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The Role of Team Development in Ensuring Small Business Profitability

Sharon Hunter Nikolaus
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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Sharon Hunter Nikolaus

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Walden University

2019

Abstract

The Role of Team Development in Ensuring Small Business Profitability

by

Sharon Hunter Nikolaus

MBA, American Intercontinental University, 2003

BA, Rutgers—The State University of New Jersey, 1980

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

August 2019

Abstract

Some small business leaders lack strategies to develop effective teams. Lack of team development affects the ability of restaurant small business owners to remain profitable for longer than 5 years. The focus of this multiple case study was an exploration of the role team development plays in business profitability. The population for this study was 3 experienced owners of restaurants in New Jersey that remained open for longer than 5 years. The conceptual framework was based on the Tuckman model of team development to highlight the connection between the model and how small business owners use team development to remain profitable for longer than 5 years. Data were collected using face-to-face interviews and review of business documents provided by 2 of the participants. Through thematic analysis of the data, the following themes emerged: the number of years in business and the training program; well-developed, skillful teams are key to business success; committed teams lead to sustainability; and team development and sustainability. Studying the team development strategies used in small business restaurants may help other business owners stay profitable for longer than 5 years. The findings of the study may provide valuable information for individuals wanting to start a business or for owners of small businesses who want to learn how to make their businesses profitable. Profitable businesses can create positive social change in communities by providing jobs and an influx of capital to community neighborhoods.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to the following people in my life. To my husband, Nick, and our four children, thank you for your love, patience, and understanding. To my late mother, thank you for your love and mentorship and for making me a strong woman. To my dad, a World War II veteran and entrepreneur, thank you for giving me a business sense. To my late cousin Cee Cee, thank you for setting the standard and for helping me become a lifelong learner. I also dedicate this study to my uncle, Mr. Thomas Young, for his love. To my cousin Val, thank you. To my cousin Darlene Collins Henry, thank you for fighting to live and progress through your brain injury and breast cancer. Thank you to my siblings, the late Sylvester F. Hunter, Sr., and Virginia Hunter. Thank you to my military family, especially Technical Sergeant Elaine Drummond, Senior Master Sergeant Claudia Floyd, Miss Monique Jones, Chief Master Sergeant Kevin Warbrick, and Major Esseck Martin. A special thank you to the late Lieutenant Colonel Theresa Covington Ayers, I love you to the moon. Lastly, I dedicate this study to the Tuskegee Airmen, who fought hard at home and abroad for civil rights so I might have a military career. They are Dr. Major Nancy Leftenant Colon; my late uncle Staff Sergeant John Pritchett, Sr.; the late Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Harris Mayfield; the late Dr. Richard C. Caesar; the late Technical Sergeant George Watson, Sr.; the late Reverend Dr. Milton Holmes; the late Lieutenant Colonel Eldridge Williams; the late Mr. Robert Baker; Chief Master Sergeant James Cotton; the late Lieutenant Colonel Leo Gray; the late Captain Roscoe Dabney; the late Dr. Leslie Hayling, Sr.; and the late Master Sergeant Shade Lee.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	iv
Section 1: Foundation of the Study.....	1
Background of the Problem	1
Problem Statement	2
Purpose Statement.....	2
Nature of the Study	3
Research Question	4
Interview Questions	4
Conceptual Model.....	5
Operational Definitions.....	6
Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations.....	7
Assumptions.....	7
Limitations	7
Delimitations.....	8
Significance of the Study	8
Contribution to Business Practice.....	8
Implications for Social Change.....	9
A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature.....	10
Tuckman Model	12
Team Development Models.....	14
Military Teams.....	20

Success or Failure	22
Business Sustainability Strategy.....	26
Funding Sources.....	34
Transition	39
Section 2: The Project.....	41
Purpose Statement.....	41
Role of the Researcher	41
Participants.....	43
Research Method and Design	44
Research Method	44
Research Design.....	46
Population and Sampling	48
Ethical Research.....	50
Data Collection Instruments	51
Data Collection Technique	54
Data Organization Technique	55
Data Analysis	55
Reliability and Validity.....	57
Reliability.....	57
Validity	58
Transition and Summary.....	60
Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change.....	62

Introduction.....	62
Presentation of the Findings.....	62
Theme 1: The Number of Years in Business and the Training Program.....	64
Theme 2: Well-Developed, Skillful Teams Are Key to Business Success.....	65
Theme 3: Committed Teams Lead to Sustainability.....	68
Theme 4: Team Development and Sustainability.....	69
Sustainability Reporting.....	70
Applications to Professional Practice	71
Implications for Social Change.....	71
Recommendations for Action	72
Recommendations for Further Research.....	73
Reflections	74
Conclusion	75
References.....	77
Appendix: Interview Protocol.....	96

List of Tables

Table 1. Demographic Data	64
Table 2. Team Development Training Program	65
Table 3. Team Development Training Nodes.....	67

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Small businesses have been critical to the development and sustainability of the U.S. economy (Small Business Administration [SBA] Office of Advocacy, 2018). Small businesses provide jobs and services worldwide, and the loss of small businesses may have a significant adverse effect on a community. Business owners who are able to cultivate and preserve their businesses may help lower unemployment numbers. I explored how team development played a role in ensuring small business profitability for longer than 5 years.

Background of the Problem

The economic downturn of 2007-2009 crippled the U.S. housing market and construction industry (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2017). There was a more significant effect on small businesses than large businesses (BLS, 2017). This was due in part to less demand for products, lack of sales, and the inability of small business owners to obtain credit (BLS, 2017).

Small businesses account for approximately 99.6% of employers in New Jersey (SBA, 2018). In 2015, food service and accommodation comprised 62.9% of small business employment in New Jersey (SBA, 2018). In the third quarter of 2016, 6,199 new businesses opened in New Jersey while 6,320 businesses closed (SBA, 2018).

Team development is complex and can involve personality factors, such as whether team members are introverts or extroverts (Gino, 2015). Team development may have a positive or negative effect on a business environment. For the purpose of this study, I focused on the role team development plays in business profitability.

Problem Statement

Small businesses decline at a high rate, with 50% of new businesses not remaining in business for longer than 5 years (SBA, 2014). In the third quarter of 2016, 6,320 small businesses closed in New Jersey (SBA, 2018). In 2018, restaurants were projected to make up 8% of the jobs in New Jersey, for a total of 349,900 jobs (National Restaurant Association, 2017). Teams that work well together can have a positive impact on profitability (Chen, Chang, & Chang, 2017). The general business problem was that some small business leaders lack strategies to develop effective teams. The specific business problem was that lack of team development affects the ability of restaurant small business owners to remain profitable for longer than 5 years.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore team development strategies that restaurant small business owners used to remain profitable for longer than 5 years. The population that I sampled for this study consisted of owners of three restaurant small businesses located in New Jersey that remained profitable for longer than 5 years. The findings of the research study may provide valuable information for individuals who want to start a business or small business owners who want to learn how to make their businesses profitable. Profitable businesses may create positive social change in their communities by providing jobs and an influx of capital to their neighborhoods.

Nature of the Study

Three research methods highlighted by Richards and Morse (2013) are qualitative, mixed method, and quantitative. Qualitative methodology was the best research method to study the role that team development plays in business profitability as well as how lack of team development affects the ability of restaurant small business owners to remain profitable for longer than 5 years. In a qualitative study, researchers describe or explore a subject, whereas in a quantitative study, researchers use statistics to represent hypotheses and variables (Boesch, Schwaninger, Weber, & Scholz, 2013; Ma, 2015; Richards & Morse, 2013). Qualitative studies use *how*, *what*, or *why* questions in relation to a particular event (Patton, 2014). Because I did not intend to use statistics, hypotheses, or variables, quantitative methodology was not the best choice for this study. A mixed method study combines both qualitative and quantitative methods (Ragas & Laskin, 2014; Richards & Morse, 2013). Because mixed methodology includes quantitative tools such as statistics and surveys and I did not use the aforementioned tools, mixed methodology would not have been the best choice for this study.

I considered four research designs to be potentially appropriate for a qualitative study on team development: phenomenological, ethnographic, narrative, and case study (Hunt, 2014). I chose case study design. Moustakas (1994) described empirical phenomenological design as following the lived experiences of specific persons or groups. I did not seek to explore lived experiences, so phenomenological research did not fit the purpose of my study. In an ethnographic study, researchers study communities, groups, or organizations using numerous methods of data collection (Marshall &

Rossman, 2016) over an extended period of time (Smets, Burke, Jarzabkowski, & Spee, 2014). This study did not involve studying a specific cultural group, so ethnography was not appropriate. Narrative inquiry involves oral histories and folklore, whereby a researcher records stories told by groups of people (Hunt, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I did not record oral histories or folklore, so narrative inquiry was not appropriate. Case study is detail-oriented, ensuring control over the data collection process, such as the ability to use numerous sources of information for data collection (Yin, 2018). Case study was my choice because I planned to use multiple sources of information during data collection.

Research Question

The research question for this study was the following: How does the lack of team development affect the ability of restaurant small business owners to remain profitable for longer than 5 years?

Interview Questions

I asked participants the following interview questions:

1. Based on your experiences, what role does team development play in the success of your business?
2. How do you know if a prospective employee will fit into your team?
3. What skills are necessary to build a successful team?
4. What, if any, training do you provide relative to team development?
5. What team development strategies do you use in your restaurant?
6. How do team members demonstrate their commitment to team development?

7. How do team members demonstrate their commitment to sustainability?
8. What team development activities do you and your team participate in outside the restaurant?
9. What additional information can you share regarding the role of team development in ensuring small business profitability for longer than 5 years?

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model that I used for this study was the team development model. I used Tuckman's (1965) team development model to establish a focus on team dynamics, task fulfillment, and the steps teams take to develop working relationships to meet a common goal. Tuckman's original model used four stages: forming, storming, norming, and performing. Tuckman and Jensen (1977) added an additional stage, adjourning. In the adjourning stage, the group concludes its mission and breaks up. During the adjourning stages, the group has an opportunity to close out and recognize the work that they accomplished together (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977). As a group forms, it goes through changes in the development process (Tuckman, 1965). Team members have to learn to work together for a common goal to ensure survivability (Smith, 2005). In the fourth stage, performing, team members are more attuned to business strategies and are able to focus attention on business goals, leaving the leader free to delegate more responsibility (Tuckman, 1965).

In this study, I explored how team development can affect the ability of restaurant small business owners to remain profitable for longer than 5 years. In a small business such as a restaurant, team development may be essential to maintaining a stable structure

for business development and longevity. I used Tuckman's team development model to highlight the connection between the model and how small business owners use team development to remain profitable for longer than 5 years.

Operational Definitions

Bootstrapping: A process whereby a company uses funds from other people to fund the startup and or growth of the business (Geho & Frakes, 2013).

Business angels: Business angels are individuals who invest in business ventures with entrepreneurs such that both share the risk. Business angels also provide business connections and business expertise. Business angels share in the reward when a venture becomes profitable (Argerich & Cruz-Cázares, 2017).

Debriefings: Debriefings or *debriefs* are staff meetings in which military personnel gather to discuss particulars of an event in which they participated, such as a military exercise. Discussions generally point toward increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the team's activities (Allen, Reiter-Palmon, Crowe, & Scott, 2018).

On-the-job training (OJT): OJT is a training method used to coach and mentor workers (Bradford, Rutherford, & Friend, 2017).

Succession planning: Succession planning is a plan for the future of a business to ensure business sustainability (Sharma & Dave, 2013).

Team development: Team or group development, as defined by Tuckman in 1965, involves four elements. The elements are forming, norming, storming, and performing (Tuckman, 1965).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Unverified facts that have risk are assumptions (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The assumptions for this study were as follows. First, I assumed that participants would answer questions completely and honestly during the interview process. Lack of honesty in participants' statements could have skewed or invalidated data. Second, I assumed that the study might provide value to the small business community. New information might lead to social change by helping companies with strategic preparation for maintaining their business for longer than 5 years. The study might also introduce insight on sustainability strategies for small business owners entering the market. Third, I assumed that the instruments used for data collection might yield valid data, and I assumed that there would not be any researcher bias during the study. Fourth, I assumed that the documents reviewed during the interview process would be relevant and reflect a true picture of the participants' business practices. Examples of the documents I reviewed were meeting minutes, emails, progress reports, other reports, and notes (Yin, 2018). When used with other sources of evidence, the accuracy of the information found in those documents needs verification (Yin, 2018).

Limitations

Limitations are possible weaknesses of a study (Dean, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The study took place in New Jersey. One limitation was that the study results might not apply to every business in New Jersey or other geographic locations. I interviewed three owners of small business restaurants. The second limitation was that

the answers of participants might not be representative of all business owners. A third limitation was that interviews can be time consuming, which might equate to a higher cost to conduct the research. There was the potential for one or more participants to choose not to participate or fully engage in the interview process. A fourth limitation was the possibility that no new information would be found.

Delimitations

Delimitations provide the scope of a study and define the boundaries of the study (Dean, 2014). Three restaurant owners in New Jersey participated in the study. The participant pool consisting of restaurant owners was homogeneous. Saturation with a homogeneous participant pool should occur sooner than in other designs (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). I excluded businesses in other geographic locations. I included only businesses in New Jersey.

Significance of the Study

Changing the approach and strategy for team development may be a crucial aspect of maintaining profitability and competitive advantage. I interviewed three small business restaurant owners to explore the role that their team development strategies played in ensuring small business profitability for longer than 5 years. The findings from this study may provide information to restaurant owners to assist them in developing teams that lead to long-term profitability and growth.

Contribution to Business Practice

Small businesses keep the economy strong (Yang, 2012). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to learn how team development can help restaurant

small business owners remain profitable for longer than 5 years. The findings may include information that might help small business owners with employer-employee relationships, employee retention, and team building strategies, which may lead to business profitability. The findings from the study may be of value to small business restaurant owners, who may garner an understanding of the strategies needed to sustain a business for longer than 5 years. Learning strategies for team development may help business owners make the best decisions possible to grow their business. Lessons learned by restaurant small business owners may translate to businesses outside the restaurant industry. Successful and unsuccessful small business owners could share best practices and benchmark ideas.

Implications for Social Change

Small business closings create holes in the economy and the community (SBA, 2013). Restaurateurs open businesses to provide for their families and enrich their communities (Bradbard et al., 2014). The results of this study could provide helpful information to small business owners with respect to team development as it relates to profitability. This study may bring unsuccessful small business owners together with successful small business owners to learn better business practices and benchmarking strategies. New businesses might open, stimulating the economy, creating new jobs, and relieving the stress of unemployment and possibly reducing poverty. The information from this study could have a direct positive effect on small businesses and unemployment in the state of New Jersey.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

Small businesses are important to developing and sustaining the U.S. economy (SBA, 2013). The SBA (2018) determined that in New Jersey, small businesses accounted for approximately 99.6% of the state's employers. Still, many small businesses fail in the first 5 years (SBA, 2014).

Factors that I explored in this study were the identification of team development strategies used by business owners to remain operational and the transfer of those behaviors to failed companies. Exploring the team development strategies used by successful business owners may allow other business owners to use the information as a benchmarking tool. Behaviors that successful companies use with the aim of surviving the next economic downturn, such as team development, could lead to positive social change and collaborative business relationships.

Literature can support a study or can highlight, compare, and contrast elements of a study. The literature used for this study supported the conceptual theory of the study. The problem statement and research methodology were tied to peer-reviewed, scholarly sources and directly related to the central research question. The Walden University Library was the primary resource for locating articles. Government agency websites were a secondary source for articles. The literature reviewed for this study included books, journal articles, government websites, reports, statistics, and dissertations. The Walden University library system supported this research by allowing me to locate several hundred peer-reviewed scholarly articles. The peer-reviewed scholarly journals that I consulted for this study included *Journal of Workplace Learning*, *American Political*

Science Review, Journal of Strategy and Management, Journal of Small Business Management, and Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Business Source Complete, ABI/INFORM Complete, Multidisciplinary Databases, Academic Search Complete, and ProQuest Central were business databases that I used in the study. The following key words supported complete Boolean searches: *small business, strategy, business strategy, team development, team dynamics, sustainability, economic downturn, economic recovery, ethics, and Institutional Review Board (IRB).* The literature review has seven sections focused on the following topics: the Tuckman model, team development models, military teams, success or failure, the economic crisis, business sustainability strategy, and funding sources. The team development model section touches on aspects of team development and its importance to the business community. In the success or failure section, I examine the meanings of success and failure in business. The economic crisis section addresses the last economic crisis and its effect on the business community. The business sustainability strategy section includes strategies business owners can incorporate in their business sustainability plans. Lastly, the funding sources section includes innovative and creative ways that small businesses can obtain funding. The literature review has 60 references, 53 (88%) of which are peer reviewed. Thirty-four (57%) of the references are dated within 5 years of the expected completion of the study. There are 130 references used in the entire doctoral study, with 100 (77%) of those peer reviewed and 80 (62%) published within 5 years of the expected completion of the study.

Tuckman Model

Tuckman (1965) and Tuckman and Jensen (1977) created the team development model. Team development theory has changed little since its initial formulation. Large and small businesses use team development. There are four stages in Tuckman's model: forming, storming, norming, and performing. In the first stage of team development, called *forming*, individuals join as a group for a common goal (Tuckman, 1965). These individuals may or may not have worked together as part of a team in the past. The degree of success is dependent upon several factors, such as members' understanding of the tasks and level of experience with working on a team. Tuckman described team members in the forming stage as similar to babies trying to make their way in the world. In the forming stage, group members are dependent upon their leader in much the same way as a baby is dependent upon a parent or caregiver (Largent, 2016).

In the second stage of team development, *storming*, team members may not be able to reach consensus on how to attack an issue or manage a project. The group may have differing opinions on the vision. There may be strife and anger among team members, which represent the opposite of the team interaction in the forming stage (Largent, 2016). In the storming stage, these issues are often compounded by the fact that group members have not jelled as a team and are still getting to know one another's strengths. The team lacks productivity in this stage, but the "storm" must occur for the team to move forward (Largent, 2016).

In the *norming* stage, group members begin to form relationships, which help the group to work on meeting goals. The group may still have some unresolved issues, but

productivity increases and divisiveness decreases (Largent, 2016). The group begins to become a team at this stage. The group also adopts standards, patterns, and models of behavior.

In the fourth stage, *performing*, the team has synergy. The team is fully formed and capable of producing the assigned work. Members' relationships are completely formed, communication is ongoing, and work processes are rote.

In 1977, another stage was added to the model by Tuckman and Jensen (1977). The fifth stage is called *adjourning*. In this stage, the team has met its goals and completed its project. The team must dissolve or adjourn to go on to complete other tasks. The team meets ceremoniously to discuss the project, with an emphasis on what went well and what could have gone better. The manner in which the group dissolves can impact future ventures for group members (Largent, 2016).

Tuckman developed the model after studying how groups interact with one another. Through study of groups, Tuckman found that groups reach cohesion and focus on task completion by Stage 4 (performing). Tuckman, along with Jensen (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977), developed the fifth stage, *adjourning*, after reviewing several studies. Tuckman and Jensen concluded that the *adjourning* stage is the most difficult for those involved in the process, due in many cases to the feeling of loss that workers experience. The conclusion is that small groups working together follow a particular protocol in the development of group dynamics (Tuckman, 1965).

Team Development Models

Maes, Stansbury, and Schifo (2015) addressed the question of whether or not a team can reset itself if it is unable to move from Tuckman's storming stage to the norming stage. In order for teams, which are generally comprised of people of various ages, cultures, and ethnicities, to be productive, they may need to go back to the forming or norming stage to move forward (Maes et al., 2015). A study conducted in New Zealand revealed leadership as the primary source for team development (Cardno & Tetzlaff, 2017). However, the study also revealed that there is a lack of leadership knowledge in developing teams. The participants had no knowledge of team development theories or practices. The study, which took place in New Zealand primary schools, applied the Tuckman model of team development. In analysis using Tuckman's model, Cardno and Tetzlaff found that senior leaders, including school principals, did not engage in formal participation in team development practices. Cardno and Tetzlaff concluded that senior leaders, including school principals, needed education and training in the areas of team behaviors and team dynamics so that they would be better equipped to thoroughly develop their teams. In the Ryan (2017) article team behaviors among nurses is one area focus in the article. In a hospital environment, nurses generally work together as a team to ensure a positive patient care experience. Azizan, Darus, and Othman (2017) also concluded that nurses work together to promote excellent patient care. Compared to other teams, nurses are more likely to coordinate, strategize, and collaborate for the welfare of their patients (Azizan et al., 2017). Like Cardno and Tetzlaff, Ryan explored the Tuckman model of team development to analyze teamwork and its effectiveness on

performance. One area of importance relative to team dynamics is relationships among team members and the criteria affecting each team (Ryan, 2017). Individual attributes such as personality, age, and patterns of behavior affect the ability of team members to work together effectively. Ryan's conclusion was similar to that of Cardno and Tetzlaff in suggesting that training is necessary for team members to perform optimally. Azizan et al. looked deeper into team development and found that not only training, but also mentoring staff on how to overcome problems among team members is necessary.

The findings of Cardno and Tetzlaff and Ryan were consistent with those of Matthews and McLees (2015). Matthews and McLees found that teams need effective leaders to perform optimally. Matthews and McLees, Cardno and Tetzlaff, and Ryan agreed that educating team members is important for effective team development. Matthews and McLees used the Tuckman model as the basis for their study. Morton, Igantowicz, Gnani, Majeed, and Greenfield (2016) conducted a team development study in two London, England emergency room hospital settings. In contrast to Ryan's research, the participants in Morton et al.'s study included not only doctors and nursing staff, but also receptionists and managers. Traditionally, in these hospitals, nursing staff and doctors do not work side by side in a collaborative manner (Morton et al., 2016). One theme that emerged was that team development took time, and with time, the tradition of nursing staff and doctors not collaborating eroded (Morton et al., 2016). Although Tuckman was not mentioned in the study, some of the factors relating to team development mirrored the Tuckman model, such as the forming and storming stages. Key points needing to be addressed were expectations and education and training. When

participants were educated on what they were expected to do and were given the proper tools to accomplish their tasks, they were able to assimilate into the collaborative model. Their newfound team concept extended for longer than the workplace and into life outside the work environment. At the conclusion of the study, participants found that the group benefitted from team dynamics. Additional study is needed to ascertain whether or not patients benefit from team dynamics.

Jiang, Flores, Leelawong, and Manz (2016) considered whether there is a connection between empowering a team and the performance of the team. During their study, Jiang et al. concluded that team empowerment leads to information sharing among members. In addition, information sharing leads to increased performance (Jiang et al., 2016). Conversely, Jiang et al. discovered that team conflict leads to poor team performance. The ability to work in a team is an attribute sought by most employers (Casper, 2017). The attribute of working in a team is important because working as part of a team can lead to business sustainability (Casper, 2017). Casper (2017) conducted a study on higher education students to understand students' degree of teamwork ability. Casper noted that the students canvassed were unprepared to venture into the workplace. The students did not possess the needed skills to work as part of a team. Casper recommended curricula using the Tuckman and the Tuckman and Jensen models to teach students the skills they would need to work as part of a team. Although students were assigned team projects, they were not given the tools to work in a team environment. Casper recommended that institutions of higher learning give students practical

knowledge of teamwork concepts so that they would be well versed in and successful at teamwork and team-building activities.

Gino (2015) and her team conducted a study of 57 pizza restaurants with regard to team dynamics. Specifically, Gino sought to determine whether extroverted leaders were more successful when they worked with passive employees or proactive employees. The pizza restaurants were part of a chain, so each restaurant was set up in a similar way. The employees at each location tracked profit margins for 2 months. At the conclusion of the study, Gino and her team found that extroverted leaders garnered higher profit margins. The higher profits had a connection to the type of employees that the leaders managed. Teams comprised of an extroverted leader and passive employees garnered higher profits. The opposite was true when the leader was extroverted and the employees were proactive (Gino, 2015). Although the Tuckman model was not specifically mentioned in this study, there were similarities to stages of the Tuckman and Tuckman and Jensen models. In the successful groups, norming was evident, in that group members were able to form working relationships, thus enabling the group to meet its goals.

Mintrop and Charles (2017), in studying teacher team development, uncovered attributes of the Tuckman model without specifically mentioning Tuckman. In a collaborative environment of team development, teachers went through various stages. In one stage, group members tried to figure out what they would get out of being in a collaborative group and how to put the group's needs before individuals' needs (Mintrop & Charles, 2017). In another stage, the teachers needed to resolve group conflict in order to gel as a team. These attributes were reflective of the Tuckman model. Conversely,

Poston, Haney, Kott, and Rutledge (2017) closely followed the Tuckman model during a study of healthcare professionals. Poston et al. used Tuckman's initial four stages, defining each stage for participants. The group further defined criteria for each stage of team development, adding their own interpretation. Furthermore, teams were assessed to determine information about each team. Poston et al. found that many variables determined what made a good group. Some of those variables were good listening skills, communication based on the education level of team members, age, and experience. Poston et al. found that assessing each team made moving through the storming stage easier and enabled the teams to move more quickly through each of Tuckman's stages of team development.

Webber and Webber (2015) viewed team dynamics as a vital part of team development, similarly to Tuckman. Webber and Webber suggested that the stages in Tuckman's model were not the most reliable when discussing teams and how teams operate. Team development evidence has not changed much since Tuckman first researched the topic, and very little information exists on the topic.

Using the Tuckman model for team development involves assumptions that may or may not fit some teams (Webber & Webber, 2015). Some of the assumptions are that team members will work together for an extended period of time, have no assigned leader, and have never worked together in the past. Through research, Webber and Webber found that just the opposite is true. Team members have imposing project cutoff dates, have a leader, and may have worked together in the past. Dynamic teams, such as

those studied by Webber and Webber, do not follow the typical path suggested by the Tuckman model.

Webber and Webber introduced the concept of dynamic team development, which has few, if any, similarities to the Tuckman model. Tuckman referred to events in the development continuum as *stages*, whereas Webber and Webber chose to use the term *phases*. The first phase, the *building phase*, is defined by the team leader finding out about the project when no other members have been assigned to the team (Webber & Webber, 2015). During this phase, the team leader focuses on developing a relationship of trust and an environment in which the team can have a successful project. A leader has to build a team, taking into consideration team members' skills and personalities. Team leaders assign team members to specific tasks and need to prepare members in advance for the project launch.

The second phase, the *launching phase*, begins once team members are apprised of the project's purpose (Webber & Webber, 2015). During this phase, the team leader establishes trust with the team as well as the vision for the project. The vision was established and discussed during the launch meeting. Failure to effectively launch creates an atmosphere in which team members are not engaged (Webber & Webber, 2015).

The third phase, the *collaborating phase*, commences once team members decided how to meet their goals and objectives (Webber & Webber, 2015). This is also the phase in which team members' roles and responsibilities are defined. Then team members begin to share ideas and build relationships (Webber & Webber, 2015).

During the fourth phase, *performing*, team members work toward their goals and objectives (Webber & Webber, 2015). It is in the performing phase when objectives are reinforced and progress is evaluated, allowing for redirection if, and when necessary. Webber and Webber noted conflict in team dynamics is a positive aspect of team development. Conflict cultivates success (Webber & Webber, 2015). In the fifth and final stage, goals and objectives are met and the team disbands. Numerous evaluations occur and team leaders check to be sure the project is progressing properly. If not, there is a possibility that the project will need a relaunch with or without the original team. This process requires the project to cease and the team to reorganize, citing the original goals and objectives (Webber & Webber, 2015). Webber and Webber added to the team development literature by providing a different perspective than Tuckman.

Military Teams

Military teams have been studied for many years. Goodwin, Blacksmith, and Coats (2018) posited 5 areas of military team science. The areas are: team training, team performance, team staffing, team leadership, and team processes. The areas are not reflective of the Tuckman model. Each area provides insight into teams and team development in a military forum. The military team concept is vital to readiness and successful mission accomplishment (Goodwin et al., 2018). Teams can effectively perform missions more successfully than a single person without support of others. Traits vary from person to person such as age, sex, education, reasoning skills, perspectives, and background, leading to differing ideas on solving a particular problem or completing a particular task (Goodwin et al., 2018). The shift in the importance of team strategies and

composition became important during World War II (Goodwin et al., 2018). Teams must be developed according to the change in military strategies over the years even though each service focuses on developing different aspects of team development (Goodwin et al., 2018). The lack of a team structure in certain situations could be devastating. Team member performance, whether in a military setting or a civilian setting is a multifaceted process (Goodwin et al., 2018).

Like Goodwin et al, experts at the Royal Norwegian Naval Academy believe military teams are expected to deal with complex military operations. This study involves cadets at the Royal Norwegian Naval Academy (Voll Mjelde, Smith, Lunde, & Espevik, 2016). Cadets are taught team development techniques and skills so that upon graduation, academy cadets are able to function in complex military environments. The goal is for cadets to have a clear understanding of how team resiliency training plays a role by teaching team training (Voll Mjelde et al., 2016). Teams must be developed to work seamlessly in high stress environments where team members are able to rebound and operate at a high level (Voll Mjelde et al., 2016).

Norwegian military experts tested how military teams perform during complex exercises using an assessment checklist rating system. The training is used to assess cadet teams using simulator training as well as practice exercises. Cadet team achievement between simulator training and training exercises is compared among each team. Some rated areas included: adaptability, speed, agility, creativity, and success. The study results point to simulator training as a predictor of how cadets will perform during training exercises. Similar stressors were found in both types of training. Voll Mjelde et al. found

that stress affects the ability of a team to work cohesively which affects the decision-making process. Similar to Norwegian military experts, Webber and Webber believe in the importance of modeling and testing so leaders are able to lead effectively in complex situations.

Success or Failure

Fisher, Maritz, and Lobo (2014) conducted a qualitative study of 10 business owners to reach an understanding of the criteria these individuals use to determine success. There is little agreement in the literature on this topic, and Fisher et al. wanted to fill the gap in the literature. From the information obtained from the business owners, Fisher et al. formulated a way to measure the data. Nine barometers of success emerged. These barometers of success became the elements explored, measured, and analyzed in the next study involving 213 participant business owners. In the findings, Fisher et al. defined success as more than money but rather a complicated, multitude of factors. Furthermore, Fisher et al. found the process of success to be a constant process with many parts as did Taneja, Golden Pryor, and Hayek (2016). Fisher et al. were unable to come to a consensus on a definition of success.

In a constantly changing economy, business owners must find new ways to create an environment for success and sustainability (Taneja et al., 2016). Whether the strategy is innovation, social media, technology, marketing or a website, smaller entities should develop strategies to remain competitive with larger entities. Fisher et al. concluded that success took many pieces to reach fruition and the use of social media can promote and propel a business further by reaching larger audiences (Taneja et al., 2016). Since small

businesses are important to any economy, strategic plans should include sustainability as a key component (Taneja et al., 2016).

The first person to consider the importance of economics and business in concert is Richard Cantillon (Brown & Thornton, 2013). In the 18th century, Cantillon believed small business owners took risks to reach success (Brown & Thornton, 2013). Although Cantillon's theory may have a narrow perspective, the theory can be widely used (Brown & Thornton, 2013).

Baluku, Kikooma, and Kibanja (2016) studied economic development in a depressed area, specifically Uganda. The idea is to find the behaviors that constitute business success. Two things are evident in the research. Firstly, money is not the single factor leading to success, a conclusion similar to Fisher et al. Secondly, the psychological situation of business owners, such as a positive attitude and belief in one's ability to succeed, is a basis for success (Baluku et al., 2016). Baluku et al. found a direct correlation between business success, business survival, and employment.

An area of team development sometimes overlooked is debriefing. Reyes, Tannenbaum, and Salas (2018) studied teams using debriefings as part of team development. The purpose of the article is to show the simplicity and benefit of the debriefing process. Teams conducting debriefings are more successful than teams who did not perform debriefings (Reyes et al., 2018). Webber and Webber also suggested something similar called feedback and reflection. Feedback and reflection and debriefings are interchangeable. Both allow for team members to discuss positives, negatives, strengths, and weaknesses (Reyes et al., 2018; Webber & Webber, 2015).

Debriefings are developed for use by military teams (Reyes et al., 2018).

Debriefings could be beneficial when used by any team in any context (Reyes et al., 2018). In a corporate setting, debriefings are shorter than those conducted in a military setting but equally beneficial. A debriefing should be structured and act as an opportunity for a team to assess their overall effectiveness (Reyes et al., 2018). In conclusion, the article is written to inspire teams to use debriefings as a means to meet their goals.

The Economic Crisis

Geho and Frakes (2013) presented a paper on how the economic crisis affected business and the ability to remain sustainable. The crisis ended in 2009, but as of 2012, small businesses continue to have financial difficulty (Geho & Frakes, 2013). Small businesses in Tennessee are the target population of this study. The economy made it difficult for small business owners to access funding. Even when credit is an available option, many small business owners chose not to use credit. Those business owners who chose loans are willing to take on the debt (Geho & Frakes, 2013). One alternative to conventional lending is bootstrapping. Government lending and incentives for small businesses brought some growth. Some of the short-term changes helping small businesses are elimination of fees and an increase in the SBA loan guarantee. Banks decreased many small business credit lines due to increased risk. During an economic downturn, short-term, government programs should be available until the economy improves enough that the programs are no longer necessary. Rubery and Rafferty (2013) studied the effect the economic downturn has on women in the workplace.

Rubery and Rafferty specifically studied the effects the 2008-2009 recession has on women in the job market. Their focus is on the extent of how the recession affected government policies and the lower number of positions available to women, as a result of the recession. Rubery and Rafferty considered the aspects from the perspectives of labor policies, demand, and the ability of women to be flexible in the job market when the market is in a downturn. Research suggests women no longer want to be flexible, but rather women prefer consideration for long-term employment even during a recession (Rubery & Rafferty, 2013).

Ramakrishnan and Ragothaman (2014) examined the recession of 2007-2009, with regard to how the financial crisis affected the U.S. economy and how business owners deal with crisis. Many businesses have to overhaul operations, spending, investing, and eliminate risk (Ramakrishnan & Ragothaman, 2014). The impact of the recession is different across businesses based on their industry. Larger organizations have more options due to their size and resources. Many businesses owners were able to capitalize on the low interest rates during the recession and use this time to streamline their businesses and lower operating costs.

The Sugheir, Baughn, and Neupert (2013) article contains information on unemployment rates in the United States during the latest economic downturn. The period of research by Sugheir et al. is between 2007 and 2009. Sugheir et al. found a correlation between unemployment rates and business ownership rates. Sugheir et al. notes there is an increase in business births in states with higher unemployment. In addition, Sugheir et al. notes there is not the same relationship between business births

and unemployment in states with low levels of business births prior to the economic downturn. Sugheir et al. questions whether self-employment is the only alternative after losing a job working for an employer.

Just as Sugheir et al. notes significant effects of the last financial crisis, Fairlie (2013) notes similar findings. Fairlie and Sugheir et al. agree, higher unemployment rates lead to business growth. Persons not previously employed are more likely to start a new business during times of high unemployment (Fairlie, 2013). Fairlie delves further into the economic issues created by the financial crisis. He notes other effects of the financial crisis such as foreclosures, lack of access to financial backing, business deaths, job losses, and a double-digit unemployment rate, which is twice what it was before the financial crisis began. Fairlie similarly suggests starting a business might be an alternative to unemployment due to a lackluster job market much the way Sugheir et al. suggests in their research. Although many businesses fail during a financial crisis, many new businesses are born. Their success post-crisis could have a positive effect on the economy (Fairlie, 2013).

Business Sustainability Strategy

An aspect of sustainability called succession planning is the impetus behind the study performed by Sharma and Dave (2013). The focus of the study is on sustainability of family owned businesses from one generation to another generation. Another area of focus is on the planning involved to remain sustainable and survive for longer than the life of the original business owner. One finding is that advanced planning is the key to

long term, successful business sustainability (Sharma & Dave, 2013). Another finding is that a succession plan can affect business performance (Sharma & Dave, 2013).

Symons and Lamberton (2014) studied the social ramifications of business sustainability theory. More specifically the gap that exists in the literature with regard to the perception that business sustainability has separate parts when in fact, there should not only be a financial view, but also a combination of social, economic, and environmental aspects. Anything less would not present the complete picture of sustainability. While Sharma and Dave focused on planning, Symons and Lamberton focused on the social aspect of sustainability in an effort to fill the gap since there were few articles on the topic. The three elements: social, economic, and environmental sustainability need to be viewed as one not as a separate entity (Symons & Lamberton, 2014). Each area depends on the other to complete the sustainability picture. Separating the three areas could lead to disastrous results (Symons & Lamberton, 2014).

Arend (2013) considered human emotions for future study and inclusion by weighing the economic and like Symons and Lamberton, the social aspects. Using different variables such as emotions could help to answer questions that may arise. Arend suggested that additional research and writing incorporate alternative theories that set it apart from other business aspects.

Theodorakopoulos and Figueira (2012) discussed the void in research pertaining to strategies that help grow a small business. Theodorakopoulos and Figueira studied strategies such as job creation, innovation, differentiation, and economic growth (Kuratko, Morris, & Schindehutte, 2015; Theodorakopoulos & Figueira, 2012).

Theodorakopoulos and Figueira chose to join organizational learning theory and strategic leadership to see how melding the two could increase performance of small businesses. Theodorakopoulos and Figueira concluded business performance and a business culture of leadership and performance were interwoven. Testing businesses of differing ages, operational stages, and differing environments to garner a broader scope warranted additional research (Theodorakopoulos & Figueira, 2012). Additional research could produce a complete account of business and the strategies important to businesses development.

Sustainable business practices translate into profitability (Hill & Seabrook, 2013). Hill and Seabrook (2013) also believed the following things were necessary to attain sustainability: (a) safety and health initiatives, as they apply to sustainability and viability, (b) safety and health professionals who understand the sustainability principles, and (c) safety and health professionals who align their organization's safety and health initiatives with existing sustainability strategies.

Business death rates were high during the latest recession (Khan & Muhammad, 2015). Even businesses such as banking and trading, which in the business world were exempt from such trouble performed poorly during the economic downturn. It can take years to build a successful business and a series of bad events such as an economic downturn, to create an atmosphere whereby a business death occurs. Some businesses have strategies to remain sustainable (Geho & Frakes, 2013) while some business owners do not plan, diversify, or differentiate to keep with current world-trends. Some business owners choose to live day to day, making money without planning for the future. In the

aforementioned instance, there was a clear lack of stability and sustainability (Khan & Muhammad, 2015). Khan and Muhammad (2015) focused the study on assisting business owners with long-term sustainability strategies. Khan and Muhammad posited five points necessary for longtime survivability combined with continuous improvement. Business owners must understand that not every business strategy will work for every business plan. As part of a sustainability plan, funding sources must be part of the plan. Business owners might need to search for unconventional funding sources if conventional funding sources are not within reach. Khan and Muhammad found that business owners should consider a number of factors, in their sustainability plan. Diversification, flexibility, culture, and funding are a few factors to consider. Khan and Muhammad believe someone could use their study to research business sustainability and create new business models.

Understanding sustainability opened the door for several sustainability consulting firms to create a niche in the market (DesJardins, 2016). Some of the largest, well-known firms are teaching business owners about sustainability. Two examples of such companies are Ernst and Young and Deloitte (DesJardins, 2016). DesJardins (2016) believed the concept of sustainable development could be helpful to business owners. DesJardins believed ethical issues might arise with organizations in the business of sustainability consulting. DesJardins concluded there must be a global focus on sustainability to ensure business owners meet needs of consumers without destroying the planet. In addition, DesJardins recommended a closer look at the ethical side of sustainability through more study.

The European Union embeds sustainability policy in every process (Rotaru, 2015). Rotaru (2015) presented a paper on sustainability related to risk management as it applies to health and safety. They concluded that institutions performing risk assessments were not utilizing sustainable procedures. Instead of using an electronic format for reporting and implementing procedures, they used paper reporting. Paper reporting was not a sustainable process due to the number of trees used to make paper for the printed copies. Rotaru recommended use of electronic documents to improve sustainability.

Small business owners help sustain the economy in many areas of the world (SBA, 2013; Yang, 2012). Many small businesses are unable to live for longer than 5 years (SBA, 2014). Yang (2012) explored small businesses relative to overcoming barriers during an economic downturn. Small businesses are more susceptible to death during economic turmoil than other businesses (Yang, 2012). In recent years, a number of large businesses such as GM and several banks were privy to government bailouts to remain viable while small businesses closed (Yang, 2012). One finding was that there was a need for additional research in the area of international business. An economic downturn in one country can have a negative effect on the economic stability of other countries.

WalMart negatively affects small business wherever WalMart establishes new stores (Ficano, 2013). When a new WalMart store opens, there are significantly more small retail business deaths than births (Ficano, 2013). Throughout the article Ficano (2013) assessed the effect larger retailers have on small and family owned businesses.

In their article, Brown, Lambert, and Florax (2013) examined the births, deaths, and the existence of manufacturing businesses in the 20th century. Through their research, the research team noted how businesses began and ended over time. Many business owners, specifically manufacturing firms, entered the market with many, failing to sustain their place in the market. Other manufacturing firms were successful at sustainability. The successful firms shaped both the exit and entry of manufacturing firms. Additional information and data analysis could be required to ascertain new information in the future (Brown et al., 2013).

Bello and Ivanov (2014) examined a real estate company with respect to business growth and sustainability. Bello and Ivanov surveyed the business owner, asking him a series of questions. They found that the real estate company lacked innovative ideas and used obsolete methods. Bello and Ivanov concluded in order for the real estate office owner to be successful, he needed to create a better business strategy, a marketing strategy, become an innovator in his field, differentiate, and take on investors (Bello & Ivanov, 2014).

Cacciolatti, Fearn, Ihua, and Yawson (2012) conducted a quantitative study of small businesses in the food and drink business, sampling 296 small businesses. The focus of the study was the relationship between marketing and growth. To achieve profitability and growth, small business owners should understand marketing to have a competitive edge over competition and increase growth. Bello and Ivanov believed marketing was one of the most important business strategies for success. Through their research, Cacciolatti et al. also concluded marketing was important to increasing

profitability and growth among small businesses. The important link was business owners with the foresight to choose the proper marketing outlets. In addition, Cacciolatti et al. found the smallest businesses may be limited in their scope. Limitations might be due to lack of understanding the type of marketing needed, lack of a strategic plan, or lack of financing. Cacciolatti et al. concluded marketing expertise and a marketing strategy are a formula for growth with potential for success. Cacciolatti et al. suggested formal marketing training as a source for understanding marketing at all levels.

An excellent customer service experience was more important than quality (Klaus & Maklan, 2013). This theory connects to Total Quality Management, which was prominent in the 1980s (Klaus & Maklan, 2013). Through research, Klaus and Maklan (2013) found business owners used customer feedback as a barometer to understand the customer service experience. Klaus and Maklan were concerned a gap existed in the practice used by business owners to measure the depth of customer service satisfaction.

Marketing was an important and powerful tool in business (Bello & Ivanov, 2014; Cacciolatti et al., 2012). The use of promotional gifts as a marketing tool could have a positive or negative effect on customers. This was dependent on affective or cognitive decision-making process (Laran & Tsiros, 2013). For example, in cognitive decision-making, a consumer wanted more information about the free-gift. In effective decision-making, the consumer did not need additional information. The effective consumer appreciated the surprise (Laran & Tsiros, 2013).

Cause marketing grew in use since its introduction by American Express in 1984 (Rozencher, 2013). Cause marketing was a means for businesses to raise funds for

nonprofits to highlight and promote a positive business image. For example, American Express donated the funds raised to restore the Statue of Liberty. Cause marketing as a strategy assisted with increased sales and profits (Rozencher, 2013).

There have not been studies about education in business where young students are involved (Järvi, 2015). This gap in the literature gave Järvi (2015) the opportunity to pursue studying business enterprise education from the perspective of studying the role of the teacher and the information students learned as well as how they learn from working in a small business. The yearlong qualitative case study included querying 8 teenaged students. The study took place in Europe where students study a vocation for at least three years. The significance of the study surrounds the important role small businesses play in the economy (Järvi, 2015; SBA, 2013). One of the findings was that learning was a perpetual process. Learning comes from experience and skills, over time. A limitation of the study was that Järvi was a longtime business owner and had working knowledge of day-to-day business operations. Järvi might not interject his knowledge into the workplace. Students had to develop their business skills. The longer Järvi worked with the students, the less the students had to rely on Järvi for assistance. Students could use what they learned and use the knowledge in real time. Students used feedback from customers and other students to gauge success. Lessons learned from the study may allow teachers the opportunity to learn how best to teach business practices. Järvi learned the role of the teacher was less important as time went on, but ever present.

Research in the social media realm was not a new topic of study (Roy, Maxwell, & Carson, 2014). Roy et al. (2014), chose to study how the use of social media helps

small business owners in Arkansas to sustain their businesses. In addition, Roy et al. wanted to investigate how these businesses reached their customer base. As a result of their study, Roy et al. found social media was the primary influencer when customers made decisions on purchases and the reviews of business owners on social media use as a positive tool was mixed. Business owners were most comfortable using their website and Facebook to reach customers versus using lesser-known social media outlets (Roy et al., 2014).

Funding Sources

Shiller (2013) and Yeoh (2014) examined crowdfunding, a relatively new funding innovation, with regard to small business, using qualitative methods models. The recession of 2007-2009 negatively affected the ability of small business owners to secure conventional funding or credit (Yeoh, 2014). A solution was the use of Internet based funding sources such as crowdfunding (Shiller, 2013; Yeoh, 2014). Yeoh studied crowdfunding from its inception to new regulatory requirements. Regulations pertaining to crowdfunding might be just in time since there was concern over the business failure rate among new businesses in the United Kingdom. Yeoh found the new regulations good in terms of the protections provided for investors. In addition, the regulations allowed small businesses the opportunity for expansion.

Shiller and Yeoh had similar ideas on the use of crowdfunding. Shiller highlighted three innovations in the literature. One of the innovations was crowd funding (Shiller, 2013). Investors made a small investment in a business similar to the way venture capitalists made investments in business. The main difference was the use of a

website to make investments. This innovation may create a positive impact on the financial world; however, this type of funding had its pitfalls. By using the website, there was the possibility of unscrupulous behavior by investors as well as the company listed on the website.

Venture capitalism was a way to fund new ventures, especially startups. For some small business owners, securing the backing of venture capitalists was not an option. Business owners used crowdfunding, called an innovative funding option similar to venture capitalism, using the Kickstarter website. Crowdfunding was not a new concept (Gobble, 2012). Funding to build the statue of liberty and to fund trick or treat for UNICEF used financing concepts similar to crowdfunding. Gobble (2012) highlighted an entrepreneur unable to secure venture capital funding who used Kickstarter. The entrepreneur set a fundraising goal of \$100,000 for his project and within 24 hours, raised one million dollars. This example was an anomaly. Most entrepreneurs raise an average of \$5000 (Gobble, 2012). People funding a Kickstarter entrepreneur might receive a nominal gift in exchange for money but could not make an investment in the business. A law enacted in 2012 may relax regulations and allow investments in return for equity (Gobble, 2012). There will be set limits. A phenomenal feat for a startup venture but as Shiller pointed out this innovation had its pitfalls. There was the possibility of fraud. Unscrupulous entrepreneurs might raise funds multiple times through crowdfunding only to close the businesses, but not before pocketing the balance of the funds (Gobble, 2012).

Like New Jersey small enterprises, micro, small, and medium sized enterprises had a significant role in the economy and employment in the South Pacific (Naidu &

Chand, 2012). Small businesses in the region lacked access to funding. Lack of funding had a direct impact on the ability of companies to grow. Naidu and Chand (2012) explored financial barriers companies in the South Pacific had to overcome. The Naidu and Chand study revealed operations problems, administrative problems, and funding problems were at the core of economic problems for companies in the South Pacific. Similarly, in the United States, small businesses also had funding problems during the 2007-2009 economic downturn (Yeoh, 2014).

Nkpoyen and Bassey (2012) performed a quantitative study to analyze micro lending as a strategy from the perspective of women to help them in ridding themselves of poverty. A random sample of 300 participants lived in a developing area of Nigeria. Many lived below the poverty level. In developing countries, women are more likely to live in poverty (Nkpoyen & Bassey, 2012). Micro lending served women well by empowering them and helping to develop their business skills (Nkpoyen & Bassey, 2012). In addition, Nkpoyen and Bassey and Ondoro and Omena (2012) believed micro lending was successful at poverty reduction and alleviation in a number of people. Micro lending also created the opportunity for many to afford medical care, better education for their children, and the ability to save money. Based on answers from participants, the authors presented data to support increased micro lending. Micro lending positively affected economic stability in homes and in the community by providing increased self-employment opportunities and financial wealth.

Young people were the most likely affected by poverty (Ondoro & Omena, 2012). The authors queried how credit would help young people with entrepreneurship to keep

them from facing a future of poverty. The study reflected on poverty, the young people of Kenya, and micro-lending's effect on their ability to achieve financial freedom. The participants included 513 young people and 339 youth groups who received micro financing. Ondoro and Omena (2012) performed quantitative analysis and data retrieved was from semistructured questionnaires, structured questionnaires, journals, books, and reports. The results of the study revealed there was no relationship between micro lending and savings among young people in Migori County, Kenya. Participants did, benefit from training. Ondoro and Omena recommended several changes to the micro lending process: additional training for young people on funding and business skills, further research over a long period to ascertain data on the effect of micro lending and financial freedom on young people, an increase in loan amounts, and a user-friendly loan process.

Johnson and Sohl (2012) studied the effect angel investors and venture capitalists have on small business investments. Johnson and Sohl found the smaller investments made by angel investors had a huge impact on businesses. Angel investors invest personal funds while venture capitalists generally invest money belonging to a group of investors. While Johnson and Sohl studied the difference between angel investors and venture capitalists, Dorff (2014) studied the problems with angel investing and crowdfunding. In Dorff's estimation, people investing in businesses utilizing the internet have a lesser chance of recouping their investment than those who invest in a traditional manner. Reasons investors could not garner a return on their investment include lack of financial oversight, no reasonable process to ascertain whether a business was valid, and whether the businesses are a profitable investment (Dorff, 2014).

North, Baldock, and Ullah (2013) researched how an economic downturn, in particular the financial crisis, affected small businesses in the technology niche. The team studied the ability of these business owners to obtain financing, whether through angel investors or banks. The research team conducted a combination of interviews and surveys. Findings included the fact that financial representatives from banks presented business owners with parameters for receiving financing that were undesirable. One reason a financial manager puts such parameters in place was due to past, low investment return. Venture capitalist investors also had concerns about investment returns. Businesses may need government intervention (North et al., 2013).

Kerr, Lerner, and Schoar (2014) presented information in their article in support of angel investing. The authors researched two groups of angel investors and the project they supported. Through their research of the two angel investment groups, Kerr et al. found the angel investors were successful at positively influencing the development of businesses where they invested. The influence of the angel investors made businesses more likely to survive past the death threshold of five years (Kerr et al., 2014). In addition, the businesses were more likely to have increased viewership on their websites and higher employment statistics. Angel investors fully vested who spend time with the business owners ensure business success (Kerr et al., 2014). Kerr et al. need to research more angel investment groups since they researched only two of the many angel investment groups in the United States. The additional research should focus on individual angel investors to ascertain their impact on businesses where they invest.

Bruton, Khavul, Siegel, and Wright (2015) explored non-traditional funding sources. Their focus was to explain the financing options to people growing or starting a business. Crowdfunding and microfinance were two funding sources Bruton et al. examined and wrote about in their article. Gobble, Shiller, and Yeoh also examined crowdfunding while Nkpoyen and Bassey and Ondoro and Omena examined microfinance. Investments through crowdfunding allow a number of people to invest small amounts of money to meet a specific funding goal using technology (Bruton et al., 2015). People in developing countries sometimes use a combination of non-traditional funding sources since traditional funding was generally unavailable to the poor in developing countries. Social media boosted the use and reorganization of microfinancing (Bruton et al., 2015). Bruton et al. concluded the topic warranted further study.

Transition

In this qualitative study, I explored the strategies employed by some small business restaurant owners to survive. The areas presented in Section 1 highlighted the problem of operational sustainability among small business restaurant owners and how some businesses remained sustainable and successful. The foundation of the study, problem statement, purpose statement, and conceptual framework set the tone for the research.

Sustainability was a key ingredient in business viability and success. To reach operational sustainability and a competitive edge, business owners may need to embrace social media, creative advertising, and creative financing. The literature review highlights the team development model, success or failure, a number of strategies used by small

business owners, and funding sources. The information provided in this study and the lessons learned from successful New Jersey small business restaurant owners might motivate former small business restaurant owners to reopen their businesses. Reopening businesses lost during an economic downturn could create new jobs, stimulate the local economy, and reduce unemployment. To identify and recruit participants required addressing local government through a written proposal. Participant interviews took place and data analyzed to draw conclusions. Section 2 detailed how the research process took place, which included the role of the researcher. Section 3 will reveal results of data collection and the analysis of themes that emerged during the study process.

Section 2: The Project

Section 1 detailed the structure of the study, including the research question, interview questions, and conceptual framework. Section 2 includes the purpose statement for the study. This section also provides information on my role as the researcher, study participants and ethics, the research method, the research design, data collection, and instruments for collecting and analyzing the data.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore team development strategies that restaurant small business owners used to remain profitable for longer than 5 years. The population that I sampled for this study consisted of owners of three restaurant small businesses located in New Jersey that remained profitable for longer than 5 years. The findings of the research study may provide valuable information for individuals who want to start a business or small business owners who want to learn how to make their businesses profitable. Profitable businesses may create positive social change in their communities by providing jobs and an influx of capital to their neighborhoods.

Role of the Researcher

My role as the researcher was to listen intently to the participants during the interview process. My goal was to collect as much information as possible, using a semistructured interview process with open-ended questions. Gathering as much information as possible from each participant was important (Brown et al., 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016) so that needed data were collected. Building a rapport and a

relationship of trust can facilitate the ability to gather rich data (LeBaron, Iribarren, Perri, & Beck, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I did not have any prior knowledge of the topic or research area.

Adherence to ethical parameters as outlined in the Belmont Report (2014) such as respect for the participant was vital (LeBaron et al., 2015). The Belmont Report regulates research involving human participants and presents guidance for researchers to ensure that research is ethical. Two of the parameters in the Belmont Report involve informed consent and human selection processes. Informed consent implies that human subjects have a right to decide whether to participate as subjects in a study. A participant must be a volunteer, must understand all provisions of the study, and must receive all pertinent information with regard to the study, including notice of the right to withdraw at any point. The human selection process involves moral decisions to choose proper participants. Selection of participants should be fair, without regard for class or social standing (Belmont Report, 2014).

As a part of member checking, I provided a summary of transcribed data to participants (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013). Providing data to participants after transcription validated the data (Brown et al., 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I was aware of biases that could affect the outcome of the study such as subjectivity instead of fact, omitting groups of people, and inaccurately recording data (Kruth, 2015).

An interview protocol was an important part of the interview process (Appendix), as the protocol listed the interview questions (Harvey, 2017), described the interview method, and indicated how to conduct the interviews (Killawi et al., 2014). Some factors

to include in the interview process are (a) establishing a rapport with the participants, (b) explaining the interview and consent processes, and (c) member checking (Brown et al., 2013; Chan, et al., 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I performed face-to-face interviews at a mutually agreed-upon venue away from the participant's place of business in order to limit distractions.

Participants

The participants for this qualitative multiple case study was three owners of restaurant small business in New Jersey. Doganaksoy and Hahn (2012) and Terrell (2012) suggested that each participant in a study meet specified participant criteria. Participants were volunteers and had an understanding of the study, including the central problem and purpose of the inquiry.

I initially contacted prospective participants by letter. Once a prospective participant agreed to be part of the study, I met the individual in person at the individual's place of business to discuss the study. In doing so, I built a rapport with each participant. I described the study and the interview process in depth. Participants must be apprised of the ethical parameters of a study in relation to protection of participant privacy and the impact of the study (Blackwood et al., 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). My discussion of the study with each participant included the topic of the study, sample interview questions, an explanation of the consent form, participant confidentiality, and the amount of the time involved for participants. The information we discussed only related to the study and the conceptual framework (Irwin, 2013). The target time for interviews was 45-60 minutes. Interview times were longer or shorter depending on the level of participant

interaction. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions at any time throughout the process. Because participants were business owners, execution of the consent form granted access to visit their workplace and the ability to conduct interviews. Participants could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. In keeping with the ethical standards of the Belmont Report (2014), included in the clarification of the study was an assurance that study documentation would not identify participants by name or location. Researchers are responsible for protecting the identities of all participants. A numeric code (e.g., P-1) identified each participant (Campbell et al., 2015). Campbell et al. (2015) recommended locking all data and documentation pertaining to a study in a cabinet for 5 years. To protect participants' information and identity during the research process, use of a password-protected computer to secure and maintain collected data was necessary (Campbell et al., 2015). I am the only person who knows the password to the computer on which study data have been stored. I did not collect information prior to obtaining approval of the Walden University IRB.

Research Method and Design

Each research method has positive and negative attributes. The challenge for researchers is to choose wisely by weighing all options and factors, including time and financial interests. This qualitative case study addressed how and why team development plays a role in ensuring small business profitability for longer than 5 years.

Research Method

The three accepted approaches to research are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodology (Kura, 2012). I used qualitative methodology. Qualitative methodology

provides a researcher the opportunity to explore the human aspect of a study (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015; Yin, 2018). The goal was to glean as much information as possible from participants by asking open-ended interview questions and follow-up questions, if necessary. Qualitative researchers delve deeply to discover and uncover data directly related to the problems they seek to address in their studies.

When using quantitative methodology, a researcher loses the ability to work closely with participants. Quantitative research concentrates on the analysis hypotheses and numerical variables (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015; Spillman, 2014). Quantitative methodology works well in studies using numerical data, variables, or hypotheses (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). In quantitative methodology, numbers are used to interpret collected data (Yilmaz, 2013). A theoretical framework, variables, and the measure of numerical data are the context of quantitative research, along with experiments, statistical data, and analysis of scientific data (Landrum & Garza, 2015; Yilmaz, 2013). There were no numerical or statistical data in my study. For that reason, quantitative methodology was not acceptable for this study.

In the 1980s and 1990s, researchers concluded that qualitative methodology and quantitative methodology may be used together (Terrell, 2012). Whether the sequence of research and analysis is quantitative followed by qualitative or qualitative followed by quantitative, the weakness reported by Terrell (2012) is the same. Like a quantitative study, a mixed method study, a hybrid of quantitative and qualitative methods (Zohrabi, 2013), requires the development of a hypothesis and comparison of variables. Because

there were no hypotheses for this study, mixed methodology was not appropriate, so I did not use mixed methodology.

Research Design

The questions asked in a study can indicate the design (Yin, 2018). The research design for this study was case study. The study design allowed for investigation, exploration, and evaluation of how some companies used team development strategies to remain in operation for longer than 5 years. Case study has been the preferred design used by researchers when asking *how* or *what* questions (Rittenhofer, 2015; Van Wyk, 2016; Yin, 2018). The kind and amount of data collected were dependent on the kind and type of questions asked (Brown et al., 2013; Yin, 2018). Asking the right questions in the right way was paramount (Brown et al., 2013). Case study research allows for an in-depth exploration of cases and a record of as many details as possible (Yin, 2018).

Case study research uses several sources of data (Yin, 2018), including interviews. Quantitative methodology using qualitative case study allows a researcher to use multiple sources of information to collect data (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2018). Marshall and Rossman (2016) suggested using two to three sources of data to validate the study and reach methodological triangulation. Yin specifically discussed six sources of evidence. Using additional sources of evidence distinguishes case study from other research designs such as ethnography or phenomenology. Yin suggested interviews, archival records, participant observation, documentation, artifacts, and direct observations. Face-to face interviews permit direct interaction with participants, whereas a quantitative study is more clinical, relying on a survey (Yin, 2018).

Additional data collection took place using information from business documents such as calendars, letters, administrative documents, meeting minutes, and reports, which may provide information on team development strategies. These documents helped me uncover information about team development and how team development relates to small business profitability. Data revealed in documents could be important to understanding the team development strategies of participants. The use of different methods to collect data was consistent with case study research (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The use of different collection methods may provide an avenue for an in-depth look at team development strategy. The goal was to obtain as many overlapping themes as possible. The volume of cited sources in the study may provide various views on the subject matter, allowing less opportunity for bias or skewed data (Kruth, 2015). The cases I studied related directly to the business problem. I decided upon qualitative case study because I wanted to explore an issue (Sparks, 2013) in a way that might lead to social change. My goal was to delve deeply into each business to garner an understanding of how team development helps businesses remain open for longer than 5 years.

In an ethnographic study, fieldwork is the primary approach used to conduct observations (Richards & Morse, 2013; Yin, 2018). These observations are performed to study humans and garner an understanding of the group's culture (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Case study is not dependent on observation alone, but rather a combination of sources (Yin, 2018). Because my focus was not studying a culture, ethnography did not fit with the type of study I sought to conduct.

Phenomenology is a study method that involves research on the lived experiences of participants (Lamb, 2013). Researchers use phenomenology to study participants' lived experiences in relation to a specific phenomenon (Lamb, 2013; Lin, 2013). In my case study, I did not seek to explore the lived experiences of the participants, so phenomenology did not fit the purpose of my study. I reached data saturation once themes repeated and no new data were revealed (Boddy, 2016). The use of member checking and probing questions enhanced the study and helped in reaching data saturation (Chan et al., 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was three experienced owners of restaurants in New Jersey that remained open for longer than 5 years. The final sample size was based on reaching data saturation (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2015). I used purposive sampling, choosing participants by design rather than randomly (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016; Robinson, 2014), to gather data using open-ended questions. Open-ended questions instead of closed-ended questions gave participants the opportunity to elaborate on their business practices and experiences. The research involved discovering team development strategies used by business owners. The intent was to capture as much rich data as possible, including relevant business experiences, strategies, and processes (Etikan et al., 2016) through data saturation. Data saturation was reached when no new information emerged (Boddy, 2016; Fusch & Ness, 2015). To reach saturation, I interviewed participants until no new themes emerged (Palinkas et al., 2015) and used member checking (Chan et al., 2013) by providing participants with themes that emerged

to obtain their feedback on the information. To achieve methodological triangulation, a researcher should use multiple sources of evidence for cross-examination purposes (Denzin, 1978; Yin, 2018). Marshall and Rossman (2016) stated the importance of remaining flexible throughout the interview process.

The primary data collection source for the study was face-to-face interviews, which occurred away from the participants' places of business. A face-to-face interview allows a researcher greater opportunity to pick up verbal and nonverbal cues. In such an interview, there is potential for in-depth interaction between the interviewer and the participant. Data collection for a case study may occur over a long period, with no established cut-off (Yin, 2018). I sought to collect enough evidence during the interview process to describe team development. Providing participants with proper instructions with regard to a study and the interview process may improve participants' experience. Participants signed a consent form prior to the start of the study. The interview protocol document that I used to help participants in understanding the interview process is in the Appendix.

Participant interviews took place away from the participants' businesses. As the interviewer, I maintained a calm, neutral posture so that the participants would not be fearful or uncomfortable when answering the interview questions. I used a digital tape recorder to collect data during interviews. I asked each participant for consent before their interview was audio recorded. Clausen (2012) suggested transcribing data after each interview. Data transcription took place after each interview, and themes were placed in a document for analysis.

Ethical Research

Ethical behavior does not begin or end with filling out the proper forms. A researcher must be aware of the ethical dilemmas involved with research that will take place (Resnick, 2015). Although researchers cannot anticipate every possible scenario, they must be aware of the ethical behavior expected of a qualitative researcher, such as protection of participants and integrity (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Resnick, 2015). Terrell (2012) clearly identified ethical concerns that researchers need to understand with respect to participants. For example, participants must volunteer to participate and understand their rights, such as the right to a copy of study results.

Data collection began after I received IRB approval #11-09-18-0353314. Care was necessary to protect participants and not to collect data before receiving IRB approval (Blackwood et al., 2015; Musoba, Jacob, & Robinson, 2014). At any time, participants could withdraw from the study without penalty (Gast & Ledford, 2014). Participation in the study was strictly voluntary and without remuneration or penalty for not participating (Gast & Ledford, 2014). Each participant read and acknowledged a consent form, which briefly described the study. In my role as the researcher, it was my responsibility to explain the consent form and ensure that each participant fully understood its content (Kruth, 2015). Participants were encouraged to keep a copy of the consent form for reference. As the researcher, I agreed to keep all information pertaining to this study confidential (Blackwood et al., 2015). To protect the integrity of the study and study participants, I will maintain all data and records pertaining to this study in a locked cabinet for a period of 5 years (Mealer & Jones, 2014). I will destroy all data,

records, and other information pertaining to the study after 5 years. To protect the identity of participants, names of participants and businesses will remain private (Blackwood et al., 2015). I identified each participant using a numeric code such as P-1.

Data Collection Instruments

The proposed study included interviews as the main method of data collection. As a researcher, I used a data collection instrument as recommended by Bastos, Duquia, González-Chica, Mesa, and Bonamigo (2014). I was the primary data collection instrument. As the primary instrument for data collection, I used open-ended questions during face-to-face interviews. I used the interview protocol listed in the Appendix. Documents can validate the information obtained through other sources and point to other areas requiring inquiry. Yin (2018) recommends using multiple documents and possible documents are financial reports, sales reports, inventories, and business procedures. I used documents such as calendars, letters, administrative documents, meeting minutes, and reports for documents analysis (Bettis, Gambardella, Helfat, & Mitchell, 2014). I recorded pertinent information in a journal.

There are three types of interview methods for qualitative research, (a) unstructured, (b) structured, and (c) semistructured (Wethington & McDarby, 2015). I decided upon using a semistructured interview. A semistructured interview has standardized questions each participant will answer. At the end of each interview, participants had the opportunity to add information. Using semistructured interviews also gave the researcher the opportunity to ask follow-up questions and get an in-depth

knowledge of the case to the maximum benefit of the interview process and data collection (Brounéus, 2016; Wilson, 2014).

Case study research includes collecting rich data from different sources (Yin, 2018). I used interviews with three business owners and review of documents for methodological triangulation to understand what made the business owners successful. Interviews took no longer than 60 minutes and took place away from the participants' place of business. I audio recorded interviews using a digital recording device. I recorded a description of the interview location, document data, and notations about the restaurants' processes. Clausen (2012) suggests transcribing data as soon after an interview as possible. Transcription of data from interviews will take place immediately following each interview.

Proposed questions pertain to how team development might help restaurant small business owners remain profitable for longer than 5 years. The use of open-ended questions also provides an opportunity for open discussion between the researcher and participant, resulting in detailed answers. Answering open-ended questions in a job interview or during a research interview, the interviewer must be aware of not only the verbal responses, but the nonverbal cues as well (Hoffmann, 2008). I used a Word document to track themes as they arose during transcription of the interviews.

During the interview process, I made an in-depth description of each interview setting in a journal as recommended by Phillippi and Lauderdale (2017). I transcribed the notes at the conclusion of the interview. I used the same journal to describe the notes made after viewing documents. A researcher must be careful not to make these notes

while the interview was in progress, or important data may not be recorded (Hancock, 2002). With the permission of participants, I audio recorded interviews, but I did not video record the interviews (Mealer & Jones, 2014). Hancock (2002) elaborated that video recording the interviews allow the researcher the opportunity to focus on the participant's answers and fully engage with the participant, eliminating the risk of bias. Hancock (2002) believed audio recording the interview ensured the collection of all data and that participants are undistracted by excessive note taking. Video recording, requires additional rationale and special permission of the IRB. Making a request to use video might add more time to the study process.

Transcription of recorded interviews include participant responses as well as notes on verbal and nonverbal participant responses. Participants must be willing to dedicate no more than 60 minutes for completion of the interview process. Transcription of the notes occurred at the conclusion of each interview as suggested by Clausen (2012). According to Chan et al. (2013), I must ensure I do not introduce personal bias into the study by introducing document, data, and interview materials (Kruth, 2015). To achieve this, I included the process of member checking as recommended by Nelson, Onweugbuzie, Wines, and Frels (2013), to verify themes and have each participant review and validate the analysis of the responses to ensure capture of the correct information. The choice of including a sample size of three participants in the study ensured enough data collection to validate the study results. Boddy (2016) proposed that in qualitative research a single case can be acceptable as a sample size in certain cases such as management. An external threat could be maltreatment of one or more of the participants. An internal threat to the

research study may be the participants chosen for the study. Participants might not be experienced business owners and could answer interview questions inconsistently or untruthfully.

Data Collection Technique

I contacted each participant in person to garner interest in the study. Data collection took place via face-to-face interview using open-ended, semistructured questions in a focused manner (see Interview Protocol, Appendix). Transcription of audio taped interviews, notes, and logs occurred immediately following each interview to ensure the accuracy as recommended by Clausen (2012). In some situations, according to Clausen (2012), note taking can replace audio transcription without hurting reliability. My intention was to audio record each interview and take notes as appropriate to ensure reliability of collected data. Member checking and probing questions aids in the achievement of data saturation as proposed by Marshall & Rossman (2016). I used a member checking process to validate and improve the accuracy of interviews per the recommendation of Chan et al. (2013). I provided each participant with a Consent Form and requested each participant acknowledge a Consent Form. Anyone who participated in or was involved with the study signed a consent form.

Recording interview data in a document will assist with revealing themes as they emerge (Cope, 2014). I read through documents and collected and organized document data using a journal to record themes. Transcription of data took place at the conclusion of each interview to ensure accurate capture of data as suggested by Clausen (2012).

Data Organization Technique

Data must be kept for a certain amount of time (Mealer & Jones, 2014). I will safeguard and keep data, including audio tapes, written records, compact disks, digital recorders, flash drives, and smart pens in a locked, combination safe (Yin, 2018). Taking and maintaining good notes during case study research ensured all information was collected during interviews and when reviewing documents pertinent to the study (Yin, 2018). I logged each piece of data and documentation in a journal to protect and maintain the chain of evidence (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The journal also served as a place to document information to remember for the next interview or problems that arose during an interview. I organized document data by themes as they emerged and kept a data collection log on my computer. Johnson, Dunlap, and Benoit (2010) and Marshall and Rossman (2016) recommend logging and recording collected data. I logged an entry for each item of data collected to include participant identification number, interviews, location of data collection, date of data collection, and all other data in a journal. During data collection, documentation on computer hard drives remained secure and accessible with a password. I was the only person with access to the data and the password. The purpose of maintaining the data are for further study. After 5 years, I will delete or destroy the documentation by shredding or electronic erasure.

Data Analysis

Data analysis follows a set pattern to complete the analysis process logically (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Methodological triangulation involves using more than one source of data (Denzin, 1978). Methodological triangulation can assist a researcher with

affirming, validating, and confirming findings by increasing the understanding of data (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). At the conclusion of the study, I used methodological triangulation to organize and analyze collected data. To facilitate methodological triangulation, I used documents, such as calendars, letters, administrative documents, meeting minutes, and reports for document analysis. During the analysis, I addressed each question to search for themes and key words. Cope (2014) suggested checking and analyzing data numerous times. I read and reread interview data and document notes to ensure I did not miss any themes. I recorded the themes in a document as I identified, analyzed, and coded themes. As themes emerged, I assigned codes to determine which participants revealed the themes.

The data I collected relates to the conceptual framework by supporting the research question: How does the lack of team development affect the ability of restaurant small business owners to remain profitable for longer than 5 years? An analysis of the strategies used by successful companies may help owners of dead or dying companies become operationally sustainable and successful. I used qualitative analysis software to analyze, organize, and code interview and document data. Qualitative analysis software can help a researcher decipher the frequency of themes from raw data (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Statistical analysis, output from qualitative computer-based programs, assists with coding and finding themes (Yin, 2018). I read the collected data several times and recorded themes. Data analysis included coding of themes and data analysis software. Marshall and Rossman (2016) suggested understanding how to use analysis software or whatever computer-based program used.

Reliability and Validity

Lincoln and Guba (1985) introduced criteria for qualitative research trustworthiness. The criteria included: creditability, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Reliability and validity are not measurable but are essential elements to the study. In keeping with the recommendation of Lincoln and Guba (1985), I defined credibility (Patton, 2014), transferability, dependability, and confirmability along with the aforementioned criteria in the context of the study. Addressing triangulation and member checking helped accomplish the task (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Reliability

The consistent collection of reliable, trustworthy data, following a prescribed process throughout the study was a necessity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The transferability of data collected should permit another researcher to conduct the study again and come to the same conclusion (Clausen, 2012; Street & Ward, 2012; Yin, 2018). Although a researcher cannot complete the exact same study twice, a researcher should be able to use the processes to perform another study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each interview must be consistent, following a prescribed protocol (Killawi et al., 2014). All data and processes must reflect back to and support the research question. After the study, each participant had the opportunity to verify their transcript of data collected to ensure the clarity and correctness of transcribed information.

Chan et al. (2013) and Marshall and Rossman (2016) agree member checking is a process whereby participants receive a draft of study findings and make comments on the information. I transcribed all collected data at the end of each interview and recorded

document data in a journal. I analyzed all data for emerging themes and used member checking to ensure study dependability.

Validity

Choosing peer-reviewed, scholarly sources for the study ensures validity and reliability of source materials. Checking and rechecking data collected ensures validity of data (Cope, 2014). Participants reviewed their interview transcript for accuracy and validation after the interview (Cope, 2014). Participants had the opportunity to comment and provide additional information. Assessing the overall study to include positive and negative aspects of data collection methods, as well as methods that worked well and those that did not; lend itself to validation of the study. To maintain a consistent interview process, I used identical interview questions during each interview and used documents as an additional source. Participants had an opportunity to add other pertinent information.

Possible internal threats for my study could be the participants chosen for the study may have very little business experience. Some of the participant owners might have more business experience. The participants may not answer interview questions honestly.

To ensure validity and confirmability, I assessed personal researcher bias for this study (Chan et al., 2013; Cope, 2014). Preconceived ideas did not influence the outcome of the study or be considered or permitted. Data analysis and descriptions of research results should use rich descriptions of themes. Those descriptions should be easily discernible for readers.

All data collected should validate cited sources and ensure data validation from more than one source and author. Careful documentation of data collected and allowing participants to verify the information ensures validity. A valid instrument ensures the reliability of the data collected in the study.

Methodological triangulation, the use of multiple sources of evidence, such as interviewing business owners and reviewing documents, provides more than one way to measure data and provides different perspectives (Denzin, 1978; Yin, 2018). In this study, the use of open-ended interview questions and review of documents provided an opportunity to collect different types of data and gain different perspectives. I transcribed all collected data after each interview, including document data. I recorded document data in a journal. After the study, I verified each transcript of data collected to ensure the clarity and correctness of transcribed information. Participants had the opportunity to comment and provide additional information. As proposed by Nelson et al. (2013), I conducted additional interviews in conjunction with member checking and additional probing questions until data saturation occurs.

Transferability is a process by which the findings of a study are useful to other researchers (Cope, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The findings of this study might be useful to new business owners or business owners that may not have had a successful business experience. This study might also be useful to students who choose to conduct a similar study. In the case of confirmability, the question is whether someone else could confirm another researcher's study (Cope, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). To ensure confirmability, a researcher can check and recheck the transcripts, notes, the interview

process and data to ensure the data was representative of participant answers to interview questions (Cope, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Lincoln and Guba (1985) established criteria for credibility of a study, which include triangulation, member checking, prolonged observation, and persistent observation. I ensured creditability or believability by the strength of the study design. I accomplished this by describing the worldview of study participants during transcription and data interpretation, thoroughly describing interview settings and participants, member checking, and methodological triangulation.

Transition and Summary

The focus of Section 2 was to reintroduce the information presented in Section 1. Section 2 identified the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, ethical research, and the elements of data collection. Ethical data collection and analysis ensure validity and reliability of data as well as protection of participants. Sections 3, the final Section, will present the study findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, gaps in the literature, and recommendations for further study. The findings section gave me the opportunity to tie the study to the central research question and purpose of the study. Section 3 of the proposal provided me an opportunity to elaborate on the personal impact of the study. Two of the most important aspects of the study were the opportunity to report on the application to professional practice and implications for social change. The relevance of the data collected may point to practices that would be beneficial throughout the business community to assist business owners with documentation to support business sustainability and viability. The

data may point to how changes might improve the business community, organizations, and the community.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

Section 3 includes an overview of the study, the purpose of the study, a presentation of the findings, applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for future research, and reflections. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore team development strategies that restaurant small business owners used to remain profitable for longer than 5 years. The data collection instrument that I chose was semistructured, face-to-face interviews with owners of three small business restaurants in New Jersey. Additional data were derived from owner and employee observations and owner demographics. The findings showed that team development is vital to business sustainability and profitability.

Presentation of the Findings

The data analysis section identifies themes. The following themes emerged: Theme 1: The number of years in business and the training program; Theme 2: Well-developed, skillful teams are key to business success; Theme 3: Committed teams lead to sustainability; and Theme 4: Team development and sustainability. The overarching research question for this study was the following: How does the lack of team development affect the ability of restaurant small business owners to remain profitable for longer than 5 years?

I conducted semistructured interviews with three small business restaurant owners in New Jersey. I reviewed team development documents provided by participants as well

as public information related to each business. All businesses had been in operation for more than 5 years per the criteria to participate in the study. One restaurant owner had been in business for more than 10 years. One restaurant owner, Participant 1 (P-1), had completed a PhD. P-1 did not have a detailed, written team development plan. Two participants had more in-depth team development programs. One area that stood out was that P-2 and P-3 had in-depth team development programs not necessarily because of their education level, but because of their military service. Both Participant 2 (P-2) and Participant 3 (P-3) had formal education, with P-3 having more education than P-2, but their military service was the key factor in their team development programs. Teams in the military are vital to sustainability and task completion. Military teams learn that being part of a collective or team ensures that complex tasks will be completed more efficiently than they would be by a single person (Goodwin et al., 2018). P-2 and P-3 brought that concept to their team development programs. For example, P-2 not only had events for team members at public venues outside the restaurant, but also rewarded team members as a group with home dinner parties in an effort to develop a family atmosphere and closeness with team members. All three participants used a debriefing method. P-3 used the method more extensively during staff meetings. Debriefings are used in the military so that teams can discuss outcomes and events in a collaborative way (Allen et al., 2018; Reyes et al., 2018).

Each participant had varying food service programs in addition to running a restaurant. P-1 had a team of seven employees and ran a barbecue restaurant with a small menu. This restaurant owner also provided takeout catering services and a mobile smoker

on a trailer. P-2 had a team of nine employees, with a larger menu and a significant off-site catering service. P-3 had a large menu, providing one-on-one cooking services for new cooks, an in-home dinner party service, catering, and a nonprofit feed-the-homeless program. Additional demographic data are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Data

Participant code	Gender	Education	Military	Number of years in business
P-1	Male	PhD	No	More than 6
P-2	Male	Some college	Yes	10
P-3	Male	BA + some culinary courses	Yes	More than 10

Theme 1: The Number of Years in Business and the Training Program

All study participants had a team development program. Only one participant provided hard-copy documentation with regard to the team development program. P-3, who had been in business for more than 10 years (Table 1), used team development solutions and recommendations from “The Red Book” combined with on-the-job training (OJT), videos, and tests. “The Red Book” combines scheduling tools, management journals, assignment and task trackers, interview/evaluation trackers, performance notes, and training. P-3 had been able to develop a comprehensive training program using military training in combination with the aforementioned elements. The most interesting part of P-3’s training program was the videos and testing used to reinforce OJT and “The Red Book” training.

Surprisingly, P-1, who had been in business for 6+ years, and P-2, who had been in business for 10 years, did not have any written documentation to support having a team development program. All participants used some form of the OJT method (Table 2). OJT is a method whereby training is accomplished using coaching and mentoring tools to ensure and enhance employee performance (Bradford, Rutherford, & Friend, 2017). Employees learn while performing their duties, generally with the supervision of a manager or owner. Table 2 illustrates the breadth and depth of each team development training program.

Table 2

Team Development Training Program

Participant identification	Documents	Tools	Tools	Tools
P-1	No documentation	Uses OJT		
P-2	No Documentation	Uses OJT	Team building exercises	
P-3	The Red Book	Uses OJT	Team building exercises	Videos/tests

Theme 2: Well-Developed, Skillful Teams Are Key to Business Success

As previously noted, all of the participating small business restaurant owners had been in business for more than 5 years. All participants had a team development program, none of which are the same. P-3 had the most comprehensive program. The most significant part of the program was skills testing (P-3). Team members needed to complete skills training as part of team development and take a test at the end to ensure a complete understanding of the business.

Additionally, in order to ensure well-developed teams, all of the participants in this study required team members to know each job in the restaurant, including front-of-the-house operations, cleaning, setting a proper table, and food preparation. Team members could therefore assist when another team member was absent or when there was a large order to prepare. The OJT method was used by all participants to make sure that team members knew how the restaurant system worked.

All participants had team development activities outside the restaurant setting, including parties, to promote cohesion among team members. P-1 took the team out to dinner so that members could assess the year in order to formulate a plan for the next year. P-2 took team members to food tastings outside the restaurant as well as food tastings at the restaurant. P-2 articulated that team member feedback was important to building a new menu. P-3 celebrated each team member's birthday with a cake to show appreciation. All three participants showed that they cared for their team members in varying ways.

Only one participant, P-1, had a conflict resolution plan (Largent, 2016). The other two participants mentioned conflict resolution. P-2 and P-3 had no conflict resolution plan. All participants agreed that positive personality traits were important to well-developed teams. Descriptive words such as *happy*, *kind*, *people person*, and *leadership* were used by participants. Each participant noted people as the greatest asset to the business.

P-1 stated that development of team processes in an organization is critical to success. The size of a team is not a decisive factor (P-1). P-1 was of the opinion that the

larger the team, the less functional the team, making it important to keep teams at manageable levels. P-1 noted the following attributes as important to developing a team: the attitudes of members, the expertise that members brought to the team, team goals, and the end product.

P-2 stated that developing the team is key to success. P-2 also stated that each team member plays a role and that members understanding or knowing their roles was key to team development. The following attributes were important to P-2: positive personality, multi-tasking, the ability to think on one's feet and make quick decisions, dependability, being a people person, and being a kind, happy, and personable individual. P-2 preferred using tried and true members as part of the team.

P-3 stated that team development is vital because without a team working in unison, one cannot get the job done effectively. P-3 used the following descriptive words when defining a team: *leadership ability, people person, congeniality, and a professional appearance*. Teams whose members work well together have a positive impact on business success and profitability (Chen et al., 2017). Team development training nodes are listed in Table 3.

Table 3

Team Development Training Nodes

Training nodes	Files	References
Team dev	3	3
Parties etc.	2	2
Team dev training	3	4
Conflict resolution	3	3

Theme 3: Committed Teams Lead to Sustainability

All participants referenced collecting data from team members during parties and or meetings. Data were collected with the knowledge of team members. Team members were encouraged to give feedback to business owners. For example, P-1 noted that one team member tracked the number of customers coming into the business on any given day. Based on those observations, the number of team members for each shift was adjusted down, saving P-1 money. P-1 also used the annual holiday party to assess the year and plan the following year based on input from team members.

P-2 used information garnered from after-action reviews to determine where the team could improve. The after-action reviews included good and bad elements, which allowed the team to have sufficient flexibility to adjust processes. P-2 kept hard copies of after-action reviews. P-2 also collected data from team members during team member private food tastings and parties. During those times, team members could brainstorm ideas, build trust, and develop camaraderie.

During team meetings, P-3 asked for feedback and ideas. P-3 considered the team members the eyes and ears of the business. P-3 encouraged team members to look for elements that would help to grow the business. P-3 maintained documentation in a journal and after-action reports. For example, team members would make journal entries noting items such as the weather and sales to aid in business projections for the following year. One participant required after-action reports to assess productivity and performance. In many instances, gathering suggestions or input from team members may result in team members being more committed to doing a good job, thus creating business

sustainability. When team members feel that they have some amount of ownership, they tend to perform better.

All participants relayed that team members were committed to the success of the business. P-1 relayed that team members arriving for work on time consistently demonstrated commitment to the business. In addition, P-1 felt that team members getting along showed commitment. P-2 and P-3 mentioned having longstanding work relationships with team members leading to consistency in the team. Everyone on Team P-2 had to work hard and perform well enough to earn a black jacket. Earning the black jacket was a morale booster, built team confidence, bonded the group, and encouraged sustainability. P-2 expressed that people tried to get hired to work in the business to get a black jacket. P-2 relayed that team members were willing to go above and beyond at all times. P-3 emphasized having a good work environment for the team and providing the team with tools for success. Accordingly, P-3 felt that success of the team enabled business success and the ability to build a successful business model. Having good team members equated to a successful business model.

Theme 4: Team Development and Sustainability

All participants had a clear understanding of the association between team development and sustainability. Words such as *key*, *vital*, *success*, and *very important* were used to describe the association. There was agreement among all participants that team development is critical to business success, making team building a top priority.

One of the elements that participants identified as important was cross-training, or having team members know all parts of the business. Having team members learn each

job made the team members more valuable to the business. P-2 and P-3 shared a perception that successful people surrounded themselves with other successful people, making developing a team important to sustainability. P-2 stated, “If you have good team members, you’re likely to be successful”. P-3 stated that “If the team is successful, the business is successful; helping the team to be successful helps the business to be successful.”

The team development aspects used by P-1 to ensure sustainability were coaching, developing norms, and team interaction. P-2 took a different tactic. P-2 hired known people who took direction well but were independent thinkers. Having to earn a black jacket gave incentive to team members to perform at a higher level. P-3 encouraged team members to look for things to help the business grow, empowering team members. The perception among participants is that team building is a key aspect of sustainability because if everyone is not working in unison, then a business may be disrupted. All of the participants had restaurants in business for longer than 5 years.

Sustainability Reporting

Smaller organizations, such as those run by the participants in this study, generally do not formally report sustainability (James, 2015). Because each of the restaurants studied were private organizations, the owners were not required to submit or publish an annual report. They could choose to submit a financial report (James, 2015). None of the participants prepared and published an annual sustainability report. All participants prepared financial reports culminating in their required annual business tax reporting.

Applications to Professional Practice

This qualitative multiple case study was conducted to explore team development strategies that three New Jersey restaurant small business owners used to remain profitable for longer than 5 years. Data collection occurred through semistructured, face-to-face interviews, and a review of available team development documentation and public information. With small businesses failing at a rate of 50% (SBA, 2014), I was fortunate to garner two participants who remained in business for longer than 10 years. Most businesses fail to remain operational for longer than 5 years (SBA, 2014).

In relation to the general business problem, I found that some small business leaders lack strategies to develop effective teams. P-1 had the least effective team development program. P-2 and P-3 had better plans. P-2 needed written documentation to support the team development plan. P-1 had no written plan, having developed only a verbal plan.

With the information and data collected, a comprehensive team development plan could be written to include information from all three participants. With a cohesive, written strategy for team development, all three participants may exceed their expectations for profitability and sustainability. The plan may be of use to other small business restaurant owners who are starting a new business, or for those business owners wishing to increase their profits and remain in business for the long term.

Implications for Social Change

New businesses have a 50% failure rate, failing to remain open for longer than 5 years (SBA, 2014). Some business owners attribute failure to a lack of business strategies

that help to keep businesses operational and sustainable. When business owners fail to keep their businesses in operation, the job market is negatively affected, and blight is created in the community.

The aim of this study is to see how team development affects the sustainability of small business restaurants for longer than 5 years. Each participant agrees that successful team development has a positive impact on sustainability. Although all participants have a team development program, however, the programs are not equal. On a scale of 1-10 with 1 as least comprehensive and 10 as most comprehensive, P-1 is at 1 while P-3 is at 9. P-2 is in the middle of the scale.

The information garnered from this study may be useful to business management professionals teaching business strategies. Using the information collected from P-1, P-2, and P-3 may be helpful in crafting a comprehensive team development plan. The plan could assist startup business owners with a basis to develop a team development program and plan. The strategies could also help current business owners to consider having a formal team development training program.

Recommendations for Action

It is apparent that my participants perceive team development training as an important part of business. Team development could contribute to both business sustainability and profitability. Providing training to team members and considering team members' input may be of considerable value to a small business. The degree to which a business owner creates a team development program is more important than educational level of the business owner.

Anyone trying to start a small business or that has a current business may benefit from the results of this study. There are a couple of ways to get the information out to business owners. One way is by creating a guide to team development. A comprehensive document utilizing a combination of the team development training provided by all three participants would make a good starting place for such a training document. Another way to get information to business owners would be by taking the lessons learned to a community college for use in a business course on entrepreneurship.

Recommendations for Further Research

One of the limitations of the study was that the results might not apply to every business in New Jersey or other geographic locations. The benefits of this study could have a positive impact across businesses including small business restaurants. A team development program of some kind is better than no team development program at all. P-1 and P-2 have no documented written plan. P-3 uses a standardized team development program and requires team members to take a test to have a clear understanding of each team member's knowledge level.

A recommendation for further study is to study the difference between small business restaurants with written proof of team development and small business restaurants without written team development plans. To reproduce this study with the same premise, I would recommend making the following a prerequisite to be part of the study: Each participant must have a written plan for team development.

The second limitation was that responses from participants may not be representative of all business owners. When analyzing the interviews of all three

participants, many of the responses to interview questions have the same or similar wording. The information revealed in the analysis could be used across businesses in general not only restaurants.

A third limitation was that interviews can be time consuming, which can equate to a higher cost to conduct the research. There was the potential for one or more participants to choose not to participate or fully engage in the interview process. It was difficult to get participants to agree to participate. The time of year, the holiday season, had a negative impact on garnering participants.

A fourth limitation was the possibility that no new information would be found. Each participant provided some level of information not mentioned by other participants. Follow-up questions were used to see if the same or similar information would emerge. Although all participants agreed on certain aspects of team development, P-3 has the most comprehensive team development program. P-3 brought forth training information that P-1 and P-2 did not mention with regard to their team development programs, such as testing.

Reflections

The DBA Doctoral Study process afforded me the opportunity to make a contribution to the business community through analysis. The construct of a strategy for business sustainability and profitability can be daunting for business owners if they do not have the necessary skills. The lack of knowledge, strategy, and skills, in this case, a team development program, could have a negative effect on business, as perceived by participants in my study.

During the interview process it was important to record data as accurately as possible so as not to skew the data. Following the interview protocol was paramount. When necessary, follow-up questions were asked to make sure there was a clear understanding of the information. My hope is that the information revealed in this study will make a positive impact on small business. I was curious if any of the participants had a team development program to rival a fast food restaurant, I am familiar with. Nothing was revealed during the study.

The doctoral process is not an easy process. I experienced delays and disappointments along the way. My determination to get to the end product spurred me onward. Creating balance in my daily life was an important factor of this journey. Mid-way through the journey, I accepted a teaching position which impeded on my time for my education but I made the adjustment. I met a number of people along the journey, some of which became my friend. My best friend at Walden was Dr Vaughn O. Gleaves. We were fast friends from our foundation course onward, Skyping every Sunday and days in between. We kept one another going throughout the journey. We got to know one another's family members, solidifying our friendship. Sadly, Vaughn passed away in February of 2018. We pushed one another to succeed and when he passed away, I was devastated. Vaughn's widow has been an inspiration to me since his death.

Conclusion

One of the conclusions of this study is the perception by participants that well developed teams who work well together have a positive impact on business profitability (Chen et al., 2017). The prospect of a well-developed team is evident in the results since

all restaurants are profitable and continue to be in business. Another conclusion of this study is the longer a participant is in business, the more extensive the team development training program. The educational background of all three participants is diverse. The level of education of each participant is not indicative of the extent to which participants create a team development program. For example, P-1 has a PhD and has the least developed team training program while P-3 has a Bachelor's Degree and a few culinary courses with the most comprehensive program for team development. Education is not a determining factor to having a successful team development training program. Length of time in business has more of an effect on having a comprehensive program and in the case of P-2 and P-3, military team training is also a determining factor.

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Appendix: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol	
What I will do	What I will say
Introduce the interview and set the stage—choose a place away from the business that both parties agree upon	Good afternoon/evening. My name is Sharon Hunter Nikolaus. Thank you for meeting me and agreeing to participate in this interview process. I will ask you a series of questions and the process should take no longer than 45-60 minutes. I will audio record the interview for accuracy. If at any time during this interview process you are uncomfortable or wish to not participate, just let me know.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for non-verbal queues • Paraphrase as needed • Ask follow-up probing questions to get more in-depth 	1. Based on your experiences, what role does team development play in the success of your business?
	2. How do you know if a prospective employee will fit into your team?
	3. What skills are necessary to build a successful team?
	4. What, if any, training do you provide relative to team development?
	5. What team development strategies do you use in your restaurant?
	6. How do team members demonstrate their commitment to team development?
	7. How do team members demonstrate their commitment to sustainability?
	8. What team development activities do you and your team participate in outside the restaurant?
	9. What additional information can you share regarding the role of team development in ensuring small business profitability for longer than 5 years?
Wrap up interview thanking participant	Thank you for participating in my study. Your assistance has been invaluable to my success.