacles have you faced when implementing retention strategies?

3. How did you address the barriers to implementing the employee retention strategies?

4. How did you know your retention strategies were successful?

5. What strategies are the most effective in retaining employees?

6. What strategies are the least effective in retaining employees?

7. What additional information would you like to share about retention strategies?

Conceptual Framework

In 1959, Herzberg developed the two-factor theory, also known as the motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). The two-factor theory tenets are hygiene factors and motivators. Factors that, when not satisfied, lead to dissatisfaction are known as hygiene factors; factors that lead to satisfaction are motivators (Gaziel, 1986). Examples of hygiene factors in an organization are the company policy, work conditions, and compensation. Motivational factors in an organization are growth,

recognition, achievement, and responsibility (Islam & Ali, 2013). Depending upon the needs of the individual both tenets, hygiene factors, and motivators can lead to increased motivation but on different scales (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg's two-factor theory applied to this study since motivational factors can influence the retention of employees (e.g., Chien, 2013). Herzberg's two-factor theory was suitable for this study to explore strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees in the workplace.

Operational Definitions

Retention: The ability of an organization to create an environment that wants to keep their employees (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Terera & Ngirande, 2014).

Small Business: There is no universal definition of a small business. Definition of small business varies depending on the size of the organization, and the number of employees (Mahmood & Hanafi, 2013). For the purposes of this study, the definition of a small business will be a small business owner who employs less than 25 employees.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are ideas and perspectives that researchers accept as true during the research stage of a study (Grant, 2014). Making assumptions occur in the data collection process (Anfara & Mertz, 2015). I assumed that retention strategies were important to small business managers specifically in the retail industry. I assumed that small businesses in Trinidad had experienced retention issues. I assumed that business managers understanding of retention strategies aligned with my study. I assumed the

population of business managers would provide honest and complete answers to the interview questions.

Limitations

Limitations are possible weaknesses that can affect the end result of the study. Limitations are out of the control of the researcher (Argouslidis, Baltas, & Mavrommatis, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Three limitations could have affected the completion and validity of this study. The first limitation would have been time restrictions to meet and collect the data from participants. The second limitation would have been not being able to find at least five small business managers that are willing to participate in the study. The third limitation would have been participants opting to generalize their knowledge and experiences on employee retention.

Delimitations

Delimitations are boundaries set by the researcher (Berdychevsky & Gibson, 2015; Simons, 2014). The two delimitations in the study were the participants and the geographical location. The first delimitation was that the study was limited to participants from small retail businesses that have managed employees for a minimum of 3 years. I only interviewed participants that met this requirement. The second delimitation was the geographical location. The study was limited to Trinidad. The study did not include participants living outside of Trinidad. However, the findings of this study might give valuable insight and pertain to businesses outside of Trinidad.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study could be of value for business practitioners to gain ideas on effective retention strategies. The research and findings on retention strategies may help leaders improve employee retention in their business. Managers must focus on retention strategies to thrive in this competitive business environment (Shekhawat & Sandhu, 2016). Retention strategies may help leaders maintain their human capital by increasing employment stability.

The findings from this study could contribute to improving business practices by providing business leaders practical strategies on how to successfully retain employees and avoid recruitment and hiring costs. Small business leaders can benefit by having a better understanding of employee retention strategies. Understanding the effective retention strategies that small businesses use to address retention issues can be financially beneficial for the organization in the long term. Instead of spending more money on developing human resources, managers can focus on flourishing the business.

The implications for positive social change could include helping small business leaders improve business practices. The result of a robust small business is stable employment. A sense of stability in employment enriches families within a community. When an organization is profitable, leaders are more willing to contribute resources and local community support. Profitable organizations provide the possibility to support charities, community centers, parks, and recreational centers for the youth. Contributions through donations and assistance highlight and inspire positive social changes within the community. Community events lead to a positive environment for individuals to

encourage others, through sharing their stories and effecting change for a better future (Saha, 2014). Therefore, retention has a positive social impact because organizations can contribute to local communities when they are successful.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a critical analysis and synopsis of current and previous research that explores strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees. Academic and professional literature will provide a foundation for the topic of employee retention. I used the Walden University Library to gather research for the literature review. I accessed the following research databases: Google Scholar, Business Source Complete, Emerald Insight, ProQuest Central, SAGE Journals, and ABI/INFORM Collection. The search words included *retention, employee retention, retention strategies, employee turnover, employee turnover intention, job satisfaction, job dissatisfaction, training and development, Trinidad, employee commitment, employee culture, workplace environment, retail industry, small business,* and *small and medium-sized enterprises.* Other terms that I used were *Herzberg's two-factor motivation theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Vroom expectancy motivation theory.*

I organized the literature by topics and used subheadings. The presentation of the literature begins with research on the conceptual framework foundation of Herzberg's two-factor motivation theory followed by the supporting theory of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the contrasting theory of Vroom's expectancy theory. The subheadings that follow the conceptual framework are themes and phenomena, small business/small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), and retail industry. The literature review consists of

peer-reviewed journal articles and seminal sources. The use of multiple sources was

utilized to strengthen the foundation of the study and to ensure rigor and depth. I ensured

that 85% of the total sources have a publication date of less than 5 years (2014-2018)

from my expected year of CAO approval of my completed study. I ensured that 85% of

the total sources are peer-reviewed with a minimum amount of 60. These percentages

comply with the DBA doctoral study rubric requirements. Table 1 provides a summary of

the types of sources used in the literature review section.

Table 1

Literature Review Source Content in the Literature Review

Reference Type	Total	<5 Years	>5 Years	%Total <5 Year
Peer-reviewed journals	190	173	17	91%
Dissertations	5	4	1	80%
Books	3	0	3	0%
Non-peer reviewed journals	6	6	0	100%
Total	204	183	21	90%

Conceptual Framework

I used Herzberg's two-factor theory as the conceptual framework to explore the

factors that affect employee retention. In 1950, Herzberg developed the two-factor

theory, which is also known as Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg et al.,

1959; Herzberg, 1974). In the workplace, the factors that cause satisfaction are different

from the factors that cause dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). Hygiene factors are extrinsic, and motivators are intrinsic.

The two-factor theory tenets are hygiene factors and motivators. In the original study, Herzberg collected data from accountants and engineers by conducting interviews to gain a better understanding of satisfiers and dissatisfiers and what motivated employees (Herzberg et al., 1959). Hygiene factors relate to satisfiers, and motivators relate to dissatisfiers (Lacey, Kennett-Hansel, & Manolis, 2015). According to Herzberg et al. (1959) the factors that lead to job satisfaction and the factors that lead to job dissatisfaction are different. The factors of job satisfaction are (a) achievement, (b) recognition, (c) work-itself, (d) responsibility, and (e) advancement and growth. The factors of job dissatisfaction are (a) company, (b) supervision, (c) interpersonal relationships, (d) working conditions, and (e) salary (Damij, Levnajic, Skrt, & Suklan, 2015; Herzberg, 1974; Singh, 2016). Depending on the needs of the individual, both factors can lead to motivation (Islam & Ali, 2013). Satisfaction is not the opposite of dissatisfaction (Oluwatayo, 2015). According to Oluwatayo (2015), Herzberg's two-factor theory is a good model to refer to when evaluating factors that lead to job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Extrinsic factors linked to the individual and the work environment are the following (a) company policies, (b) work conditions, (c) supervision, (d) personal status, and (e) interpersonal relationships (Ismail & El Nakkache, 2014; Jansen & Samuel, 2014; Oluwatayo, 2015). Extrinsic and intrinsic rewards can attract top performers to stay (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). Organizational managers need to understand that factors that may lead to satisfaction are not the same factors that may lead to

dissatisfaction. The factors that may influence one employee to become satisfied may not be the same factors that lead another employee to become dissatisfied.

Multiple researchers have used Herzberg's two-factor theory in their study. Islam and Ali (2013) used Herzberg's two-factor theory to establish factors that promote job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction in the private sector. Teck-Hong and Waheed (2011) applied Herzberg's two-factor theory in retail stores in Malaysia and found that job satisfaction is affected by working conditions, recognition, policy, and salary. The employees' working condition is one of the main factors of motivation compared to employee salary. According to Teck-Hong and Waheed, retail store managers should focus on the working conditions, recognition, company policy, and salary when increasing employee satisfaction, ultimately leading to an increase in productivity levels and job performance. Chien (2013) examined a Chinese chemical fiber company and found that work conditions did not promote employee motivation. Putra, Cho, and Liu (2015) discovered that highly skilled workers with complicated tasks have intrinsic motivation, while unskilled workers with low-level tasks have extrinsic motivation.

Employers can use Herzberg's two-factor theory to focus on retention factors. Researchers have used the two-factor theory as a framework to explore best practices for employee retention (Hernaus & Vokic, 2014; Singh, 2016; Wilson, 2015). Tourangeau, Wong, Saari, and Patterson (2015) recognized that supportive supervisor relationships helped to increase employee retention. Zhang, Prammanee, and Chantarathong (2014) determined that prospective job opportunities, verbal praise, the potential for promotion, and satisfactory work conditions motivated workers. Davis (2013) incorporated

Herzberg's two-factor theory and concluded that strategies that improve employee morale lead to improved retention and job satisfaction. Islam and Ali (2013) believed that motivational factors of growth, recognition, achievement, and responsibility are factors that may influence retaining an employee. Retention factors are related to an employee job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction.

Motivation factors can lead to job satisfaction. Lukwago (2014) discovered that motivation factors increase job satisfaction. Van Scheers and Botha (2014) found that there is a correlation between motivation and job satisfaction. Motivation entices employees to become committed to their job. Dedicated employees are more likely to experience job satisfaction than those employees who are not motivated.

There have been some critics of Herzberg's two-factor theory since the beginning. The two-factor theory can be impractical in distinguishing between intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Wernimont, 1966). King (1970) believed that bias would occur between the investigator and the respondent. Locke (1976) claimed that the sample size used in Herzberg's original study was too small and that there are different causes of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Herzberg's two-factor theory is often resistant to critics.

Researchers continue to use Herzberg's two-factor theory. Researchers, most notably Ozguner and Ozguner (2014), Damij et al. (2015), and Wilson (2015), used Herzberg's two-factor theory as their conceptual framework. Although Ozguner and Ozguner stated that the use of Herzberg's two-factor theory might not always be valid, they agreed that organizations must focus on both intrinsic (hygiene) and extrinsic

(motivational) factors. Sithole and Solomon (2014), highlighted relationships between hygiene and motivator factors. Organizational managers cannot pay attention to only intrinsic (hygiene) factors (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). Damij et al. used Herzberg's two-factor theory to test the present relevance. The findings of the study showed that Herzberg's two-factor theory is relevant (Damij et al., 2015). Wilson demonstrated that there was a significant correlation between intrinsic and extrinsic factors and the intention for an employee to leave. The findings of this study can help managers implement strategies to improve employee retention.

The use of Herzberg's two-factor theory allows leaders to focus on satisfaction and retention factors. Motivational factors of growth, recognition, achievement, and responsibility are factors that may influence retaining an employee (Islam & Ali, 2013). Sankar (2015) stated that motivation and job satisfaction are elements used to retain employees. Herzberg's two-factor theory suggested that managers should provide hygiene factors to reduce dissatisfaction and motivator factors to increase satisfaction. The use of these intrinsic and extrinsic factors would help managers to motivate and retain employees (Rahman & Nurullah, 2014). Herzberg's two-factor theory is relevant and beneficial when exploring strategies to retain employees and this is the reason I chose Herzberg's two-factor theory for the conceptual framework.

Supporting theory. Maslow introduced the hierarchy of needs in 1943. The five sets of goals in Maslow's hierarchy of needs are (a) psychological needs, (b) safety and security, (c) social (love and belonging), (d) self-esteem, and (e) growth or self-actualization (Gouveia, Milfont, & Guerra, 2014; Maslow, 1943). Psychological needs

are individual survival needs for an individual to survive such as water, air, and food. Psychological needs must be satisfied before moving to the next level of safety and security (Rahman & Nurullah, 2014). Safety and security needs are the threats of a situation, such as competition and economic condition. Social needs are when an individual seeks to be a part of a family, community, or group to communicate and share ideas and visions. Self-esteem occurs when an individual receives acknowledgment or recognition of his or her performance. Self-actualization happens when the individual reaches self-fulfillment and growth become the goal (Rahman & Nurullah, 2014). When one need is satisfied the individual can move to the next level (Maslow, 1943; Rahman & Nurullah, 2014). Self-actualization is impossible if psychological, and safety needs have not been met (Andreassi, Lawter, Brockerhoff, & Rutigliano, 2014; Maslow, 1943). Self-actualization will not occur when needs are not met (Boyd, 2014).

Gieter and Hofmans (2015) uncovered that employees' attitude and behavior stems from their personal satisfaction. The level of personal growth depends on the individual. The need to fulfill personal growth can change an individual (Maslow, 1943). Individuals with a high level of education assume they have the option to find another job if needed. The need for personal growth depends on the situation and level of the individual.

Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs can help management understand an individual's motivational need. I did not choose Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory because I decided to explore both intrinsic and extrinsic strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees. Maslow's hierarchy of needs focuses on the need for

each employee individually. I want to explore and understand the overall factors that lead

employees to job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction.

Contrasting theory. In the expectancy theory, Vroom (1964) focused on effort

performance relationship, performance-reward relationship, and rewarded personal goal

relationships. Vroom fixated the attention on understanding how and why people make

decisions to satisfy maximum pleasure with minimum pain. Vroom's expectancy theory

can be used to explain how individuals make decisions to achieve the outcome they

desire (Purvis, Zagenczyk, & McCray, 2015). Employees have personal goals that they

want to fulfill. Organizational rewards and work outcomes can help an employee satisfy

that goal. Motivation occurs when there is an elevated level of expectancy (Parijat &

Bagga, 2014). Under the expectancy theory, Vroom believed that employees based their

job performance on knowledge, personality, and experiences.

I did not choose Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory to be the conceptual

framework of the study because I wanted to understand what strategies worked to

motivate employees to stay rather than focus on the decisions and the outcomes. The

expectancy theory is a complex theory of motivation compared to other motivation

theories (Parijat & Bagga, 2014). According to the expectancy theory, for an individual to

perform a particular job depends on the perceived value of the expected reward they will

receive (Vroom, 1964). Vroom's expectancy theory explains how individuals make

decisions to achieve the outcome they individually desire (Purvis et al., 2015).

Herzberg's two-factor theory focuses on the workplace factors that cause job satisfaction

and job dissatisfaction. Vroom's expectancy theory looks at the individual factors that

contribute to employee performance. For the purposes of this study, I wanted to look at the workplace factors that contribute to job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction.

Themes and Phenomena

Literature regarding employee retention provides a foundation for this study. I thoroughly researched the information presented in this section. I supported this literature review by using previous studies that have explored employee retention and the themes that have emerged from it. From the literature on employee retention topics such as employee turnover and contributing factors that cause employees to leave an organization have materialized.

Employee retention. Employee retention is a global concern no matter which industry. Maintaining efficient and talented employees is a difficult task for organizations. Employee retention is a challenge that leaders face with new and existing employees (Aruna & Anitha, 2015). Retention occurs when organizational leaders develop and implement strategic actions that encourage employees to stay with the organization (Darkwa, Newman, Kawkab, & Chowdhury, 2015). Organizational leaders need to understand that not implementing an effective retention strategy may result in the loss of valued employees, a decrease in profits, negative impact reputation, and loss of valuable organizational knowledge (Kraemer et al., 2016; Swarnalatha & Vasantham, 2014). The challenge with employees leaving an organization is that they carry their wealth of knowledge and competencies to another organization (Nzewi, Chiekezie, & Ogbeta, 2016; Strom, Sears, & Kelly, 2014). An organization will incur additional costs when knowledgeable employees leave (Kaur-Sahi & Mahajan, 2014). A retention

strategy is fundamental for the organization to maintain its goodwill amongst its partners, customers, and competitors.

Leaders need to take the initiative and determine how and why they want to retain their valuable employees. The development and implementation of retention strategies can reduce employee turnover intention, strengthen employee commitment, increase employee motivation, improve job satisfaction levels, and increase organizational commitment. Employees can become demotivated in the workplace if there is a lack of retention strategies as they may feel management does not support them (Yiu & Saner, 2014). Employee retention needs fluctuate depending on the need for the organization or the economy (Sarmad, Ajmal, Shamim, Saleh, & Malik, 2016). Managers need to be able to ascertain which employees will be a good fit for the workplace (Wei, 2015). An effective business operations strategy should include a plan of action to retain valuable employees. An organization should have a stable amount of human capital employed to achieve the organizational goals. The organization may be in jeopardy of staying competitive if it fails to attract and retain employees. Organizational leaders should be willing to create an environment that motivates employees to stay.

Need for retention strategies. The lack of retention strategies can become a primary concern for organizational leaders. Retaining valuable employees will benefit the organization in the long run. Mitchell, Burch, and Lee (2014) found that there is still the need to study retention strategies. Retaining talented employees and developing effective retention strategies can become a challenge for some organizational leaders (Oladapo, 2014). For an organization to be competitive, the skills and knowledge employee possess

is critical for the business to survive (Johennesse, & Te-Kuang, C., 2017; Sarmad et al., 2016). Holtzman, Bradt, and Yehia (2015) uncovered that some organizations do not have retention strategies in place. Employee retention can affect all areas of an organization such as the finances, productivity levels, and organizational size (Richardson, 2014). The lack of not having effective retention strategies in place can become a financial burden affecting the bottom line. Retention strategies are necessary for managers to retain employees and to sustain the organization.

Employees who are satisfied with their position are more likely to stay with the organization. Employees that are encouraged and motivated by management are more likely to stay (Oladapo, 2014). Dresner, De Rivera, Fuccillo, and Heejun (2014) suggested that employee retention is linked to motivated and incentivized employees. Retention strategies can contribute to the improvement in employee morale, and job satisfaction (Khalili, 2014). Employees that feel appreciated will more than likely stay with the organization because they are motivated consequently reducing the turnover rate.

The process of handling employee retention and creating an effective employee retention strategy will depend upon each organization. According to Vasquez (2014), to improve business performance, managers need to develop and support employee retention strategies. Each organization leader will determine what works best depending on their unique needs (Davis, 2013). Employee retention strategies are considered a proactive approach to increasing efficiency (Singh & Sankhi, 2016). There is no perfect retention strategy for retaining employees but there are practical and efficient strategies organizations can implement (Harrison & Gordon, 2014). Organizational leaders need to

modify employee retention strategies according to the needs of the organization and the employees. For organizational leaders to implement employee retention strategies, they need to understand what will work and how to determine whether it will be effective and efficient within the organization.

Employee retention benefits both the organization and the employees. Employee retention is an ongoing and challenging task (Michael, Prince, & Chacko, 2016; Oladapo, 2014). In today's ever-changing economic climate, an organization can maintain a competitive edge by retention and engagement of their employees' knowledge and skill set (Vasquez, 2014). The leader of an organization should value the skills and knowledge an employee brings to the table (Sarmad et al., 2016). To reduce employee turnover, leaders need to create retention strategies (Anitha & Begum, 2016). Improving employee retention rates will enhance the bottom line for the organization (Oladapo, 2014). For an organization to gain a competitive advantage over competitors, a reliable and efficient retention strategy is essential to maintain in this competitive market (Ashmore & Gilson, 2015; Nzewi et al., 2016). Leaders need to implement retention strategies, monitor the policy and maintain the plan (Craig, 2015). Leaders must find competitive strategies to retain talented employees. Employees are valuable to organizational leaders.

Employee turnover. Organizational leaders must understand the underlying causes of turnover before developing and implementing a retention strategy program. Leaders can expect some turnover in an organization. However, a high rate of employee turnover becomes a significant concern that organizational leaders must address (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; Mohamed, Nor, & Dahalan, 2014). There can be underlying issues for

employee turnover. When underlying employee turnover problems are not adequately addressed the retention strategy will not be effective (Gallego et al., 2015). The organization needs to be proactive when investigating the motive for an employee to leave (Harrison & Gordon, 2014). Awareness of how employees view the workplace environment is key to decreasing turnover (Markey, Ravenswood, & Webber, 2015). Organization leaders would benefit from favorable employee retention strategies because it would reduce turnover and retention costs. Employee turnover can become disruptive, have a negative impact, become costly, and hinder the quality of service for an organization (Bhattacharyya, Mahajan, Ghoshal, Yadav, & Rai, 2015; Chauhan, Goel, & Arora, 2014). Understanding the factors that trigger employee turnover is crucial in finding a solution to retaining employees. Effective retention strategies could decrease the rate of employee turnover.

Costs of employee turnover. Constant employee turnover becomes disruptive to the organization affecting the bottom line. Employee turnover is an ongoing predicament for organizations (Aslam, Ghaffar, Talha, & Musthaq, 2015; Moquin & Riemenschneider, 2014). A high level of employee turnover points to an underlying issue (Yiu & Saner, 2014). Time and productivity can decrease when constant turnover occurs (Kumar, 2016; Tews, Michel, & Allen, 2014). Replacement costs are estimated to range from 32% to 114% of an individual's annual salary (Collins, McKinnies, Matthews, & Collins, 2015). An organization that loses ten managerial level employees is averaged to discard approximately 1 million dollars (Vasquez, 2014). Managers need to be aware of the lingering costs of turnover (Christie, 2014). Haresh (2014) found the reasons for

managerial turnover are: (a) lack of prospects, (b) lack of career opportunities, (c) lack of promotional opportunities, (d) lack of job satisfaction, (e) improper working conditions, (f) lack of monetary incentives, (g) family problems, and (h) lack of authority. Turnover expenditure can include advertisement, recruitment, training, and development for new employees (Thomas, Brown, & Thomas, 2017). Replacing an employee can become costly for the organization. Employee turnover results in a disruption of daily operations and additional financial costs. Replacing and training a new employee is expensive and time-consuming. If an organization does not retain their skilled employees, then the sustainability of the organization will be at risk.

Risks of employee turnover. Employees leverage valuable organizational knowledge. Employee turnover may raise the possibility of knowledge sharing with competitors. When an employee leaves an organization, they do not forget the knowledge they gained during employment. The opportunity for competitors to obtain disclosure of vital organizational processes and informational expertise from former employees is a threat to profits and market share for an organization (Hancock, Allen, Bosco, McDaniel, & Pierce, 2013). An organizational leader can leverage employee knowledge into a competitive advantage for another organization (Chong & Besharati, 2014). The reputation of an organization can have an impact due to the loss of skilled employees with organizational knowledge. The loss of organizational knowledge and processes from one organization to another can put competitors at the forefront. Implementation of effective retention strategies can help organizations prevent knowledge loss.

Types of employee turnover. A critical asset of any organization is the employee. The employee is at the forefront of the organization, but sometimes the relationship between the employee and the organization does not match. Employee turnover can result in the following (a) termination, (b) resignation, (c) job abandonment, and (d) discharge (Fred, 2016). Pietersen and Oni (2014) identified two types of employee turnover: (a) voluntary turnover and (b) involuntary turnover. Turnover of any kind can negatively impact the consistency, productivity, and overall effectiveness of the organization.

Voluntary turnover. Voluntary turnover occurs when an employee terminates an employment relationship with a particular organization permanently (Davis, Trevor, & Feng, 2015; Shipp, Furst-Holloway, Harris, & Rosen, 2014). Organizational performance is interrupted by voluntary turnover (Davis, 2013). When an employee is not satisfied with their job, they have a higher chance of voluntarily leaving their position (Chiedu, Long, & Ashar, 2017).

Voluntary turnover becomes costly for an organization affecting the tangible or intangible costs. Direct costs for an organization amounts to recruitment and selection, training and development and administrative expenses (Gialuisi & Coetzer, 2013). Intangible costs for an organization can mean the loss of value-added knowledge from employees, drop in employee morale, and customer dissatisfaction. (Allen, Hancock, Vardaman, & Mckee, 2014). An increase in voluntary turnover will put benefits and investments at risk (Kessler, 2014).

In the past, there have been studies focused on the reason people leave an organization. Porter and Steers (1973) found that the feeling of dissatisfaction in the withdrawal process resulted in the decision to quit the job. Mobley (1977) discovered a link between job satisfaction and voluntary employee turnover. According to Gialuisi and Coetzer (2013), the reasons employees voluntary leave include (a) escape from dysfunctional relationship conflict, (b) lack of career progression opportunities, and (c) informality leads to work overload and stress. Gamage (2014) conducted a study in Japan and found that over the last two decades, there has been a downward decline in small and medium enterprises (SME). Gamage discovered SMEs were not attentive to their employees. The lack of acknowledgment of the human side of the operations played a significant role in the high number of voluntary turnover occurring. There is a link between the turnover rate and human resource management practices (Gamage, 2014).

Voluntary turnover can hinder the behavior of an employee that decides to stay with an organization. Voluntary turnover reduces employees' morale and productivity (Memon, Salleh, Baharom, & Harun, 2014). High employee turnover can have an unfavorable influence on the productivity, product and service quality and, the profitability of an organization (Butali, Wesang'ula, & Mamuli, 2014; Onah & Anikwe, 2016). According to Tzabbar and Kehow (2014) productivity can decrease when skilled employees leave. Davis (2013) indicated that organizational processes could negatively influence an increase in employee turnover. The negative impact of employee turnover can become costly to the organization (Ampomiah & Cudjor, 2015). Employees that

voluntarily leave an organization may stay in contact with their former coworkers. Based on the reasons one employee leaves can influence other employees that decide to stay.

Organizational leaders notably associate employee turnover and negativity with one another. However, employee turnover does not necessarily have to negatively impact the profitability and performance levels of an organization (Kuo, Lin, & Li, 2014). There can be some advantages to employee turnover (Iqbal, Ehsan, Rizwan, & Noreen, 2014). Based on the study conducted by Ampomiah and Cudjor (2015) employee turnover can have a positive impact but should be kept to a minimum. When turnover occurs, managers can replace the employee with a lower paid employee. There can also be the additional development of new ideas (Wyld, 2014). New employees can bring new and innovative approaches to an organization (Ampomiah & Cudjor, 2015). When turnover occurs, leaders are forced to face the issue and develop better solutions to increase customer service and financial performance for the stakeholders (Wyld, 2014). Ampomiah and Cudjor (2015) noted that turnover could be positive citing (a) opportunity for promotion for existing employees, (b) reduction in redundancy, (c) new ideas, and (d) removal of poor performers. When poor performers leave, organizations can benefit. It is sometimes necessary for organizations to experience employee turnover and make a change for the better. Even though an organization may have done something one way for some years that does not necessarily mean that it is the right way.

Leaders set the tone and culture of the organization. Managers with the assistance of employees reinforce the mission and goals of the organization. Communication between both parties is key to executing the vision and mission of the organization. Smith

and Macko (2014) conducted a study with one of the largest retailers in the UK and concluded that at least 69% of employees would leave if the right opportunity arose. The participants in the study cited that communication between top management and the staff was substandard and, in turn, they felt as though management did not value them (Smith & Macko, 2014). When employees are satisfied with management, they exhibit more satisfying behaviors such as higher productivity levels and increased organizational commitment in the workplace (Dinh et al., 2014). Managers influence employees and organizational performance. To achieve the goals and objectives of an organization the persistence of a manager to their employees must occur.

Talevich, Read, and Walsh (2014) introduced the concept of goal impact. Goal impact is the influence of a decision or choice one has made. If their current job or future job does not assist in helping them achieve their life goals, employees will voluntary terminate their position (Talevich et al., 2014). It is crucial for employees to be interested and compatible with their job position because they spend a lot of time in the workplace. When a business has a disgruntled employee, job dissatisfaction will occur resulting in employee turnover.

Overqualification can lead to voluntary turnover. Overqualification is when an employee has the skills and educational knowledge that exceeds the job requirements (Kulkarni, Lengnick-Hall, & Martinez, 2015). Managers consider the hiring of overqualified candidates to be risky due to the concern of dissatisfaction and voluntary turnover (Alfes, Shantz, & van Baalen, 2016). There must be a link between the educational background, the skills and the knowledge of the employee, and job

requirements. Overqualified employees will eventually become discontent with the position and become more likely to leave the organization.

There are internal and external causes of employee turnover. Kuria, Alica, and Wanderi (2012) conducted a study in Nairobi, Kenya and found that the internal causes for employee turnover resulted from job dissatisfaction, insufficient training and development programs, unconducive working conditions, extensive working hours, and minimal compensation. The external causes for employee turnover were the result of outside forces of the organization such as the economic stability, better compensatory opportunities available, and increased salary in other industries (Kuria et al., 2012). De Mesquita Ferreira and De Aquino Almeida (2015) conducted a study in the retail sector in Brazil and concluded that human resource practices such as recognition, training, and rewards play a contributing factor in employee turnover. Another form of reward is an appreciation of the employee. Appreciation of employees can be a strategy to retain employees (Shonubi, Abdullah, Hashim, & Hamid, 2017). Organizational leaders and managers should understand and address the internal and external factors that drive employee turnover. Ignoring the underlying determinants of employee turnover can affect business operations.

Involuntary turnover. Involuntary turnover can have a significant impact on the bottom line and organizational performance of the organization. Involuntary turnover occurs when management determines that an employee is no longer a value-added benefit to the organization (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979). Failure to meet the goals and objectives of the organization can become a downfall for an employee resulting in an

involuntary turnover. Management has the option to discharge an employee and replace the employee with a better fitting choice. Management holds the key to the decision-making and can turn an involuntary turnover into a positive situation.

Contributing factors for employees to leave an organization. Understanding the mindset of an employee might help managers to understand the potential reasons an employee would leave an organization. Retaining talented employees has become more challenging because of the current competitive business environment (Idris, 2014; Manz, Fugate, Hom, & Millikin, 2015). There are different reasons an employee will leave an organization (Harris, Li, & Kirkman, 2014). It is essential for organizational leaders and managers to attract top talent as well as retain them (Kossivi, Xu, & Kalgora, 2016). I will provide an in-depth explanation below of factors contributing to the deciding reasons employees leave an organization.

Compensation. Compensation plays a critical role in retaining employees. Employees can leave one organization for another in search of higher or more equal compensation. Compensation can be a notable incentive for employers to use to retain employees (Aa & Berkel, 2014). Compensation can determine whether an employee stays or leave (Michael et al., 2016). Leaders and managers may view the compensation to be adequate, but that does not mean the employee will be satisfied (Reitz, 2014). According to Herzberg (1974), compensation is a hygiene factor and not a motivating factor. Compensation can enhance employee output and decrease turnover (Kwon, 2014). Under compensating, an employee can lead to an increase in employee turnover as employees may seek higher compensation from other organizations (Garbers & Konradt,

2014; Gupta & Shaw, 2014; Kwon, 2014). Money can influence behavior and is a concern for both employees and employers (Dixon, 2016; Hassan, 2014). Osibanjo, Adenji, Falola, and Heirsmac (2014) discovered that when an organization offers an employee the right compensation package motivation increases. A balanced and fair compensation encourages employees to achieve the goals and objectives set forth by the organization and decrease the intent to leave (George, 2015; Nyberg & Sewell, 2014). Compensation is not only monetary but also nonmonetary as well such as rewards and benefits as stock options, profit sharing programs, project bonuses, and performance bonuses (Onyango & Wanyoike, 2014). A strategy for attracting, retaining and motivating talented employees and applicants can be compensation (Stone & Deadrick, 2015). Organizations invest a lot in top performers in the hope of added long-term benefits (Nzewi et al., 2016; Sharma, 2015). However, some top performers can demand and expect too much (Gambardella, Panico, & Valentini, 2015). Compensation is considered a prime factor for employees to leave an organization (Mbugua, Waiganjo, & Njeru, 2015; Terera & Ngirande, 2014). Lee, Raschke, and Louis (2016) believed in the notion that compensation motivates employees. Onyango and Wanyoike (2014) suggested organizations should offer financial rewards to motivate employees. However, Oladapo (2014) stated that there are other factors more important than compensation that reduces employee turnover. Employees are not only concerned with monetary incentives, but non-monetary incentives and they will leave regardless of the compensation offered (Nzewi et al., 2016). Expectations about compensation can vary among employees and their position. Quality of work and performance levels rise when an employee is satisfied

with their compensation. However, compensation alone will not keep an employee, as other factors are important as well.

Job dissatisfaction. An employee that is dissatisfied with their position and work responsibilities will leave an organization. Managers will not be able to retain a discontented employee. Job satisfaction is a measure of how happy and content an employee is in the work environment (Spies, 2014; Sukriket, 2015). There is a link between job satisfaction and turnover levels (Bandura & Lyons, 2014). According to Herzberg et al. (1959) two-factor theory, hygiene factors can cause employees to be dissatisfied leading to employee turnover. Saeed, Waseem, Sikander, & Rizwan (2014) found that job dissatisfaction and work conditions lead employees to leave an organization. Leelavati and Chalam (2017) conducted a study in India and concluded that only 32.94% of employees are highly satisfied with their present position. Disengaged employees towards their job will have a negative attitude and provide poor customer service (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Job dissatisfaction contributes to 32% of employee turnover as researched by Bajwa, Yousaf, and Rizwan (2014). A dissatisfied employee will eventually become a counterproductive employee and will incur financial costs to the organization (Self & Self, 2014).

Employee turnover intention is defined when an employee wants to intentionally leave the position or organization they are in (Qazi, Khalid, & Shafique, 2015). A solution to reduce employee turnover intentions is for management to satisfy the factors leading to job dissatisfaction (Bajwa et al., 2014). The decrease in employee motivation and the increase in turnover intention heightens because of job dissatisfaction (Jadoo et

al., 2015). When an employee is happy with their job, they will have a higher chance of staying and will be more involved with the organization (Hakanen, Peeters, & Schaufeli, 2017). The findings of the study conducted by Terera and Ngirande (2014) showed that job satisfaction is the key to keeping the employee onboard. Job satisfaction is crucial. However, unmotivated employees are more likely to leave (Shaheen & Farooqi, 2014). Gharib, Kahwaji, and Elrasheed (2017) findings showed that job satisfaction had a significant impact on employee retention more than job security and rewards. However, Terera and Ngirande (2014) found that rewards may be a factor in employee retention, but it does not guarantee job satisfaction. To decrease job dissatisfaction and improve job satisfaction an organization can give an employee the opportunity to voice their opinion (Van Scheers & Botha, 2014). Dissatisfied employees decrease productivity levels, decrease performance levels, and decrease organizational commitment in the workplace. Job dissatisfaction is a significant cause of voluntary turnover.

Lack of growth/lack of opportunity for advancement. Employees that stay with an organization seek job growth or opportunity for advancement in the long run. Therefore, an organization should be conducive to providing employees with the opportunity for continuous learning environment (Dhanraj & Parumasur, 2014). Employees are willing to stay if these opportunities are available (Kang, Gatling, & Kim, 2015). Employees have personal goals and objectives that they would like to meet, and if an organization is not willing or unable to provide them with these opportunities, then they may seek advancement elsewhere (Pee & Lee, 2015). Three ways employees seek growth are: (a) professional growth, (b) personal growth, and (c) financial growth (Adu-

Brobbey, 2014). Financial growth is the perceived to be the principal method of retaining

an employee (Pucher, Candel, Krumeich, Boot, & DeVries, 2015). Factors that focus on

growth and experience of employees influence the decision for an employee to remain

with the organization for an extended time. The lack of opportunities for career growth

will affect retention (Darkwa et al., 2015). Growth is part of human nature, and every

individual strives for growth in some shape or another. Growth helps individuals move to

the next level. An employee that perceives a lack of growth in the organization may

diminish their intent to stay leading to voluntary turnover. Growth opportunities allow

employees to stay engaged.

Leadership and management. Poor leadership and management skills can

become a determinant for employees to leave an organization. Inadequate leadership and

mismanagement will affect an employee's productivity levels. Leadership plays an

important key in reducing employee turnover and increasing job satisfaction (Bateh &

Heyliger, 2014; Selesho & Naile, 2014). Building a strong leadership relationship can

have an impact on retaining talented employees (Nzewi et al., 2016; Westcott, 2014).

Khan and Du (2014) concluded that 41% left due to poor management. An employee that

feels uncomfortable with management will consider leaving the organization. Reina,

Rogers, Peterson, Byron, and Hom (2017) found that employees would leave an

organization due to the behavior of the manager. It is the responsibility of management to

support and build employee morale (Kasenga & Anna-Karin, 2014; Khan & Du, 2014;

Madden, Mathias, & Madden, 2015). Engaged employees are more involved in the

organization and will do whatever it takes to get the job done by becoming engrossed in

their work (Hakanen et al., 2017). Employees are investments that contribute towards the success of the organization (Onah & Anikwe, 2016). Managers need to make employee retention a priority for the future success of the organization.

Leaders and managers must learn how to effectively and efficiently manage and develop their employees otherwise frustration can build and then explode leading to employee turnover and high retention levels. Fred (2016) noted that employees would leave an organization if they cannot work with their manager. On the other end, employees will stay if they feel a manager will invest in understanding what their needs are (Bareket-Bojmel, Hochmen, & Ariely, 2014). Employees that are satisfied with the relationship they have with their managers are more likely to stay and have a more considerable overall work experience. Employees need to feel a sense of confidence and trust in their leader. Leaders need to inspire employees.

Organizational culture and commitment. Organizational culture and commitment drive employee retention. For an organization to retain their valuable employees' corporate culture must align with personal goals, and organizational commitment must be prevalent. When the beliefs and values of the organization and an employee do not align poor performance can occur leading to the intent to sever ties (Habib, Aslam, Hussain, Yasmeen, & Ibrahim, 2014). Haider et al. (2015) conducted a study in Pakistan and concluded that organizational culture has a positive impact on employee retention. Inabinett and Ballaro (2014) found that organizational culture was a contributing factor for an employee to stay at an organization. A negative work environment will more than likely make an employee want to leave rather than stay

(Markey et al., 2015). A positive work culture that aligns with the goals of the employee will attract and maintain employee retention.

Organizational commitment occurs when employees are motivated and satisfied with their job and show interest in wanting to advance their opportunities and growth with the company further. Organizational commitment is a driver of organizational behavior, which leads to turnover (Sow, Anthony, & Berete, 2015). An employee will be loyal to the organization when they feel they are treated fairly and are valuable (Shrestha & Mishra, 2015). When an employee stays with an organization for an extended period, they are showing their loyalty (Hofhuis, Van der Zee, & Otten, 2014). Employees that feel a sense of appreciation from management are more likely to be committed to the job (Shonubi et al., 2017). An increase in organizational commitment affects the turnover levels of an organization (Patil & Ramanjaneyalu, 2015; Saeed et al., 2014). The top priority for leaders and managers is to keep the retention numbers low (Harris et al., 2014). Organizations need to determine and evaluate strategies to minimize the number of employees that exit an organization. An employee will be more engaging and stay committed to an organization that empowers them.

Workplace stress. Workplace stress can lead to mistakes on the job decreasing employee performance. Physical and psychological pain is a result of workplace stress (Johnstone & Feeney, 2015). Workplace stress is a significant factor that influences job satisfaction, job dissatisfaction, employee performance, retention and intention to leave (Chao, Jou, Lia, & Kuo, 2015; Leelavati & Chalam, 2017). Management should consider workplace stress a serious determinant of turnover as it can affect the amount of

workforce an organization employs (Yeboah et al., 2014). Datt and Washington (2015) used the two-factor theory and determined that employees that are stressed lacked motivation. Workplace stress does not occur all of a sudden. The pressure can build up from the daily job responsibilities and the work environment (Yeboah et al., 2014). Organization leaders can reduce stress in the workplace by providing motivational factors to retain employees (Datt & Washington, 2015). The downfall of workplace stress can lead to poor decision-making, poor concentration, increased mistakes and voluntary turnover. A positive and supportive work environment reduces stress and increases employee motivation resulting in higher employee retention rates (Anitha, 2014; Datt & Washington, 2015). Leaders and managers influence the workplace environment (Yiu & Saner, 2014). Workplace stress occurs in every organization and in any industry, but it can vary depending on the occupation and the number of stressors. Workplace stress arises when there is a disproportion amount of job responsibilities, how the individual handles the demand and the resources/support that is available to the employee. Workplace stress can become overwhelming for the employee leading the employee to a diminished productivity level raising the level of costs for the organization.

Education and skills. As the marketplace has changed and become more competitive, more individuals are becoming highly educated. Employees are furthering their education in hopes of advancing their opportunities and careers internally or externally. Knowledge and skills affect the performance system of an organization because if the employee does not have the right competencies to complete the task, then the project can and will fail (Borras & Edquist, 2014). Skilled and knowledgeable

employees are beneficial to an organization; furthermore, so are employees that the company will train (Neerpal & Kidong, 2015). Education allows employees to raise their value. Education expands into the training and development programs an organization provides to their employees.

Training and development. Training and development can increase employee satisfaction and become a factor of whether an employee stays or leaves (Akhter, Raza, Ashraf, Ahmad, & Aslam, 2016). Investing in employees gives them more incentive to stay with the organization (Tan, Nadarajah, Sim, & Ng, 2014). Employee commitment is fortified when organizations that invest in their employees increase retention levels and improve profitability. Training and development increase job knowledge and teaches employees how to accomplish the current or future goal of the organization (Tahir, Yousafzai, Jan, & Hashim, 2014). The employee competencies grow with additional training and development, which benefits the organization (Beattie et al., 2014; Kandampully, Keating, Kim, Mattila, & Solnet, 2014). On the other end, when an employee acquires more training and development techniques they believe they are more marketable and may consider leaving (Smith, Stokes, & Wilson, 2014). Gharib et al. (2017) found that training and development have no significant impact on employee retention. However, Dresner et al. (2014) conducted a study and concluded that of all the participants surveyed 84% would rather stay in their current position if training and development opportunities were available. Training and development increase employee commitment (Erturk, & Vurgun, 2014). A strategy for success is for management to invest in employees by offering training and development (Alasadi & Al Sabbagh, 2015).

According to Yiu and Saner (2014), training and development are one of the leading retention strategies in India. For managers to retain employees, they can review existing policies and identify new approaches. It is necessary for managers to comprehend the underlying determinants of voluntary turnover. Understanding the reason for occurrence will help leaders find solutions that are effective in the long run.

Lack of recognition and achievement. Recognition can be an effective motivator for employees. The lack of recognition can become a determinant for an employee to leave. Recognition refers to the amount of attention an employer gives to their employee for tasks or projects completed (Dugguh & Ayaga, 2014). The need for recognition for their efforts is crucial for all employees across all industries. Recognizing employee achievement increases employee morale and increases job satisfaction (Vasquez, 2014; Wang, Noe, & Wang, 2014). Employees that feel acknowledged are more likely to pass on the positive attitude towards their day-to-day interactions with customers and clients (Bakar, Mohamad, & Sharmeela-Banu, 2015). However, when employees that do not feel appreciated there can be a decline in job satisfaction and job commitment (White, 2014). Idris (2014) encouraged leaders to use recognition as a strategy to retain employees. Dugguh and Ayaga (2014) suggested the implementation of 'employee of the month or employee of the year' program to recognize the achievements of employees. Recognition motivates employees (Schneckenberg, 2014). Employee recognition programs increase employee retention. Managers must acknowledge that each employee is a critical asset. Employees need acknowledgment that management is recognizing their efforts and achievements.

Work-life balance (WLB). As organizations strive to become more competitive with their competitor's employees, strive to maintain a work and life balance. Work-life balance is part of the corporate social responsibility. As of recent, there has been more research on the effects of work and life balance and how it influences employee retention (Coetezee & Stoltz, 2015; Schulte et al., 2015). Work and life balance is a balancing act and is more valued in organizations because it can have either a positive or negative effect on the company (Kim, 2014). When an employee can satisfy work, and personal life responsibilities without compromising either work and life balance occurs (Belwal & Belwal, 2014). An unbalanced work and life balance can trigger poor health (Lunau, Bambra, Eikemo, van der Wel, & Dragano, 2014). Yunita and Kismono (2015) conducted a study in Bali and found that a struggle between balancing work and family obligations which can impact employee retention numbers. Joseph, Gautam, and Bharathi (2015) found that work and life balance connects to employee commitment. When there is a lack of work and life balance poor job performance can start to overshadow the job responsibilities (Pattusamy & Jacob, 2015; Deery & Jago, 2015). Kim (2014) conducted a survey in Korea, and the findings concluded that Korean workers found it difficult to disconnect between their personal and work lives. The confusion of both worlds colliding became a burden on both sides, and their focus on work performance and responsibilities declined (Kim, 2014). The expectations of employers can make employees become engrossed in their work leaving no room for work and life balance.

As organizations become more technologically advanced and the information is always available the boundary between work and personal life can be blurred. Work

overload can contribute to medical issues, and stress issues such as (a) anxiety, (b) fatigue, (c) burnout, (d) poor mental and physical health, and (e) overall decreased satisfaction with work and family (Ruiz, 2017). The use of technology specifically company e-mail allows an individual to be connected 24/7. Managers can assume that since the employee has access to the information through e-mail, they are always available and can have certain expectations for them to respond immediately. The expectation of an immediate response beyond work hours can be a disadvantage to the employee. Organizational managers need to become more forward in their thinking and keep in mind that work and life balance is necessary for employees to recharge and revitalize themselves.

Small Business /Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME)

There are various definitions of a small business owner; therefore, there is no universal definition. Buculescu (2013) searched and could not find a one size fits all description of SME. The meaning of a small business differs depending on the size of the organization, the number of staff employed, the amount of financial assets and annual sales (Mahmood & Hanafi, 2013). Buculescu (2013) indicated that someone could categorize an enterprise by either sector, size, number of employees, location, and technology. A business that employs less than 180 employees could identify as a small business (Okpara, Ezirim, & Mohammed, 2017). For the purposes of this study, I defined a small business owner as an individual that owns an organization that employs fewer than 25 employees.

Small businesses are beneficial for a country but have a higher chance of failure. At inception, small businesses are less likely to survive (Marcelino-Sadaba, Perez-Ezcurdia, Lazcano, & Villanueva, 2014). Small businesses strengthen and contribute to the local economy (Gamage, 2014; Kozan, & Akdeniz, 2014; Oyeku, Oduyoye, Asikhia, & Elemo, 2014). Individuals may start a small business in the same field they have experience in (Alasadi & Al Sabbagh, 2015). The elements that small businesses bring to the local economy are employment opportunities, growth, and innovation (Shukla & Shukla, 2014). Innovation is key to the success of an organization especially a small business (Bello & Ivanov, 2014). Anderson and Ullah (2014) stated that a small business owner could connect and know their customers on a personal level. In a domestic economy where productivity comes to a halt or slows down retention issues can become an immediate concern (Milman & Dickson, 2014). There is an elevated risk of emotional and financial costs for small businesses (Filho, Albuquerque, Nagano, Junior, & de Oliveira, 2017). Longevity in small businesses depends on the availability of resources and the talent and skills retained (McDowell, Harris, & Geho, 2016). A dedicated small business owner that recruits and retains talented employees can become profitable and successful (Gandy, 2015). Talented employees are knowledgeable and skilled employees that maintain a high level of performance for the organization (Latukha & Tsukanova, 2015). Small business owners need to implement strategic, operational business plans to survive in this competitive market. Selecting the proper business strategy is critical to the success of the organization.

Retail Industry

Employees can become part of an organizations' success story or hinder its ability to grow and succeed. Employees have direct contact with suppliers and customers (Singh & Prakash, 2013). Maintaining a relationship with suppliers and customers is a top priority for organizations. Leaders should implement effective strategies that managers can use to continue the relationship with suppliers and customers. Gialuisi and Coetzer (2013) conducted a semistructured interview in 10 small businesses with 15 participants in Australia. Three strategies managers should employ to retain staff were highlighted in the study (a) ensure that newcomers fit in with the current employees, (b) provide opportunities for employees to succeed, and (c) tailor remuneration packages to suit individuals (Gialuisi & Coetzer, 2013). Managers need to recognize the efforts of employees and supply tools and resources that will help them become successful in the organization. Employees represent the organization and can strengthen the reputation and brand of the organization.

The retail industry faces challenges in employee retention (Pandey, Singh, & Pathak, 2016). The problems that contribute to a high turnover in this sector are (a) long work hours, (b) entry-level compensation, and (c) ability to relocate based upon need and availability (Good, Sisler, & Gentry, 1988). According to Leelavati and Chalam (2017), there have been few academic studies surrounding turnover in the retail sector. Many factors contribute to a susceptible high turnover rate in the retail industry. Managers should take a keen interest in understanding what these factors are and how to alleviate the problems and create solutions.

The retail industry is service oriented. The goal of an organization is for the customer to have a positive interaction between customer and employee during the exchange of service (Darling, 2014). Service-oriented organizations are customer driven and rely on the behavior and attitudes of employees to be successful. Employees need to have a positive attitude that will attract customers to come back. Management needs to empower employees. When an employee feels empowered in the workplace, they become more motivated. A motivated employee is more likely to be committed and give more attention to detail. Management can improve the attitude and behavior of the employee by offering rewards, offering training and development opportunities, and improving the working conditions (Van Scheers & Botha, 2014). Management needs to communicate the importance of a healthy and positive attitude with employees. Frontline employees need to be motivated; otherwise, they will become dissatisfied with their job, and it will be apparent to the customer.

In this literature review, I compared, contrasted, and summarized sources that relate directly to my research topic. Based on the critical analysis of the academic literature that I gathered on strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees there is still a lack of available information. The findings from this study may provide small business leaders new insight into strategies that can be used to stabilize employment. A marker for growth and success in an organization is the ability to find and retain quality employees. An organizational leader that stimulates, motivates and inspires employees will have a higher chance of keeping valuable employees. The creation and

implementation of suitable retention strategies are fundamental in maintaining a

consistent number of employees and decreasing turnover levels and costs.

Transition

Section 1 included the foundation of the study, the background of the problem,

purpose statement, research question, conceptual framework, operational definitions, the

significance of the study, and review of the relevant literature. The literature review

included a description and analysis of several sources about employee retention,

employee turnover and, contributing factors that cause an employee to leave an

organization. The two-factor theory provided the conceptual framework to explore

strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees.

Section 2 included the restatement of the purpose of the study, the role of the

researcher, the participants, the research method and design, the population and sampling,

and the ethical research. Additionally, section 2 contained details regarding the data

collection instruments, the data collection technique, the data organization technique, the

data analysis, the reliability and validity, and the transition and summary. Section 3

provided the presentation of findings, recommended employee retention strategies,

suggestions for future actions, reflections on the process, and results from my research.

Section 2: The Project

Employee retention has been a major concern that organizational leaders must address (Mohamed et al., 2014). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees. In Section 2, I described the purpose of this study, my role as a researcher, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, and data collection of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees. The targeted population for the study was five business managers from five small retail businesses in Trinidad who implemented successful strategies resulting in employee retention. The implications for positive social change include the potential for small business leaders to gain new insights into strategies that can be used to stabilize employment. Stabilized employment can lead to employee satisfaction. Employee job satisfaction can lead to prosperity and investments in the community, thus improving the standard of living in local communities.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in a qualitative case study is to generate in-depth descriptions and analysis based on one or multiple cases (Abma & Stake, 2014; Kavoura & Bitsani, 2014). In this qualitative case study, I was the primary data collection instrument. To efficiently complete this study, I needed to conduct research, select participants, collect the data, organize the data, analyze the data, evaluate the findings,

and review the results (see Siegle, Rubenstein, & Mitchell, 2014; Takyi, 2015). My role as the researcher in the study was to answer the overarching research question by conducting semistructured interviews and exploring the literature from reliable academic sources. From the findings, I identified themes, meanings, and recommendations.

I did have knowledge of the topic of employee retention since I am a business owner and my responsibility is to retain employees. Employee retention is one of the issues I face daily as a business owner. Employee retention is critical to the bottom line of any organization (Griffin, Hogan, & Lambert, 2014). The challenges of employee retention can have an adverse impact on the profitability and stability of an organization.

Initial contact with participants occurred after IRB approval. Initial contact with participants occurred through either telephone conversations or in-person visits. Once I made the first contact with the potential participant I followed up with an e-mail communication that provided all of the relevant details of the purpose of the study, and the objectives per the telephone conversation. For each prospective participant, I conducted a follow-up telephone call 2 days prior to the interview to discuss the purpose of the study and to answer any questions or concerns. I e-mailed a copy of the informed consent form and sample questions.

Before the start of the interview, each participant received a consent letter. The consent letter had an explanation of the nature of the study, the research goals and the process to understand the fundamental core of the study (Check, Wolf, Dame, & Beskow, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Tam et al., 2015). Each participant was required to sign the form before the interview started. Marshall and Rossman (2016) suggested that

the use of effective communication and clearly defining the objectives would help

participants to share more information.

I followed the guidelines of the *Belmont Report* to ensure transparency and ethical

practices. The *Belmont Report* is an outline of ethical principles and guidelines that

researchers should use to protect human subjects (National Commission for the

Protection of Human Subjects and Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1978; Cugini,

2015; Lolis & Goldberg, 2015). Three principles of research involving human subjects

are respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (Schrems, 2014). For each participant in

this study, I followed the standards outlined by the *Belmont Report*, the ethical guidelines

set forth by Walden University and Walden University's Institutional Review Board

(IRB) before contact with participants and collection of data begins. Following the

standards outlined in the *Belmont Report*, I ensured the research is ethical.

Bias in an interview can threaten the validity, reliability, and transferability of the

findings (Malone, Nicholl, & Tracey, 2014). To reduce bias, I set aside my personal

feelings, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs. I did not want to influence the study with bias

(Cope, 2014). It was crucial for me to stay neutral throughout this data gathering process

(Collins & Cooper, 2014). During the data collection process, I was open to evidence that

is contrary to my preconceived notion as recommended by Yin (2014). To mitigate

biases, I referred to methodological triangulation by using multiple sources of evidence to

enhance the credibility of the study (Yin, 2013). I used member checking to allow the

participant to analyze my interpretations of the interview, therefore, reducing personal

bias (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

I used an interview protocol (Appendix B) for data collection. The use of the interview protocol ensured consistency with the structure of each interview. The interview protocol is a structured guidance for each interview that has the list of interview questions for each participant (Chen & Mykletun, 2015). Interviews are beneficial in exploring experiences of individuals on a particular topic (Fadyl & Nicholls, 2013). During the interview, I audio recorded and documented each interview (Elo et al., 2014). For each interview, I transcribed, analyzed, and interpreted the data. Once I collected the data, I shared and verified my interpretations of the key findings from the interview with each participant. After each participant interview and before final analysis I applied the member checking tool. Member checking enhances the credibility and improves the accuracy of the data (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Participants

Participants of this study were business managers from independently owned small retail businesses in Trinidad. Managers often have more direct involvement with running the day-to-day operations and addressing issues associated with running the business. I had an invested interest in small businesses since I am a small business owner and can relate to the challenges of employee retention. I chose participants who have implemented successful strategies resulting in employee retention. I ensured each participant met the eligibility criteria to participate in this study. The participant eligibility criteria included four categories (a) at least 18 years old, (b) manager in the business, (c) work in a small retail business in Trinidad, and (d) experience with implementation of successful strategies resulting in high employee retention numbers. I

followed the guidelines that were outlined in the *Belmont Report* and by Walden

University's IRB when I recruited participants for the study. After I received approval

from the Walden University IRB (Approval Number 03-07-18-0462626), I then

proceeded to identify and recruit eligible participants for my study.

My strategy to gain access to participants was through personal contacts, previous

relationships, recommendations from potential participants, and the 2017 Trinidad and

Tobago business directory phone book. I also visited local small businesses in the area

and asked to speak with the manager. Recruitment for study participants started with

either a telephone conversation or an in-person visit. Once I made initial contact with the

participant I sent an e-mail invitation to participate (Appendix C). The e-mail invitation

to participate introduced myself as the researcher. I explained the purpose of the study

and presented the eligibility criteria to the participant. I conducted a follow-up telephone

call 2 days before the interview to discuss the intent of the study further. I e-mailed a

copy of the informed consent form and sample questions. The consent form provided the

participant with the background information, procedures, nature of the study, risks, and

benefits in the study, privacy details, and contact information. I inquired about the use of

additional data from the participant such as company documents that would have been

pertinent information to support my research and whether they would have been able to

provide it to me following the interview.

A working relationship occurred with each participant throughout the research

process (Bell, 2013). I explained the purpose of the study, the objectives, and answered

any questions from participants. Participants tend to share more information when the

objectives have been clearly defined (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The relationship built between the researcher and the participant is intricate and essential towards the success of the research (Bell, 2013).

I collected data by interviewing each participant using semistructured interview questions. For each participant interview, I followed a structured interview protocol. Before the interview started, each participant signed the consent form. I chose five participants for the study. Dworkin (2012) stated that the preferred sample size is between five to 50 participants. I used the purposive sampling method and the snowball sampling method. Purposive sampling allows a researcher to obtain the targeted sample based on the specific characteristics outlined (Barratt, Ferris, & Lenton, 2014). Interviews continued until no new information or themes emerged. Identified participants were asked to recommend another candidate for the study, which is known as snowball sampling (Handcock & Gile, 2010).

Research Method and Design

I have explained the selection process for the research method and research design in this section. For this study, I selected the qualitative method and a multiple case study design. In this section, I provided a description and justification of the qualitative method and case study design.

Research Method

Three research methodologies considered for this study was qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Mukhopadhyay & Gupta, 2014; Sandelowski, 2014). I selected the qualitative method over quantitative or mixed methods because a qualitative

researcher gathers and analyzes human experience and is the appropriate selection for this study (Marshall & Rossman, 2014; Yin, 2014). Qualitative researchers seek to develop an understanding of human behaviors (Allen, 2015; Cronin, 2014). A qualitative researcher uses open-ended questions that focus on answering *what, how,* and *why* questions (Manley, Martin, Jackson, & Wright, 2016; Spillman, 2014). The qualitative research method allowed me to identify common themes gathered and analyzed through the interview process. I chose a qualitative method because the purpose of the study was to explore strategies that managers use to retain employees.

Quantitative researchers use numerical data to perform tests (Trafimow, 2014). This study did not involve the testing of hypotheses and examining of variables thus; the quantitative design was not appropriate for this study (Antonakis, Bastardoz, Liu, & Schriesheim, 2014). A quantitative method was not the suitable method to explore strategies for retaining employees (Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson, & Barr, 2014). This study was not about the differences or relationship between variables derived from the statistical data.

A mixed methods approach is the combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Makrakis & Kostoulas-Makrakis, 2016; Venkatesh et al., 2013). A mixed methods approach was not suitable for this study since it involved the use of the quantitative method. The mixed methods approach was not appropriate in this case since I had no intention of conducting both methods simultaneously. The mixed methods approach is challenging and lengthy to execute compared to either qualitative or quantitative research (Yin, 2014).

Research Design

There are five different types of qualitative designs such as case study, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, and narrative designs (Colorafi & Evans, 2016). I selected a case study over other designs because it was best suited to explore an in-depth case within a real-life context (Yin, 2014). Researchers who use the case study design gain a real-world perspective by collecting data from multiple organizations and multiple sources of evidence. The use of multiple sources of evidence in a case study strengthens the overall quality of the study (Vohra, 2014; Yin, 2014).

A phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, and narrative design was not appropriate for this study. Phenomenology researchers focus on the lived experiences of participants (Gill, 2014; Robertson & Thomson, 2014). The phenomenology design was not suitable because it required the researcher to conduct direct observations and the use of at least 20 participants (Bevan, 2014). Ethnography researchers focus on values, behaviors, or beliefs of participants within the same cultural group (Edberg et al., 2015). The ethnography design was not suitable for this study because observations of the same cultural groups were not relevant to the study. Grounded theory researchers collect and analyze data that lead to theory development (Charmaz, 2014; Khan, 2014). The grounded theory design was not suitable for this study because I was not seeking to develop theories. Narrative inquiry researchers collect stories, documents, and group conversations to study the lives of individuals (Juntunen, 2014; Stenhouse, 2014). The narrative inquiry design was not suitable for this study because I was not seeking to use and retell stories from participants.

Data saturation occurs when a researcher does not gain any new information from collecting more data (Orri, Revah-Levy, & Farges, 2015). When there is a lack of new data, a researcher has achieved data saturation (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). If the researcher does not achieve data saturation, then the interviews must continue (Yin, 2013). According to Orri et al. (2015), data saturation can occur after the second interview. However, every situation is different, and the number of interviews it takes to reach data saturation will vary. No new data emerged after the fourth participant interview; however, I continued with the fifth participant and then confirmed I had achieved data saturation. I used member checking to ensure data saturation. Member checking is when the participant reviews and verifies the interpretations from the researcher. The participant can add further information if deemed necessary when reviewing the interpretations (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I engaged in member checking to follow up with each participant. I shared my interpretations with each participant to ensure my interpretations were accurate. The participants had the ability to comment and validate my interpretations. I asked each participant to highlight any inaccuracies and to make the corrections. I scheduled one follow-up member checking meeting. All participants verified my interpretations.

Population and Sampling

The population size should be large enough to bring credibility and small enough for detail and depth to the study (Rowley, 2012). Yin (2014) recommended two to three cases when conducting a multiple case study. The target population for the study consisted of one business manager from each of the five small retail businesses in

Trinidad who implemented successful strategies resulting in employee retention. The participant eligibility criteria included four categories (a) at least 18 years old, (b) manager in the business, (c) work in a small retail business in Trinidad, and (d) experience with implementation of successful strategies resulting in high employee retention numbers.

The sample size for this study was five business managers from multiple small business retail organizations in Trinidad who successfully implemented strategies resulting in employee retention. The rationale for being able to select a small sample size is the ability to obtain in-depth data from the participants through interviews (Abdulai & Shafiwu, 2014). In a qualitative study, Siegle et al. (2014) argued that there are no set restrictions on a sample size. A sample size should sufficiently represent the population according to Englander (2016). A reasonable sample size is between three to six subjects (Harf et al., 2015).

The sampling method used was purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling gives in-depth insight into qualitative research (Madlebe, 2014). I used purposeful sampling when screening participants that had experience and insight into the intended discoveries of the study (Conte, 2014; Imran & Yusoff, 2015; Robinson, 2014). I used purposeful sampling to ensure participants met the criteria. Purposeful sampling was the appropriate choice for researchers that depend on participants who can provide in-depth information to answer the overarching research question (Hyett, Kenny, & Dickson-Swift, 2014). The participants I selected were able to provide insight into the research question. The settings for the interviews were a location of their choosing. I stipulated that the environment

must have been one where there would be minimal disruption allowing me to audio record the interview without background noises. The participants chose the setting that was convenient for them, and we made arrangements.

I anticipated recruiting additional participants if necessary to meet the goals of data saturation through snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is a process researchers use to gain additional information from participants (Fehr, Solberg, & Bruun, 2016). When the data collection is purposeful, data saturation is likely to occur (Suri, 2013). I interviewed the participants until I achieved data saturation. When no new information or themes emerged from the participant interviews, I knew that I had reached data saturation (Gibbins, Bhatia, Forbes, & Reid, 2014; Ragab & Arisha, 2013). When the researcher does not receive new information, the data collection process can stop (Oberoi, Jiwa, McManus, & Hodder, 2015). When there is sufficient data to repeat the study, a researcher has reached data saturation according to Fusch and Ness (2015). I reached data saturation after four interviews but continued to collect data from participant number five.

Ethical Research

The responsibility of the researcher is to protect the participants (Eide & Showalter, 2012). Walden University required all willing participants to sign an informed consent form before participating in the study. The informed consent form outlined the purpose of the study, study procedures, nature of the study, and privacy details. I selected each participant by using the same eligibility criteria (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects and Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1978). In a

qualitative study participation is voluntary (Connelly, 2014; Judkins-Cohn, Kielwasser-Withrow, Owen, & Ward, 2014; Patton, 2015). I had the participant review and sign the consent form before the interview and provided a copy for the participant. To maintain confidentiality, I assigned each participant with a number (Rashid, Caine, & Goetz, 2015). It was essential for each participant to remain anonymous throughout the study (Cairney & St Denny, 2015). I concealed participant identity choosing to use codes as opposed to identifiers. Researchers are required to provide valid data and demonstrate that they are trustworthy, honest, and credible (Sarapin, Christy, Lareau, Krakow, & Jensen, 2014; Wang, Tsai, & Tsai, 2014). I advised participants that they could willingly withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. A participant that was no longer interested in participating and would like to withdraw was able to send me an e-mail informing me of their decision. If a participant requested to withdraw, then I would have withdrawn them from the study with no further explanation required. However, no participant requested to withdraw from the study. I did not offer participants any incentives for participating in the study.

I protected the confidentiality and rights of each research participant according to the responsibility outlined in the *Belmont Report* Ethical Guidelines (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects and Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1978). Data collected from the interviews were stored in a locked safe for 5 years to protect the rights of the participants and the organization they represent. After 5 years, I will destroy the collected data from the study. I will shred hard copies of the collected information and electronically erase the files associated with the study from the

computer. Participant names and organizational names will be kept private to protect confidentiality (Beskow, Check, & Ammarell, 2014). To protect the rights of participants, I waited until I received approval from the Walden University IRB (Approval Number 03-07-18-0462626) before I collected any data for my study.

Data Collection Instruments

As the researcher in this qualitative study, I was the primary data collection instrument. The researcher is the primary data collection instrument because a researcher hears, sees, and interprets the data in a qualitative study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Sutton & Austin, 2015; Yin, 2011). For in-depth investigations, semistructured interviews are effective (Wiewiora, Murphy, Trigunarsyah, & Brown, 2014). Face-to-face interviews allow the researcher to detect nonverbal communication from the participant (Omnwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014). Nonverbal communication can give a wider perspective (Comi, Bischof, & Eppler, 2014). According to Drew (2014) researchers that conduct semistructured interviews can explore the experiences of the participant.

I used individual semistructured interviews to collect the primary data. Before I conducted my semistructured interviews with each participant, I needed to prepare. As the researcher, I asked each participant the same questions that I identified in Appendix A. I created the interview questions to ensure alignment between the research question, the problem statement and the purpose statement. After I created the interview questions, I had developed an interview protocol. An interview protocol introduces the study, the interview process, and the interview questions. As the researcher, my responsibility was to follow the interview protocol and ask the questions without any bias (Yin, 2014). I

strictly adhered to the interview protocol because I did not want any inconsistencies between participant interviews (Appendix B). Before each interview began, I reiterated to each participant that this interview is voluntary and his or her identity will remain confidential. I mentioned that I could clarify a question at any time during the interview process. During each interview, I audio recorded and wrote observations in my reflective journal.

To reduce bias, validate the themes, and enhance reliability in the study, I used methodological triangulation of multiple data sources and member checking. Methodological triangulation is the collection and analysis of data from more than one source (Denzin, 2012). In addition to the semistructured interviews, I obtained additional company documents such as the employee handbook, and company retention policies. According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), member checking is a quality control process that enhances the accuracy and credibility of the collected data by allowing the participant to verify a researcher's interpretation. The credibility of the data can be confirmed through member checking (Chronister, Marsiglio, Linville, & Lantrip, 2014; Houghton et al., 2013). After I transcribed each interview, I shared my interpretations of the interview with each participant to verify the accuracy of the information.

Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique I chose for this study was semistructured interviews that were audio recorded. Semistructured interviews allow a researcher to ask open-ended questions (Moonaghi, Ranjbar, Heydari, & Scurlock-Evans, 2015). Initial contact with participants occurred after IRB approval (approval number 03-07-18-0462626). The

advantage of semistructured interviews is the ability of a researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the views of the participant (Bryman, & Bell, 2015; Hyett et al., 2014). The disadvantage of conducting semistructured interviews is the possibility that a researcher can influence the participant, leading to bias (Himmelheber, 2014). Pilot testing did not apply to this study.

Face-to-face interviews allow a researcher to respond to any questions that may arise as well as assess the body language of the participant compared to phone interviews (Miller, 2016). I conducted face-to-face interviews at locations of participants choosing. The advantage of allowing participants to select their location is to ensure minimal inconvenience. I audio recorded the interviews using my Olympus digital voice recorder WS-821 I purchased and my iPhone 6s plus as a backup in case of any malfunction. I used the same interview protocol (Appendix B) for each participant (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). I used methodological triangulation for this study. Aside from the semistructured interview, I inquired from each participant about obtaining the employee handbook and additional company documents that I can view regarding existing retention policies and strategies. I used the member checking tool after the interview to ensure the accuracy of participant responses. I shared my interpretations of the interview with each participant allowing them to comment and validate my interpretations. The use of methodological triangulation and member checking increases the credibility and rigor of the study (Prion & Adamson, 2014). After the semistructured interviews, I transcribed the data from each participant using the VoiceBase web app.

Data Organization Technique

I audio recorded the interview with each participant using two devices: (a) Olympus digital voice recorder WS-821, and (b) iPhone 6s Plus as a backup. I kept a reflective journal to write down any observations from the interview with each participant, as recommended by Yin (2014). The reflective journal could be effective in reducing bias in the study (Cowan, 2014; Tindall, MacDonald, Carrol, & Moody, 2015; Young & MacPhail, 2015). The reflective journal included handwritten notes from the interview, participant information, date of interview, location of the interview, and files name of research notes (Applebaum, 2014). I labeled each participant with a corresponding number rather than identifying names to safeguard confidentiality (Gubrium, Hill, & Flicker, 2014). The privacy of the participants was essential to this study. I concealed their identity choosing to use codes instead of identifiers. I identified the codes like the following: I used the letter P to represent the participant, the proceeding number represented the order of the interviews, and the six numbers represented the date of the interview.

After the interviews, I uploaded the recording from the Olympus digital voice recorder device into the VoiceBase app software. I transcribed the recording. I purchased the VoiceBase app software for future use. I then took the transcription that was generated from the VoiceBase app software and reviewed it against the voice recording. I reviewed the voice recording and the transcription to ensure that the information generated from the software was accurate. I used my personal laptop throughout this

process. My personal laptop is password protected, and I am the only person to have access to the confidential information.

A data management tool known to qualitative researchers, NVivo, was used to organize the data collected from the interviews. NVivo Version 11 software allows a researcher to upload the collected data and identify themes (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2015). The software allowed me to upload, organize, code, and analyze the data. I stored the original audio recordings, the reflective journal, and transcriptions on my personal laptop and a USB drive in a safe at my home for 5 years. After 5 years, per the recommendations of Walden University, I will delete and shred any information pertaining to the study.

Data Analysis

Qualitative researchers commonly use methodological triangulation in a case study (Anney, 2014). There are four types of triangulation: (a) data triangulation, (b) investigator triangulation, (c) theory triangulation, and (d) methodological triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Methodological triangulation is the use of multiple sources of data (Denzin, 2012; Yin, 2014). In this qualitative study, I used methodological triangulation that included data from the interviews and supporting data from internal company documents. I asked to obtain the employee handbook and additional company documents that I could view regarding existing retention policies and strategies.

In qualitative research the data analysis phase is critical (Potestio et al., 2015). In the data analysis phase, I dissected and organized the themes from the data received through the interviews (Yin, 2013). I analyzed the data from the semistructured

interviews for common themes. The data was analyzed using the five steps outlined by Hutchinson, Johnston, and Breckon (2010), which are similar to the five steps outlined by Yin (2012). According to Hutchinson et al., the data analysis process has five steps: (a) collect open-ended data, (b) analyze text and data images, (c) understand and prepare data for analysis, (d) move deeper into understanding, and (e) interpret the data. The five steps outlined by Yin (2012) are to (a) collect data, (b) group data, (c) regroup data based on themes, (d) evaluate the information, and (e) recognize emergent themes. The data analysis process helped me to identify themes that small retail business managers use to retain employees. The themes discovered in the study helped me to answer the research question. Triangulation included the use of primary information and secondary information (Burau & Andersen, 2014). To verify the interpretations of the collected data, I used member checking during the data analysis phase (Chao, 2014; Oberoi et al., 2015; Senden et al., 2015).

I utilized the VoiceBase web app to assist me in transcribing the data of each participant interview. I then transferred the data transcription into the NVivo Version 11 software. A qualitative researcher uses the NVivo software to analyze and dissect the analytical data collected (Hutchinson et al., 2010). The NVivo software helped me detect word frequency and helped me to identify themes (Castleberry, 2014). I stored and managed the data through the NVivo software. I examined the transcript and notes from each interview. I read each interview transcript, word for word, to identify any emerging themes. The data analysis focused on five participants' responses to seven interview questions. The conceptual framework for this study is Herzberg's two-factor theory. I

compared the emerging themes from the data analysis towards the conceptual framework, past literature, and newly published studies.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability minimizes the risk of errors in research (Yin, 2014). Reliability is crucial in determining the stability and quality of the collected data (Pocock, 2015). By documenting the steps of the process, qualitative researchers could ensure reliability (Singh, 2016; Yin, 2012). To achieve reliability all steps should be documented, and the research method and research design must be consistent throughout the study (Gibbs, 2007). To ensure reliability, I documented the data collection process so other researchers will be able to duplicate the case study process and achieve similar findings.

I was consistent in the data collection process to minimize bias or any data processing errors. An interview protocol is a guide the researcher can use during the interview. The interview protocol outlined a script and the interview questions for each participant. I ensured the interview questions asked were consistent with each participant and relevant to the research question. The use of the interview protocol assured reliability (Yin, 2014). I used member checking to enhance the reliability. Member checking involves the opportunity for participants to review the interpretations of their responses from the interview conducted by the researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Member checking improves accuracy (Andraski, Chandler, Powell, Humes, & Wakefield, 2014). Member checking allowed me to ensure that I depicted an accurate representation of the participants' perspective.

Dependability refers to the need to stay consistent (Miles & Huberman, 1994). A case study protocol allows a researcher to be focused and direct (Yin, 2014). The case study protocol ensures dependability by providing a clear roadmap of the study that future researchers can follow (Noble & Smith, 2015). Miles and Huberman (1994) stated that the steps to achieve dependability are: (a) clear research questions, (b) explanation of the roles of the researcher, (c) meaningful findings parallel to data sources, (d) the conceptual framework, and (e) the presence of the review panel enhances dependability. Methodological triangulation enhances the findings (Archibald, 2015; Harvey, 2015). The use of multiple sources of data or evidence improves the reliability of a case study (Yin, 2012). To ensure dependability, I used member checking and shared my interpretations of the data with each participant.

Validity

Validity refers to the credibility, transferability, and confirmability of the findings (Cassell & Symon, 2011). I enhanced credibility by using member checking, methodological triangulation, and the interview protocol techniques. I adhered to Walden University IRB research guidelines to mitigate bias throughout the study (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Bias within an interview can threaten the validity of the findings (Malone et al., 2014). I used member checking to verify my interpretations of the data collected from each participant (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Member checking allowed each participant to correct any errors, volunteer any additional information to the study, and confirm the researcher's interpretations (Marshall &

Rossman, 2016). Methodological triangulation enhanced the credibility and the validity of the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Madlebe, 2014; Yin, 2013).

For this study, I collected multiple sources of data. The interview protocol was used to obtain data from each participant while ensuring consistency throughout the process. Transferability is the consistency of the outlined procedures when a future researcher conducts another study (Baille, 2015; Tran, 2016). To address transferability, I meticulously documented each step that I took throughout the entire research and data collection process. To enhance confirmability, I audited the steps and decisions made during the study should be detailed (Houghton et al., 2013; Kihn & Ihantola, 2015). For this study, I used the NVivo software to audit the steps that I took in this data collection process. Future researchers can replicate the study using the methods I recorded (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For me to assure the credibility, transferability, and confirmability of the findings, I achieved data saturation. I collected data for the study until no new information, or no new themes emerged to assure data saturation (Devlen et al., 2014; Firmin, Bouchard, Flexman, & Anderson, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Suri, 2013). I collected, analyzed, and coded the data from each interview until I reached data saturation.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I provided an overview of my role as the researcher, the study participants, the research method and design, the study population and sample, ethical research, data collection, data analysis technique, and the reliability and validity of the research. In Section 3, I include the findings of the research, application to professional

practice, implications for social change, and recommendations for action. I finish Section

3 with recommendations for further research, reflections, and the conclusion of the study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies small retail business managers used to retain employees. I conducted semistructured interviews with five business managers from five different small retail businesses in Trinidad. Participants provided their experience with employee retention strategies within their organization. In addition to the semistructured interviews, I reviewed organizational documents to include the employee handbook, company retention policy, and my reflective journal depicting observations from the interviews to gain an in-depth understanding and to confirm the data. I used the structured interview protocol (see Appendix B) for each participant as a guide. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed by themes using Herzberg's two-factor theory. I analyzed the recorded interviews and transcripts using the NVivo Version 11 software. The findings from the study showed methods that business managers used to retain their employees. Five themes emerged from the study (Table 2). The major themes I discovered were (a) frequent communication improved employee retention, (b) employee engagement motivated employees, (c) employee compensation considered effective retention strategy, employee recognition enhanced job satisfaction, and (e) advancement decreased job dissatisfaction.

Table 2

Major Emergent Themes and Subthemes

Theme #	Major Emergent Theme	Subtheme
Theme 1	Frequent Communication Improved Employee Retention	Positive work environment
Theme 2	Employee Engagement Motivated Employees	Empowering employees
Theme 3	Compensation Considered Effective Retention Strategy	Incentives and bonus
Theme 4	Employee Recognition Enhanced Job Satisfaction	Praising employees Appreciation and feedback
Theme 5	Advancement Decreased Job Dissatisfaction	Training and development

In Section 3, I presented the findings of the study to explore strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees. I also addressed the application to professional practice and implications for social change. I provided recommendations for action, recommendations for further research, reflections, and a conclusion.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question for this study was: What strategies do small retail business managers use to retain employees? To answer my research question, I conducted a case study where I reviewed relevant literature on the topic of employee

retention. I recorded and transcribed interview data from five interviewees, and reviewed five company documents. I used NVivo Version 11 to organize and review the collected data. After the data was analyzed, five themes and six subthemes emerged. The following subsections detail the description of the sample, documents reviewed, the data collected, and the thematic findings discovered. The discussion of the findings addresses whether the findings confirm or disconfirm the key tenets of Herzberg's two-factor theory.

Description of the Sample

The participants in my study were business managers from independently owned small retail businesses in Trinidad. One participant from each of the five retail businesses participated in the study for a total of five participants. I conducted the interviews at the location chosen by the participant. The location was convenient to the participant making the process favorable. I concealed their identity choosing to use codes as opposed to identifiers. To maintain the confidentiality of each participant I used the letter P to represent the participant, and the number represents the order of the interviews (P1 through P5).

Participants voluntarily contributed their knowledge, experience, and ideas relating to employee retention and retention strategies. All participants held management positions in the organization for a minimum of 5 years (Table 3). All participants in the study met each eligibility criteria (a) at least 18 years old, (b) manager in the business, (c) work in a small retail business in Trinidad, and (d) experience with implementation of successful strategies resulting in high employee retention numbers.

Table 3

Participant Years in Management

Participant No.	Years in Management
P1	6
P2	7
P3	6
P4	5
P5	6

Documents Reviewed

The participants provided five company documents. The documents helped me to analyze the existing retention strategies. The company documents I reviewed (a) employee handbook, and (b) company retention policy. I received the employee handbook from P1, P2, and P5. Each employee handbook outlined employee benefits, and personnel policies. The employee handbook received from P1 indicated the availability of training and development. However, the employee would have to approach management regarding further development. Copies of the employee handbook were not widely available electronically rather the employee would have to put in a request (P1, P2, and P5). I received a company retention policy from P3 and P4. Management provided the minimum employee retention guideline in the company policy. The minimum employee retention periods were either 60-day or 90-day probationary periods. The company retention policy from both P3 and P4 was provided as a memo and provided on company letterhead. P3 stated, "I received the company retention policy on my first day at the company." P4 noted, "The company retention policy was provided a week after their initial start date."

Thematic Findings

Theme 1: Frequent Communication Improved Employee Retention

Communication was the first theme that emerged from the data analysis. Communication was a recurring theme in responses when discussing effective retention strategies. Communication allows both management and employees to interact with one another. An open line of communication is essential to employee retention. Mishra, Boynton, and Mishra (2014) defined communication as a method to exchange information. All five participants stated communication as a strategy for retention. P1 mentioned, "This (being the organization) serves as an open floor for communication and feedback." P1 believed, "An open-door communication policy is essential in an organization." Frequent communication between management and employees can occur if the fear of retribution does not exist.

P1 and P2 were strong advocates for the need for frequent and effective communication in the organization. P1 stated, "Communication should not be something that happens once a month or once a quarter." When I asked P2 the question about what effective retention strategies they used to retain employees, P2 responded, "Effective and frequent communication is key. If you do not communicate with employees to find out what is happening, then the issue can get bigger and then that will mean more turnover."

P3 and P5 both saw communication as a positive indicator towards motivation and commitment from an employee. P3 suggested, "Communication is critical towards the success or failure of both parties in an organization." P3 posited, "If you do not communicate with your employees then your employees will not want to stay. Then if

your employees do not want to stay then how can you even think about convincing them?" P5 indicated, "We communicate with our employees, and that is key to them being comfortable and motivated with us as well."

Communication stood out as the primary strategy to retain employees according to P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5. No communication or miscommunication can lead to management losing valuable employees as indicated byP1. P4 mentioned, "When implementing change in an organization sometimes employees could be resistant just because they are unfamiliar and they fear what is about to happen." Communication can become an obstacle when implementing strategies according to P4. However, as P4 further indicated, "Communication should be done on a daily basis." Mishra et al. (2014) found that employees rely on open communication to have a better understanding regarding unexpected changes in the workplace, which aligned with the responses from P1, P2, and P4. Previous research (Ayub, Manaf, & Hamzah, 2014; Mensah, 2015) found that communication is an effective retention strategy.

P1 mentioned, "In order to find the root cause of dissatisfaction in the workplace communication is key to investigating." Communication on a regular basis is critical to avoid emotions and issues from accumulating. Communication can be the key to improving employee retention. The thematic finding is consistent with previously published findings that found communication as the key to lowering employee turnover and improving employee retention (Osman, Noordin, Daud, & Othman, 2016; Panagiotakopoulos, 2014).

Positive work environment. A positive work environment was the first subtheme that emerged from the data. A positive work environment is a place that is comfortable for employees and has a manager that is supportive, and understanding. The response from P2 aligned with the findings from Asaduzzama, Hossain, and Rahman (2014) that management influences job satisfaction. According to P2, "A strong relationship between employee and management can increase employee morale." P3 indicated, "A positive work environment inclined employees to stay at the organization." However, some employees leave an organization not because of the position and job requirements, but due to the treatment from management (Okan & Akyuz, 2015). P3 further explained "Management and employees have to work together. Employees are an investment in a company." A positive relationship between management and employees opens the line of communication and influences job satisfaction, and in turn, has a positive impact on employee retention.

Theme 2: Employee Engagement Motivated Employees

Employee engagement was the second theme that emerged from the data analysis. Engaged employees tend to go above and beyond the minimum requirements at work. Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002) defined engagement as a state of mind that is characterized by energy levels, enthusiasm, dedication, and emphasis on daily responsibilities at work. Engaged employees allow organizations to meet their goals and objectives.

P1 indicated, "When your employee goes above and beyond, then that may be the point you realize that you are doing something right." P1 further elaborated, "An engaged

employee is one that sees the big picture and works with the team to achieve KPI's." P4

added, "Management has to take the employee needs and wants into account." P5 further

recognized, "The need to build relationships with employees."

The willingness of employees to commit to the vision of the organization

increases when management is supportive. P2 stated, "An engaged employee is more

inclined to assist management with further tasks and responsibilities." According to P3,

"Engaged employees seem to have more focus on their work or the organization leading

to a higher productivity output." P4 specified, "I would want to stay with a company that

interacts with me, takes me into account, engaged me daily, and not like a robot that

comes into work and hardly has any kind of interaction." Employee engagement can

affect employee retention either benefiting or hindering the profitability and financial

stability of an organization. A disengaged employee may have a negative influence over

coworkers, may not put in the extra effort and may make the workplace difficult for

management. Herzberg (1974) found that employee engagement is a motivation factor

that may lead to employee job satisfaction. This thematic finding is consistent with

previously published findings that found engaged employees are more likely to be

focused, loyal, and productive (Hakanen et al., 2017).

Empowering employees. Empowering employees was the second subtheme that

emerged from the data. Employees need to feel they are part of the business and that they

are valued. An empowered employee can strengthen employee commitment (Erturk &

Vurgun, 2014). An invested employee in the business is inclined to show a sense of

ownership according to P4. A dedicated employee will contribute innovative ideas in an

organization (Harshitha, 2016). P1 stated, "If management does not empower or support employees then they will become disengaged with the organization." An employee that does not feel empowered may feel negative emotions towards the organization. Negative emotions can result in the inability for the employee to connect causing job dissatisfaction.

Theme 3: Compensation Considered Effective Retention Strategy

Compensation was the third theme that emerged from the data analysis. For this study employee compensation is defined in terms of wages, bonus, and incentives. Compensation proved to be an effective retention strategy for all of the participants. Kwon (2014) found that compensation packages improve employee output, which aligned with the response from P2. P2 indicated, "Efficiency improved when they incentivized their pay structure to allow employees to earn more. P2 believed, "Quality was not negatively affected when employees were satisfied with their pay and the bonus." P2 further elaborated, "Inadequate compensation and incentives can increase employee turnover. When compensation is comparable and beneficial to the employee, then you find more of a dedicated, motivated, and in fact attentive employee." According to P1, "For an organization to retain valuable employees, there is a need for competitive salaries."

P5 was the strongest advocate of compensation for being an effective retention strategy. P5 stated, "From our experience, monetary strategies are always more effective in our organization because employees feel motivated, their attitude towards work and their colleagues are much more positive." P5 further indicated, "Rewards can attract

employees even minor rewards." Compensation is a determinant of job satisfaction

(Bodla, Hussain, & Chen, 2014). Ibidunni, Osibanjo, Adeniji, Salau, and Falola (2016)

along with P2 posited that compensation had a positive impact on retention. Whereas, P3

indicated, "Compensation is the least effective strategy." P3's reasoning behind

compensation being the least effective strategy is because "Some employees want a

work-life balance. Compensation may not necessarily be a top priority for all employees

because not all employees have the same priorities." P2 and P3 both believed that

compensation is costly to the organization. However, P2 found, "The payout versus the

savings would be able to improve the viability and profitability of the organization." P3

stated, "Despite being costly I agree that it is an investment that is worth it when you find

a reliable employee and you want to retain them." In Herzberg's two-factor theory

compensation is considered a hygiene factor and not a motivating factor. On the other

hand, compensation can lead to employee dissatisfaction. This thematic finding is

consistent with previously published findings that found compensation to be an effective

retention strategy (Aa & Berkel, 2014; Lee et al., 2016).

Incentives and bonus. Incentives and bonus was the third subtheme that emerged

from the data. Key terms used in participant responses included incentives, rewards, and

bonus. Management can add bonus and incentives to the base salary. Incentives and

bonus are factors to consider when developing a retention strategy. An incentive offered

to employees by management encourages the employee to work harder according to

Bennett and Levinthal (2017). Financial incentives and bonuses are extra additions that

can influence an employee to stay or leave an organization according to P1, P2, P4, and

P5. Having the opportunity to earn a bonus was considered an incentive to P2, P3, and P4 because this may not be possible in other organizations. P1 and P5 agreed that added incentives could become a motivating factor for many employees. Herzberg et al. (1959) discovered that reward systems are factors that help to improve job satisfaction and employee retention. According to Terera and Ngirande (2014), there is a positive correlation between employee retention and a rewards system. An individualized incentive program allows the employee to become personally engaged because the outcome rests on their shoulder.

Theme 4: Employee Recognition Enhanced Job Satisfaction

Employee recognition was the fourth subtheme that emerged from the data. Recognizing, appreciating, and valuing employees' performance was identified by participants. Four out of five of the participants believed that employee recognition was an effective retention strategy. Similar to the findings of this study, Zargar, Vandenberghe, Marchand, and Ayed (2014) confirmed that employee recognition could increase employee retention.

P1, P2, and P3 mentioned the need for employees to feel that they are essential to the organization. P3 stated, "Employees want to feel recognized for a job well done." Acknowledging the work that an employee is responsible for can boost self-motivation, which leads to a positive outlook on the organization. P2 and P3 stressed the importance of management showing employees they are valued. P2 further mentioned, "Management recognizes their worth." Cameron and McNaughtan (2014) explained that when management shows support to the employee, there becomes an increase in work

performance and employee retention, which aligns with the responses from P3. According to P3, "A simple 'thank you,' 'good job,' or 'job well done' can boost employee morale and motivation." P2 further indicated, "Employees that feel a sense of motivation and encouragement from management are more likely to stay." Simple appreciative words can encourage employees to continue thriving. Being recognized by the organization becomes not only an achievement for the company but also an achievement for the individual. Kim's (2014) suggestion for management is to create a recognition strategy to acknowledge employees. Herzberg (1974) found that recognition is a motivation factor that may lead to employee job satisfaction. This thematic finding is consistent with the findings from Herzberg et al. (1959), which highlighted recognition as a factor that can improve employee retention.

Praising employees. Praising employees was the fifth subtheme that emerged from the data. Praising an employee can boost their morale. An employee that has a high level of morale and energy will go above and beyond the normal. According to P5, "You can praise the employee, but at the same time let them know what they can improve upon." The responses from P3 and P4 aligned with the findings from Zhang et al. (2014) that verbally praising an employee motivated them. However, P5 disputed the need for management to constantly praise employees. P5 stressed, "You do not always have to praise an employee because they may become too complacent."

Appreciation and feedback. Appreciation and feedback was the sixth subtheme that emerged from the data. Giving employees feedback on their progress and capabilities builds upon the trust and loyalty. An increase in job satisfaction leads to an increase in

employee retention according to Sukriket (2015). Feedback is a critical factor in

employee retention. It is important to show appreciation to the employees that work for

your organization. Communicating an employees' value and contribution to the

organization is essential. Employees should be able to voice their concerns to

management (Harshitha, 2016). Management should be able to provide practical

feedback to employees (Raina & Britt-Roebuck, 2016). An employee that feels

appreciated in the workplace environment has a more positive atmosphere. An employee

that does not feel valued becomes agitated, dissatisfied, and can disrupt the flow of

business. P4 mentioned, "Management wants an employee to value the business as much

as they do." P5 found that, "Providing positive feedback to employees and recognizing

their accomplishments improved the retention of employees."

Theme 5: Advancement Decreased Job Dissatisfaction

Advancement was the fifth theme that emerged from the data analysis.

Advancement is the extent an individual takes to increase their personal development and

advance their career, through education and training. P1 noted, "When an organization is

willing to assist an employee in the development of their career, then the employee feels

more loyalty to the organization and its mission." According to Saeed et al. (2014),

advancement may increase employee motivation leading to higher employee retention

rates. P3 cited, "Career path planning" when asked what strategies were implemented to

retain employees. P3 believed, "Employees should have the opportunity to advance their

careers." P5 mentioned, "Development encourages growth and stability." The lack of

perceived advancement can increase the decision to the leave the organization.

P1 spoke further on career advancement. P1 stated, "Goal seekers often determined and looking to improve on themselves exponentially. This often will not line with the company needs, and therefore the employee may not feel satisfied with the company's approach to the development. However, laid-back employees often don't seek change and therefore are more comfortable with their normal duties." Employees are willing to stay with an organization if advancement opportunities are available. Advancement contributes to job satisfaction according to Herzberg's two-factor theory (Datt & Washington, 2015). Herzberg (1974) found that advancement is a motivation factor that may lead to employee job satisfaction. This thematic finding is consistent with the findings from Herzberg et al. (1959) who identified advancement as a motivator factor.

Training and development. Training and development was the seventh subtheme that emerged from the data. Training and development allow the employee to have the opportunity to understand their position, learn more about leadership and the business and in turn strengthen their job responsibility. Kang et al. (2015) stated that employees look forward to opportunities for recognition and advancement. The support of furthering the career goals of the employee can have a positive influence on employee retention. Training and development allow management to improve the skills of their employees. P3 believed, "Management should provide their employees with the opportunity for training and development." The lack of training and development can cause employees to become discontent and lead to job dissatisfaction according to P3 and P5. Training and development increase job satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959), which is

consistent with the findings from this study. Based on the results of this study, as well as previously cited research by Clausen, Tuftw, and Borg (2014) management should provide the opportunity for further training and development for their employees.

The participants' responses and the organizations' employee retention documents helped me to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies managers used to retain employees. There is a limited amount of current literature on retention strategies of small retail business owners exclusively to Trinidad. The results of this study provided a stable foundation for other small retail business owners with insight into how to motivate, implement, and retain valuable employees. Employers need to find retention policies that encourage employees to stay at their organization by incorporating strategies and practices that address the needs of employees. This qualitative study was explored to fill in the gap in the literature. The findings of the study extended the knowledge in the field of retention strategies that small retail business manager's use from Trinidad.

Applications to Professional Practice

The findings of the study may be applicable to professional business practices in small retail businesses by providing a foundation for organizational leaders to reference effective retention strategies. Participants indicated the strategies managers of some small retail businesses use to retain employees. Leaders who have struggled to maintain a stable employee count can refer to the identified themes to enhance their business performance. According to participants in this study, (a) frequent communication improved employee retention, (b) employee engagement motivated employees, (c) compensation considered effective retention strategy, (d) employee recognition enhanced job satisfaction, and (e)

advancement decreased job dissatisfaction are effective retention strategies that can improve business practices. The findings in this study could lead to a sustained employee retention rate and an improved relationship between management and employees. Management may be able to understand and implement the appropriate retention strategies to retain employees.

The results of my study could help to improve business practices. Organizational leaders should seek effective strategies that will help retain skilled and valuable employees. Employee retention is not successful based solely on one factor (Prince, Nagar, & Chacko, 2017). The participants in this study indicated that communication, employee engagement, compensation, employee recognition, and advancement are factors managers should consider when developing their retention strategies. Managers should establish two-way communication to improve employee retention. Communication between both parties can help to solve problems and provide solutions before the issue magnifies. Engaged employees tend to become more involved in the organization. Compensation can either be an incentive for an employee to stay or leave. However, P2 stated, "compensation should not be the driving force behind retention strategies because it may not incentive all employees." Employees feel appreciated and valued when management recognizes their efforts. Employees that feel appreciated may go the extra mile for the organization. Advancement and growth opportunities within an organization help employees stay engaged. According to P2, "Employees want to work for an organization that cares about their wellbeing and where they feel valued." P3

advised, "Organizational leaders to assess their current state and tailor strategies and solutions to address accordingly."

Implications for Social Change

The results of the study could contribute to a positive social change in small retail businesses and create awareness of the factors that influence employee retention. Tangible improvements to individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, or societies could occur from the themes identified. The identification of what motivates employees to stay or leave an organization could minimize the financial costs of resources such as recruitment and hiring costs. The development of retention strategies can lead to policies and practices that may help leaders maintain their human capital by increasing employment stability, employee commitment, employee motivation, and employee communication. The findings from this study could potentially benefit organizations in Trinidad by providing insight into information that may improve employee retention. Small business leaders may be able to implement effective retention strategies that potentially could reduce turnover, increase growth, increase profitability, and in turn strengthen economic development.

Recommendations for Action

The results of this study could help organizational leaders develop and implement strategic retention strategies that are suitable for their specific business needs. P3 stated, "Each organization is different, and one strategy will not be effective." The implementation of an effective retention strategy is critical if organizational leaders want to retain employees. Organizational leaders need to assess the current state of affairs to

determine their challenges then modify strategies and solutions. Implementation of ineffective retention strategies can become detrimental to the bottom line and could lead to an increase in employee turnover rather than a decrease.

After exploring the strategies that business managers use to retain employees, I have determined five specific recommendations for action based on the responses from participants. The first recommendation, business managers should develop new retention strategies to sustain employee stability. Business leaders must expand their knowledge and establish which retention strategies are suitable for their business model. Retention strategies vary from organization to organization. The second recommendation, implement the chosen strategies within the organization. Ensure that employees are aware of the implementation and make available an opportunity for questions to be asked and answered. The third recommendation, develop monitoring guidelines for the implemented employee retention strategies. The establishment of monitoring guidelines will help leaders decipher what strategies are working and what strategies are not working. Having insight into what measures work and do not will help leaders develop a proactive retention plan rather than a reactive retention plan. The fourth recommendation, create a working environment that allows employees to feel comfortable voicing their concerns or opinions about management. Fostering an environment of communication and collaboration leads to increased morale, this ultimately leads to increased productivity. A positive work environment allows management to spend less time trying to find solutions to problems. Management that is less resistant to employees can create a harmonized environment. The fifth recommendation is for management to make it a habit

to thank employees for what they have contributed to the organization. Communication is a strategy to connect with employees. For an organizational leader to choose the right retention strategy, they need to consider a variety of recommendations. Not all recommendations will apply but based on the circumstances a process of elimination can be used to determine the best suitable strategy.

I will disseminate the findings of this study through several methods. Participants of the study will receive a one to two page summary of the results of the study. If requested, the participant will receive a copy of the final publication of the doctoral study in its entirety. I will seek to have this study published in the ProQuest/UMI dissertations database for current and future researchers to acquire. I will attempt to publish this study in scholarly journals and professional journals. I will seek opportunities to present the research findings to community stakeholders.

Recommendations for Further Research

Employee retention needs a proactive approach from leaders. In this study, I restricted participation to only participants from small retail businesses that have managed employees for a minimum of 3 years located in Trinidad. Future researchers can address the limitation of this study by allowing ample time to collect data from participants, expand the sample size, and build upon the findings from this study. For future research opportunities, I would recommend researchers conduct further research pertaining to effective employee retention strategies from different industries and different geographic locations. Future research can concentrate on a more substantial study population size, a closer look at a larger organization with more employees, and

management of employees for a minimum of 5 years as opposed to 3 years. For future research, I recommend a study on the factors that lead to job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction in the Caribbean taking into account the culture. From my research, there has been limited research on effective retention strategies conducted in the Caribbean.

Reflections

From a young age, I was always interested in the business field. However, my parents had the dream of me becoming a lawyer or a doctor. I knew that those were not fields that I was interested in and wanted to pursue. So, I set my sights out on being the best and achieving the highest level possible in the area of business. I researched and realized to achieve the goal I needed to complete a Doctor of Business Administration degree (DBA), which became a dream of mine.

I did not realize how challenging, engaging, and rewarding the doctoral study journey would become. I used the word *journey* because the experience had many highs and lows. When I first started the dissertation journey I thought that it would be effortless just like the other educational degrees that I have obtained. I have four different degrees. However, I soon learned that earning a doctoral degree was not going to be as straightforward and smooth as I initially thought it would be.

I focused on achieving the goal I set forth for myself. At times, I became discouraged and frustrated, but I always thought to myself that it was too late to quit. When I thought about quitting I would think to myself that I have invested a lot of time already, so I might as well finish it and achieve my dream otherwise I may regret it later on in the future. No one wants to live with regret, so I continued, and I am happy that I

did because I delved deeper into the topic of employee retention and was able to see how it applies in the real world.

I acquired extensive knowledge throughout the doctoral study journey. I never felt quite accomplished before completing the DBA. The DBA made me feel fulfilled, and that is the best feeling in the world to see my efforts come alive in an entire academic paper. Upon completion of my study, I plan to use the knowledge that I have gained to help other students and businesses.

Conclusion

The retention of suitable employees has become one of the major challenges of human capital management (Terera & Ngirande, 2014). When an employee leaves an organization, the leader loses valuable institutional knowledge and experience. The purpose of this study was to explore strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees. Using the qualitative method, I conducted semistructured interviews with one business manager from each of the five small retail businesses in Trinidad. I used open-ended interview questions, asked in the same order, to five business managers in Trinidad to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies managers used to retain employees. Five themes emerged from the study: (a) frequent communication improved employee retention, (b) employee engagement motivated employees, (c) compensation considered effective retention strategy, (d) employee recognition enhanced job satisfaction, and (e) advancement decreased job dissatisfaction. The findings from the study can apply to other organizations located in different geographic locations that want to improve employee retention. Business leaders and managers from small retail

businesses can use the findings of this study to develop effective retention strategies that encourage employees to stay.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Interview Questions:

1. What strategies and methods have you implemented to retain employees?

2. What obstacles have you faced when implementing retention strategies?

3. How did you address the barriers to implementing the employee retention strategies?

4. How did you know your retention strategies were successful?

5. What strategies are the most effective in retaining employees?

6. What strategies are the least effective in retaining employees?

7. What additional information would you like to share about retention strategies?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol	
What you will do	**What you will say—script**
Introduce the interview and set the stage—often over a meal or coffee	Good day. My name is Alicia Singh. I appreciate you taking the time to sit down with me and help me have a better understanding of retention strategies in your business. I will ask you a few questions on the topic. Please let me know if you have any questions before we start or even during.
• Watch for nonverbal queues • Paraphrase as needed • Ask follow-up probing questions to get more in-depth	1. What strategies and methods have you implemented to retain employees? 2. What obstacles have you faced when implementing retention strategies? 3. How did you address the barriers to implementing the employee retention strategies? 4. How did you know your retention strategies were successful? 5. What strategies are the most effective in retaining employees? 6. What strategies are the least effective in retaining employees? 7. What additional information would you like to share about retention strategies?
Wrap up interview thanking participant	I would like to thank you again for taking the time and to assisting me in this research process for my doctoral study. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Schedule follow-up member checking interview	When possible, I would like to schedule a follow-up member checking interview to ensure I captured the information accurately. Please let me know when would be best for you.

Follow–up Member Checking Interview

Introduce follow-up interview and set the stage	I have printed a copy of the interview questions along with a synthesis of your responses. Please be so kind to review and let me know if my interpretations were accurate or if I missed anything.
Share a copy of the succinct synthesis for each individual question	I will share a copy of the succinct synthesis for each participant.
Bring in probing questions related to other information that you may have found—note the information must be related so that you are probing and adhering to the IRB approval.	

Walk through each question, read the interpretation and ask: Did I miss anything? Or, What would you like to add?	1. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed 2. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed 3. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed 4. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed 5. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed 6. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed 7. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed 8. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed 9. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed 10. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed

Appendix C: E-mail Invitation to Participate

E-mail Subject Line:

Invitation to participate in the research project titled: "Employee Retention Strategies in Trinidadian Small Enterprises"

Dear _____ (Will insert potential participant name),

I am a doctor of business administration (DBA) student and researcher at Walden University. You are invited to participate in a research study about employee retention in Trinidad. The purpose of the study is to explore strategies small retail business managers use to retain employees. I will conduct a 45-minute face-to-face interview. As the researcher, I am inviting managers who have experience with successful retention strategies to participate in the study.

To participate in the study, you must meet the eligibility criteria. The eligibility criteria include (a) be at least 18 years old, (b) manager in the business, (c) work in a small retail business in Trinidad, and (d) experience with implementation of successful strategies resulting in high employee retention numbers. If you answered "yes" to the eligibility criteria questions, then you are eligible to participate in the study.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you are free to accept or decline the invitation. If you decide to participate in the study, you can change your mind later. Your identity will be kept confidential. There is no compensation for participating in this study. However, your participation will be a valuable addition to my research and findings. The findings of this study could be useful for leaders to improve employee retention in their business.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact me directly at 1-868-_____ or e-mail me at alicia.singh@waldenu.edu. After confirmation of your participation, I will e-mail you a consent form that provides additional information about the study. I will be in contact with you to set up a mutually agreeable date, time, and location for the interview.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask. If you have any questions later, you may contact me via alicia.singh@waldenu.edu. I look forward to working with you.

_____
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