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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Olivia Miller

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Human Capital Strategies of Leaders in the Food Service Industry

by

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MBA, University of Phoenix, 2013

BFA, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2006

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

July 2017

Abstract

High voluntary employee turnover in the food service industry often exceeds 60%. Some food service leaders lack strategies to motivate employees to stay with the organization. High voluntary employee turnover negatively affects organizational profitability due to increased employee replacement costs and reduced organizational productivity. The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore the human capital strategies successful food service leaders use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. The target population consisted of 4 managers of 4 different casual dining restaurants in Winston-Salem, NC who successfully used human capital strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. The conceptual frameworks of this study were Herzberg's two-factor theory and G. S. Becker's human capital theory. Data were collected through semi-structured in-person interviews, employee handbooks, manager reference guides, exit interviews, and turnover trend reports. Transcript review and member checking strengthened the credibility and trustworthiness of this study. An inductive analysis of the data lead to the emergence of 4 themes, identified as positive work relationships with employees, employee motivation, employee incentives, and employee selection. Social implications include providing organizational leaders with a better understanding of human capital strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Additionally, the findings from this study may contribute to social change through improved organizational profitability which could increase competitive advantage and economic sustainability in the United States.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my grandmother, Elizabeth H. K. Jackson. She was my motivation to complete this study. I also dedicate this study to aspiring leaders who desire to contribute to the improvement of society. Finally, to those who are told they cannot accomplish anything. Here is proof that if you are persistent and passionate, you can achieve anything!

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The food service industry, with revenues of approximately \$1.7 billion, accounts for the employment of over 12.9 million workers in the United States (Joung, Goh, Huffman, Yuan, & Surlles, 2015). Researchers identified that the food service industry contributes to economic growth in the United States; however, voluntary employee turnover is a growing concern (Y. Yang, 2014). Some food service leaders lack awareness of human capital, which increases the likelihood of increased voluntary employee turnover (McClellan, Burris, & Detert, 2013). Barabasz (2014) added that it is vital for leaders to develop an effective plan to reduce organizational profit losses. The results of this doctoral study may provide food service leaders with knowledge of human capital strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover. I implemented a descriptive qualitative multiple case study design to explore the human capital strategies successful leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Background of the Problem

Voluntary employee turnover in the food service industry often exceeds 60%, which is significantly higher than other industries (Ellingson, Tews, & Dachner, 2016; Perez & Mirabella, 2013). High voluntary employee turnover leads to increased labor costs and decreased profits (Hom, Mitchell, Lee, & Griffeth, 2012). The most cited reasons for voluntary employee turnover are a lack of (a) training, (b) competitive wages, (c) advancement opportunities, and (d) favorable working conditions (Anvari, JianFu, & Chermahini, 2014).

Organizational leaders with high voluntary employee turnover decrease their profitability due to employee replacement costs that range from 50%-200% of an employee's salary (Selden & Sowa, 2015). Direct costs, such as employee replacement costs, training of newly hired employees, and advertising expenses for new positions, can cost organizations 21% the total annual cost (Roche, Duffield, Homer, Buchan, & Dimitrelis, 2015). Indirect costs, such as organizational productivity and employee satisfaction, account for 70-85% of total annual costs, which results in loss of organizational profitability (Jang & George, 2012).

Several researchers agree that voluntary employee turnover is problematic in the food service industry because leaders often overlook human capital as an important investment (Beehner & Blackwell, 2016; H. Wang & Wong, 2012). Some leaders fail to invest in hiring high-quality employees, which limits organizational performance (Peregrin, 2014). The cost of weak hiring may cost organizations up to two times an employee's salary and benefits (Bahar Hewertson, 2015). Voluntary employee turnover is a challenge in the food service industry because organizational leaders' lack of human capital knowledge increases the likelihood of increased voluntary employee turnover intentions (Aliyu & Nyadzayo, 2016).

Problem Statement

In the United States, the annual employee turnover rate in the food service industry in 2015 was over 66% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Employee turnover on average leads to more than a 32% decrease in profits, and up to an 11% decrease in earnings per share for some organizations (Kaliannan & Adjovu, 2015). The general

business problem is that some leaders in the food service industry are negatively affected by high voluntary employee turnover intentions, which results in loss of organizational profitability. The specific business problem is that some leaders in the food service industry lack human capital strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive multiple case study was to explore the human capital strategies utilized by some food service industry leaders to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. The targeted population for this study consisted of food service leaders of casual dining restaurants located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina who successfully implemented human capital strategies that reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions. Implications for positive social change included the potential to contribute to the improvement of employees' well-being through increased work engagement. Increased work engagement may lead to improved employee well-being through increased earnings, which in turn promotes the welfare and development of individuals, families, and communities (Xie, Xia, Xin, & Zhou, 2016).

Nature of the Study

I selected a qualitative descriptive methodology to explore human capital strategies used by organizational leaders to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Researchers use the qualitative methodology to gather data systematically based on individuals' personal knowledge or experience of the phenomenon through interviewing observation, participant observation, and engagement with artifacts (Drisko, 2016). By contrast, researchers use the quantitative research methodology to numerically

test or measure the relationship between two or more variables (Bettany-Saltikov & Whittaker, 2014). Moreover, the purpose of quantitative research is to test hypotheses, while a qualitative researcher seeks to explore in-depth descriptions, feelings, and opinions associated with real-life events, as viewed through the lens of individuals who have experienced a phenomenon (Park & Park, 2016).

The study phenomenon did not involve exploration through numerical data, variables, or statistical testing. Furthermore, a description of the strategy was not quantifiable, and I did not propose testing a hypothesis. Some researchers may use quantitative and qualitative designs together, or mixed methodology, in a single study (Galliot & Graham, 2016). In application to my research, a quantitative method was not appropriate; therefore, I did not use a mixed methodology approach.

I selected the multiple case study design to explore the phenomenon of human capital strategies leaders use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Qualitative designs such as ethnography or phenomenology did not meet the purpose of this study. Researchers use the ethnographic research design to explore the cultural similarities and differences of participants by observing daily actions, or current situations (Konu, 2015; Roberts, Henderson, Willis, & Muir-Cochrane, 2013). I did not seek to explore participants' cultural differences in this study; therefore, the ethnographic design was not appropriate.

Phenomenological researchers investigate a phenomenon through lived experiences and informed perceptions of participants (Price, Wardman, Bruce, & Millward, 2016). The purpose of the study did not involve such exploration of

individuals' or views concerning the phenomenon; therefore, a phenomenological design was not appropriate. Researchers use the multiple case study design to comparatively explore patterns of the phenomenon under study in a real-life setting through participant interviews (Liu, Lee, Kang, & Liu, 2016). For these reasons, the multiple case study design was most appropriate for this study.

Research Question

The central research question for this study was: What human capital strategies do leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?

I used the following interview questions for the study:

Interview Questions

1. What human capital strategies do you use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?
2. How do these strategies reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions in your organization?
3. What rewards such as advancement opportunities or recognition do you use for your employees?
4. What work environment factors, such as pay, salary, work schedules, and benefits, influence employees' intentions to stay in or leave your organization?
5. What reasons have employees given you as to why they voluntarily left your organization?

6. What other strategic factors should be considered when seeking to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?
7. How do these strategic factors reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?
8. What other information or recommendations can you add to help leaders in the food service industry reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?

Conceptual Framework

I used Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) and G. S. Becker's human capital theory developed in 1964 (Becker, 1964) as the conceptual framework for this study. Herzberg et al. (1959) used the key factors of two-factor theory to emphasize that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction influence employees' intentions to stay with or leave with organizations (Herzberg et al., 1959). The motivating factors of Herzberg's two-factor theory are intrinsic rewards, such as advancement opportunities and employees' sense of achievements (Herzberg et al., 1959). The hygiene, or extrinsic factors, include work environmental factors such as pay or salary, work schedules, and benefits (Herzberg, 1987). Herzberg's two-factor theory applies to this study because exploring the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of job satisfaction could increase an understanding of why some organizational leaders experience increased voluntary employee turnover intentions.

G. S. Becker wrote human capital theory (1964) to indicate that education and training increase the knowledge and skills of employees, which in turn increases advancement opportunities and pay opportunities. G. S. Becker (1975) later expanded his

study to show that increasing employee knowledge and skills lead to increased employee compensation, which directly impacts employee turnover intentions. Satisfied employees tend to stay with organizations for longer periods of time than dissatisfied employees (Tongchaiprasit & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016). G. S. Becker's human capital theory applies to this study as the tenets indicate that human capital enhances innovative and efficient strategies that in the end results to increased organizational performance (G. S. Becker, 1964; Bornay-Barrachina, López-Cabrales, & Valle-Cabrera, 2016).

Operational Definitions

The following applicable terms may familiarize readers with a better understanding of the study.

Employee retention: The term employee retention refers to organizational leaders' strategies to keep employees from leaving their organization (Hendrick & Raspiller, 2011).

Human capital: The term human capital refers to employees' amount of knowledge, skills, and experience, which impacts organizational profitability (Rukumnuaykit & Pholpirul, 2016).

Voluntary employee turnover intention: The term voluntary employee turnover intention means an employee may choose to leave or stay with an organization (J. T. Yang, Wan, & Fu, 2012).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are facts the researcher supposes to exist without proof or verification (O'Boyle, Rutherford, & Banks, 2014). I assumed participants of this study would respond honestly and thoroughly to each question based on their experience of human capital. I also assumed the semi-structured interview questions would engage the participants sufficiently for them to describe human capital strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover intentions. Another assumption was that the research method and design were appropriate to address the research question and participants would allow sufficient time to address the problem.

Limitations

Limitations of a study are situations or potential weaknesses beyond the researcher's control (Helmich, Boerebach, Arah, & Lingard, 2015). The purposeful sample selection of participants was limited by participants' knowledge concerning voluntary employee turnover and their willingness to share that information. The study location of the study population was in Winston-Salem, North Carolina; therefore, results may not be generalizable to leaders in other geographic regions. The participants selected were limited to the food service industry; therefore, the findings of the study may not apply to other industries or other areas of the food service industry not similar in size or scope to the organizations included in this study.

Delimitations

The delimitations of a study are the research boundaries based on the framework, population, and methodological procedures (J. R. Thomas, Silverman, & Nelson, 2015). The following delimitations defined the boundaries of this study. First, I only invited leaders as participants who possessed information regarding strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover intentions. The study was delimited only to voluntary employee turnover intentions and did not include a discussion of involuntary turnover. The study was delimited to four food service organizations located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Participants included four managers of different shifts from each of the four organizations.

Significance of the Study

Previous researchers determined that an issue of high voluntary employee turnover exists in the food service industry (Kumar, Dass, & Topaloglu, 2014). Food service leaders fail to properly initiate and implement effective strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions (Hee & Ling, 2011). Koziol, Koziol, Wojtowicz, and Pyrek (2014) added that some food service leaders lack managerial experience, which may impact organizational profitability. Researching the human capital strategies of successful food service leaders may provide insight for new food service leaders that will enable them to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Contribution to Business Practice

The results of the study may provide organizational leaders with a better understanding of human capital strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover

intentions. When key employees leave organizations, direct and indirect costs affect organizational profitability (Duffield, Roche, Homer, Buchan, & Dimetrelis, 2014). Lu and Gursoy (2016) mentioned that opportunities exist for researchers to explore the effective strategies leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Subramony and Holtom (2012) added that human capital factors such as employee selection, training, and compensation might influence voluntary employee turnover intentions. Recommendations from the study may contribute to efficient business practices by informing organizational leaders of factors that may increase job satisfaction and reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions in the food service industry.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for social change involved understanding the factors that contribute to voluntary employee turnover intentions. Improving job factors that affect the employees' well-being and morale contributes to social change both individually and in the community. Reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions in organizations could improve social contributions as organizational leaders who achieve higher profits tend to have a surplus to donate to charities (Chen & Lin, 2015). Additionally, the implications for positive social change included the potential to contribute to the improvement of employees' well-being through increased job satisfaction. Happiness and positive self-efficacy improve personal health and empowerment (Ouweneel, Le Blanc, & Schaufeli, 2013). Employees with an increased sense of well-being tend to actively engage in training new hires, which in turn increases supportive social networks in the

work environment (Chung, Cooke, Fry, & Hung, 2015). Organizational leaders may use the findings of this multiple case study as a resource to understand the importance of strategic initiatives. Particularly, leaders in the food service industry may use the research findings to increase their awareness of social responsibility as it relates to voluntary employee turnover intentions.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

Scholars formulate literature reviews to address the assumptions within prior research studies and contribute to current perspectives to enhance knowledge within organizations (Wisker, 2015). Seuring and Gold (2012) added that researchers use literature reviews to contribute to the development of topics that contain further research directions. The contents of this literature review consisted of peer-reviewed literature from the scholarly resources such as Business Source Complete, Thoreau, Emerald Management Journal, ProQuest, Emerald Government databases, ScienceDirect, and other management resources published within the past 5 years. Other sources included seminal books by expert authors that supported the conceptual framework of this study. Keywords used to initiate literature review searches were *career growth, employee benefits, employee replacement costs, employee retention, employee selection, employee turnover, employee turnover intentions, Herzberg's two-factor theory, human capital, human capital theory, human resources practices, job satisfaction, organizational culture, sustainability, and wage level*.

The period covered by the literature review on voluntary employee intentions was from 2010 to 2016. After evaluating over 300 references from past researchers, the total

number of references in this study was 210. The total number of peer-reviewed references was 202. The total percentage of peer-reviewed references was 96%. The total number of peer-reviewed references from 2012 to 2016 was 87%. Further source material breakdown within the literature review 5-year range and outside of the literature review 5-year range is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Source Material

Sources	Outside of 5-year Range (2011 and Earlier)	Within 5-year Range (2012-2016)	Total of All Sources
Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles	19	183	202
Books	6	1	8
Total Sources by Year Grouping	33	176	210

In the following sections, I will include the purpose statement to remind the reader about the focus of the study. I will present an analysis of the conceptual frameworks and how organizational leaders in the food service industry could use the tenets to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Next, I will give a critical analysis and synthesis of the literature about potential themes and phenomenon, voluntary employee turnover intentions. Lastly, I will examine literature from previous researchers who studied the same phenomenon.

Application to the Applied Business Problem

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive multiple case study was to explore the human capital strategies utilized by select food service industry leaders to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. The targeted population for this study consisted of food service leaders of casual dining restaurants located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina who successfully implemented human capital strategies that reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions. Implications for positive social change included the potential to contribute to the improvement of employees' well-being through increased work engagement. Increased work engagement may lead to improved employee well-being through increased earnings, which in turn promotes the welfare and development of individuals, families, and communities (Xie et al., 2016).

Overview

Leaders in the food service industry face a challenge in the management of voluntary employee turnover intentions. Organizations with high voluntary employee turnover intentions experience increased employee dissatisfaction, which may trickle down to other employees (Suleiman AlBattat & Mat Som, 2013). Some food service leaders neglect to develop strategies for positive work environments in which employees' age and cultural values are respected, which can interfere with organizational performance (Maier, 2011). Without the development of job satisfaction strategies, organizations may experience work environments where employees' views toward leadership are negative (J. Tang, Tu, & Ferns, 2013). F. W. Becker and Tews (2016) mentioned that strategies, such as incentive programs to recognize key employees, may

reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Previous researchers indicated that opportunities exist for leaders in the food service industry to develop effective strategies to reduce voluntary employee intentions (Y. Yang, 2014).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

After reviewing several theories, I found the two-factor theory and human capital theory to be appropriate for the focus of this study as a framework for exploring employee turnover. The two-factor theory involves employee satisfaction, a motivator theoretical component, and employee dissatisfaction, a theoretical hygiene component (Herzberg, 1974). Frederick Herzberg wrote the book *The Motivation to Work* in 1959, wherein he interviewed 200 engineers and accountants to classify the motivators and hygiene factors based on employee job satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). The participants reflected on situations when they were satisfied and dissatisfied with their jobs (Smith & Shields, 2013). Herzberg identified achievement, recognition, and promotion as motivators, and supervision, salary, and work environment as hygiene factors (Gaki, Kontodimopoulos, & Niakas, 2013). Purohit and Bandyopadhyay (2014) expanded on Herzberg's pioneering approach, mentioning that motivators are also known as intrinsic factors, and hygiene is also known as extrinsic factors.

Employee motivation involves the overall engagement, effort, and initiatives that determine employees' intentions to stay in or quit their jobs (Korzynski, 2013). Herzberg identified that motivators are the satisfactory elements that encourage employees to perform innovatively well within the company (Mládková, Zouharová, & Nový, 2015). Motivators, also known as intrinsics, are factors that allow employees to take ownership

of their expected tasks, which enhances achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Garbers and Konradt (2014) acknowledged that basic recognition and reward systems increase employee performance, and create emotional drives that enable employees to feel valued and appreciated. Dagne, Beyene, and Berhanu (2015) expounded on motivational concepts with a mixed-methods study to reveal that benefits and recognition are vital for employee motivation. Hye Jung, Sun Young, and Jin Nam (2015) agreed that intrinsic factors enhance employee motivation. The previous research of several scholars confirms the motivator factors concepts of Herzberg's theoretical framework.

Rusu and Avasilcai (2014) associated the hygiene factors with employee dissatisfaction. In the context of employee turnover, Hyun and Oh (2011) conducted a quantitative study to determine that hygiene factors were more significant than motivational factors for employees in the foodservice industry. Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015) added that without hygiene factors in the workplace, employees run a higher risk of dissatisfaction with the job. However, Turabik and Baskan (2015) argued that hygiene factors must work hand in hand with motivators to be effective.

Herzberg used the intrinsic and extrinsic factors to expand on the concept that satisfied employees are less likely to leave organizations voluntarily (Negarandeh, Dehghan-Nayeri, & Ghasemi, 2015). Employee job satisfaction refers to employees' feelings or opinions of whether they enjoy their work environment (Tziner, Rabenu, Radomski, & Belkin, 2015). Zhao et al. (2013) mentioned that satisfied employees experience a sense of belonging to the organization, which increases their commitment to

stay in the organization. Previous researchers indicated that several factors influence employee job satisfaction. In a study conducted by Jung and Yoon (2013), a positive relationship existed between employees' satisfaction and customers' satisfaction.

Benton (2016) mentioned that organizational leaders who desire to understand and achieve increased employee job satisfaction use Herzberg's intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. Leaders should focus on factors such as advancement opportunities, job ownership, and meaningful work to increase employee motivation within organizations (Panaccio, Vandenberghe, & Ben Ayed, 2014). Kim (2015) determined that intrinsic factors such as self-development and training reduced voluntary employee intentions. Using Herzberg's framework, Pandža, Đeri, Galamboš, and Galamboš (2015) indicated that employee salary and leadership competencies influenced employee motivation. Overall, Herzberg used two-factor theory in previous research to reveal that satisfied employees are less likely to leave organizations (Derby-Davis, 2014).

Human Capital Theory

The second conceptual framework for this study is human capital theory. G. S. Becker originally developed human capital theory, and later collaborated with Theodore Schultz and Jacob Mincer (Gilead, 2009). G. S. Becker (1964) developed human capital theory to indicate that general training enhances employees' overall skill set, while specific training provides employees skills with the current organization. The elements included in the human capital theory include investment in training, favorable working conditions, and advancement opportunities (G. S. Becker, 1962). G. S. Becker (1964) acknowledged how general and specific training influences employees' intentions to stay

with or leave with organizations. Additionally, components of human capital theory indicated that labor costs are relative to organizational profitability (Bornay-Barrachina et al., 2016).

G. S. Becker's (1964) perspective on human capital theory outlined that individuals increase skills and knowledge through investments in education, training, and other experiences. G. S. Becker stipulated that investment in human capital advances knowledge, skills, or health and increases organizational profitability. G. S. Becker used the tenets of human capital theory to reveal that organizations may generate compensation for their venture in human capital. Schultz (1971) developed the human capital theory to outline the need for organizational leaders to invest in the education, health, and job opportunities for their employees. Schultz expanded the tenets of human capital theory to indicate that human capital through education and training is more effective than physical capital. Mincer's (1974) perspective on human capital theory influenced several researchers to explore the idea that labor economics are essential components of human capital. Mincer emphasized that organizations must use on-the-job training and formal schooling interchangeably to for human capital effectiveness.

Employee retention is vital to the enforcement of human capital theory in that employee turnover rates are reduced when employees are satisfied (Kwon & Rupp, 2013). Various researchers have utilized the tenets of human capital theory as an important source of organizational profitability. Martin, McNally, and Kay (2013) mentioned that scholars adopted the human capital theory model to expand the linkage between human capital and organizational performance. Backman (2014) referenced the

tenets of human capital theory to indicate that human capital accumulation increases economic sustainability at the individual, organizational, and regional levels. Muller and Nordman (2011) defined that human capital as the education level of the individual, firm, or population. Mani (2013) added that the educational and occupational approaches were highly correlated, and performed only marginally differently in statistical terms, depending on the research question. While the educational and skills training approaches to human capital measurement positively correlated in previous studies, each had different implications for analysis and organizational development (Fulmer & Ployhart, 2013).

Rabuil Islam, Ang, and Madsen (2014) indicated that the employee knowledge is equal to their educational attainment, as opposed to their specific or generalized training. Barabasz (2014) agreed that tenets of human capital theory indicate that education impacts an organization's profitability. Matherly and Al Nahyan (2015) agreed that education is vital as a principle of human capital theory in that knowledge is transferable to employees and employers. From an employer's perspective, educated employees transfer knowledge to other employees, which may improve organizational performance (Ha, Lo, & Wang, 2016). From the employees' perspectives, higher education creates better advancement opportunities (McPhail, Patiar, Herington, Creed, & Davidson, 2015).

Qiu, Haobin Ye, Hung, and York (2015) conducted a study that revealed that employees' education levels increase opportunities for advancement. Andersson, Nabavi, and Wilhelmsson (2014) added that most employees expect fair compensation when they

invest in higher education. He, Long, and Kuvaas (2016) expounded on the educational perspective to mention employees with high education levels and decent salaries are more likely to remain with organizations. However, Liming and Shunguo (2015) argued that the quality of an employees' skill set reflects an occupation's demand, based on labor market factors. Ma and Trigo (2012) clarified that the impact of education on employees' voluntary turnover intentions varies and depends on the needs of the organizations.

Human capital is useful when leaders develop strategies to implement various tasks that require commitment (G. S. Becker, 1964). Some leaders in the food service industry lack education and experience, which impacts organizational profitability (Agarwal & Dahm, 2015). Comprehension of human capital theory increases leaders' motivation to decrease failure in the competitive markets (Seong-O & Patterson, 2014). Hayek, Thomas, Novicevic, and Montalvo (2015) contributed to this theory concept by emphasizing that some leaders neglect components of human capital theory because they lack knowledge of human capital.

Baptista, Karaöz, and Mendonça (2014) added that for organizations to increase profits, it is vital that human capital efficiently transfers to the employees. Human capital theory addresses the loss of institutional knowledge when employees exit (G. S. Becker, 1962). Previous research, based on human capital theory, revealed that organizations with limited human capital experience higher voluntary employee turnover intentions (Pee, Kankanhalli, Tan, & Tham, 2014).

Katsikea, Theodosiou, and Morgan (2015) identified high employee turnover as an ongoing problem in the food service industry because some leaders fail to develop

human capital strategies. Investment in human capital is a function of both the individual and the organization (Folloni & Vittadini, 2010). Organizational leaders invest in human capital by providing training and on-the-job learning. The organization absorbs the costs of these investments with the reasonable expectation that the trainee will remain with the organization. When this is not the case, the organization is responsible for the cost of training.

A review of the literature indicated that human capital increases organizational profitability. Qadri and Waheed (2013) conducted a multi-country study which concluded that human capital is vital for economic growth and increased organizational performance. Kostakis (2014) found positive statistical relationships between human capital and growth per capita (GDP) existed in 96 countries.

Akpolat (2014) conducted a correlational study based on human capital and found that education is a factor in increased GDP and economic growth. McHenry (2014) agreed that human capital influences productivity, growth, and economic adaptability. Hai, Jing, and Jintong (2013) added that human capital enhances the abilities of organizational leaders to undertake general entrepreneurial responsibilities of identifying and exploiting the opportunities available in shift operations.

Lakshman (2014) used the frameworks of human capital theory to indicate that increasing human capital could involve the transfer of tacit and explicit knowledge to employees. Hau, Kim, Lee, and Kim (2013) explained that tacit knowledge is unspoken information based on experience and intuition, while explicit knowledge contains written information in reports or manuals. Nguyen and Burgess (2014) conducted a case study to

examine the knowledge transfer of employees who worked for two small businesses in Vietnam. Findings of the case study revealed employees' job requirements with limited flexibility demand increased explicit knowledge, while employees' job requirements with more flexibility needed tacit knowledge (Nguyen & Burgess, 2014). Starks (2013) acknowledged that organizational leaders face a multitude of workforce challenges; therefore, leaders must know both tacit and explicit knowledge. To successfully transfer tacit and explicit knowledge, leaders must continuously update their competencies for professional development (Tanhua-Piiroinen & Sommers-Piiroinen, 2013).

Schatzel, Strandholm, and Callahan (2012) mentioned that employees with higher education and training increase productivity through cognitive growth, and receive incentives that increase job satisfaction. Moretti (2004) compared 318 U.S. standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA) using census data from the years 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000. The study used multiple regression analyses and the ANOVA procedure to isolate the impact of college degree concentration on several independent variables including per capita income, housing prices, and subsequent college degree level. A significant positive linear relationship existed between per capita income and college degree level. The results also revealed well-educated individuals had a positive direct effect on productivity and wages, which led to a spillover effect on others.

Alternative Theories

March and Simon (1958) developed voluntary employee turnover (VET) theory. In the tenets of VET, March and Simon focused on employees' motivation to terminate employment rather than the turnover process. Burton, Holtom, Sablinski, Mitchell, and

Lee (2010) evaluated the tenets of the VET to acknowledge that withdrawal behavior relates to ease of departure and desirability of the work alternatives to current employment. The value of alternatives was a comparison of current job satisfaction and the perceived potential appreciation of the alternative. Misunderstanding stimuli, such as organizational changes, can result in organizationally unintended responses to motivate valued employees to leave (Hom et al., 2012).

The adverse effects of VET include both the well-documented direct costs of replacement (Hester, 2013; Wallace & Gaylor, 2012) and indirect costs such as loss of competitiveness and effect on organizational culture (Shuck, Twyford, Reio, & Shuck, 2014). There are additional expenses incurred due to disengaged employees' behaviors and attitudes before VET which are less understood than the costs of actual turnover (Christian & Ellis, 2014). Food service leaders benefit from studies of VET that provide models to inform the leadership of human capital strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions as well as the direct and indirect costs of the turnover process (Watty-Benjamin & Udechukwu, 2014).

Bandura (1986) developed social cognitive theory, which indicated that environmental conditions influence behaviors. Bandura included the concept of reciprocal determinism, which suggested the world and the behavior of individuals are mutually caused. Bandura focused on the conceptions of strengthening and observation, which gave more significance to the internal mental processes and the interactions with other people. Jeong, Lee, and Nagesvaran (2016) used tenets of social cognitive theory to

indicate that employees' psychological acceptance toward learning new tasks affects voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Sampaio, Thomas, and Font (2012) added that observation and imitation may determine if employees have low or high self-efficacy. Zhu, Treviño, and Zheng (2016) expounded on this concept to add that leadership behaviors influence voluntary employee turnover intentions. Leaders with high ethics are more likely to be respected by employees, which may influence their employment intentions (Lam, Loi, Chan, & Liu, 2016). Food service leaders may use tenets of social cognitive theory to improve work conditions, such as work demands, leadership concern for food quality, and job satisfaction to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions (Young & Corsun, 2010).

Homans (1958) developed social exchange theory (SET). The tenets of social exchange theory indicated that positive social interactions between leaders and employees are as valuable as monetary gains (Homans, 1958). Huang et al. (2016), used the tenets of social exchange theory to indicate further that leadership support impacts employee engagement. Klotz and Bolino (2016) conducted four studies which reveal that social exchange relationships influence voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Shuck et al. (2014) used the framework of social exchange theory to indicate human resource development practices, such as employee skill development and career development, improves employee engagement and turnover intentions. Various researchers used the SET framework based on the phenomenon of voluntary employee turnover intentions. Løkke and Sørensen (2014) argued that various theories serve

different purposes to represent researchers' implicit and explicit understanding of the phenomenon.

Leadership

Food service leaders have an important role in that they influence employees' perception of their job (Asencio, 2016). Azanza, Moriano, Molero, and Lévy Mangin (2015) emphasized that effective leadership may reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Research conducted by J. Tang et al. (2013) revealed that employees' perceptions of leaders have a positive relationship with their job satisfaction.

Hsiung (2012) emphasized that when leaders do not value employees' opinions or concerns, employee motivation decreases. Xiong, Lin, Li, and Wang (2016) explained the concept of emotional contagion, which is when a person's perception towards situations influences others' perceptions. One employee's negative opinion toward leadership may affect other employees' perception of leadership. Therefore, it is vital for leaders to develop initiatives to address employees' concerns.

Ethical leadership. Tromp and Blomme (2014) added that leadership behaviors influence employees' job satisfaction, engagement, and self-efficacy. Ethical leadership can affect employees' intentions to stay with or leave organizations (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015). Ethical leadership correlates with leader honesty, fairness, and treatment of employees (Palanski, Avey, & Jiraporn, 2014). Dhar (2015) added that ethical leadership improves the behavior of employees. G. Tang et al. (2015) confirmed that ethical leadership impacts the performance of employees in the food service industry. Some leaders fail to apply ethical leadership practices (Bonner, Greenbaum, &

Mayer, 2016). A study conducted by Xu, Loi, and Ngo (2016) indicated that ethical leadership behavior increases employees' trust, which promotes positive views toward their organization.

Communication. Ruben and Gigliotti (2016) emphasized that effective leadership involves clear communication, which influences employee behavior. Osman, Noordin, Daud, and Othman (2016) added that leaders who communicate clear job expectations and give constructive feedback develop positive relationships with employees. Kim, Song, and Lee (2016) agreed that leaders' methods and strategies of communication may impact voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Nikolić, Vukonjanski, Nedeljković, Hadžić, and Terek (2013) acknowledged that effective leader communication increases employee job satisfaction, while ineffective leader communication decreases employee job satisfaction. Madera, Dawson, and Neal (2014) observed that communication is challenging for some leaders in the food service due to employees' inability to speak English. However, leaders may overcome language barriers by developing strategies, such as pictures, to communicate tasks to employees (Madera, Dawson, Neal, & Busch, 2013).

Knowledge and experience. Organizational leaders' knowledge and experience level may negatively or positively impact the performance of employees (Agnihotri, Rapp, Andzulis, & Gabler, 2014). Sullivan and Marvel (2011) acknowledged that experienced leaders are knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities, which enhances organizational performance. Wilson-Wünsch, Beausaert, Tempelaar, and Gijsselaers (2015) confirmed that the knowledge and experience of leaders is a major

factor of organizational performance in the food service industry. Sipe (2016) added that experienced leaders promote new ideas within organizations, which increases employee empowerment.

Employee Replacement Costs

Voluntary employee turnover is an ongoing challenge for food service leaders because retraining an existing employee costs five times less money than attracting a new employee to work in organizations (Davidson, Timo, & Wang, 2010). Replacement costs should be a consideration for all organizations when considering human capital. X. Wang, Wang, Xu, and Ji (2014) indicated that voluntary employee turnover increases labor costs and decreases the profitability of organizations.

Selden and Sowa (2015) emphasized that voluntary employee turnover costs for food service organizations range from 50 to 200% of an employee's salary. Indirect costs, such as organizational productivity and employee satisfaction, account for 70-85% of total annual costs, which results in loss of organizational profitability (Jang & George, 2012). Direct costs, such as employee replacement costs, training of newly hired employees, and advertising costs for new positions, can cost organizations 21% of the total annual cost (Roche et al., 2015). The most common direct costs associated with voluntary employee turnover are selection and replacement costs, separation costs, training costs and the cost of having a vacant position (Van der Aa, Bloemer, & Henseler, 2012).

There is extensive variation in the reported costs of voluntary employee turnover intentions in organizations. The impact of replacement costs could have differentiated

results based on job category (Hancock, Allen, Bosco, McDaniel, & Pierce, 2013). Jobs where output relied on time sensitivity were affected, and the research suggested that the total productivity loss was underestimated (Hancock et al., 2013). Also indicated were the detrimental impact that replacement costs had on productivity and the need for consistency within the workforce.

Voluntary employee turnover costs include productivity losses during training, recruiting, and lost work while a position is vacant (Dong, Johar, & Kumar, 2012; Hennes, Leone, & Miller, 2013). A combination of existing literature with an industry panel was used to survey human resource managers across 64 four and five-star hotels. The results indicated that major costs are associated with voluntary turnover in the workforce. This voluntary turnover had substantial impacts on hotel operational costs and overall profits. The research also indicated that this voluntary turnover was linked with lower levels of service, consumer experience, and general value, which may have in turn contributed to decreased profits. Replacement costs should be a consideration for all organizations when considering human capital. In an examination of productivity loss due to illness, productivity declined when workers, mainly involved in team production, required replacement (Zhang, Bansback, & Anis, 2011).

In a meta-analysis of collective turnover that included 48 independent samples 24, 943 individual cases were assessed (Kwon & Rupp, 2013). Organizational performance was found to decline with voluntary turnover; however, the strongest declines in performance were found in (a) manufacturing/transportation industries (-.07), (b) among managerial employees (-.08), (c) in midsize organizations (-.07), (d) among samples from

labor market economies (-.05), and (e) when performance was measured by customer service (-.10) or quality and safety (-.12). The results indicated that some jobs have outsized impacts on organizational performance and that organizational size was related to the impact of replacement costs. Employees who left the organization affected organizational profitability (Kwon & Rupp, 2013).

Karatepe (2013) mentioned that high performer voluntary turnover has the strongest impact on organizations. A loss of top performers was also found to have a significant impact on firms that invested less in human capital in the way of selection, training, and wage levels. The research reinforced the concept that employees who left the organization could have an impact on that organization, and reputable organizations that invested least in human capital incurred the strongest declines in performance (Karatepe, 2013).

Human Resources Management Practices

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a source of competitive advantage for food service leaders (Paşaoğlu, 2015). de Oliveira and da Silva (2015) agreed and added that employees with extensive knowledge, skills, and abilities enhance organizational performance. Durrani and Rajagopal (2016) emphasized that in the food service industry, HRM practices set the tone for employee perceptions and job performance. It is imperative that leaders implement effective HRM practices to reduce employee turnover.

In a quantitative study conducted by Ghosh and Gurunathan (2015), several leaders in the banking industry were surveyed to test their commitment based human resources management practices. Ghosh and Gurunathan concluded that effective HRM

practices lowered employees' intentions to quit. Similarly, Ozolina-Ozola (2014) conducted a mixed methods study to explain how HRM practices such as job design, recruitment and selection, training, and compensation impact voluntary employee turnover. Dhar (2015) expounded on these concepts by mentioning that effective HRM practices develop innovative behavior of employees.

Succession Planning

Succession planning is the systematic long-term process in which leaders transfer responsibilities, knowledge, and roles to meet the needs of the organization (Michel & Kammerlander, 2015). Succession planning involves (a) selecting and training employees, (b) the development of a mission or vision for the organization, (c) defining roles of employees, and (d) communicating decisions to stakeholders (Sund, Melin, & Haag, 2015). Wadson and Ciccotosto (2013) noted that effective succession planning decreases employee recruitment costs and increases employee retention. Therefore, organizations must proactively monitor the needs of the company to recruit and retain employees effectively.

Majda (2015) indicated that succession planning is essential for organizational profitability. Bozer, Kuna, and Santora (2015) conducted a quantitative study that revealed a positive association between succession planning and organizational leadership development. Frost and Laing (2015) determined succession planning was important to organizations; however, leaders often find systematic and strategically implemented succession planning as a challenge. Effective succession planning increases

employee engagement and organizational culture, which improves the performance of the organization (Chung & Luo, 2013).

Organizational Culture

Gothard and Austin (2013) emphasized that organizational culture is a major component of reducing voluntary employee intentions. Y. Lee and Kramer (2016) noted that the debates concerning the importance of organizational culture have existed for several years. Organizational culture refers to the combination of company values and employee behaviors (Johnson, Haegeli, Hendrikx, & Savage, 2016). Particularly, organizational culture is a process in which traditions are continuously shared for organizational effectiveness.

Klimas (2016) emphasized that organizational culture is known as a driving force of competitive advantage. For example, the competing values framework (CVF), developed by Quinn, outlined that leadership is a vital component of organizational culture (Melo, Silva, & Parreira, 2014). Körner, Wirtz, Bengel, and Göritz (2015) added that strong team culture enhances organizational culture and increases job satisfaction. On the contrary, misunderstanding stimuli such as organizational changes can result in organizationally unintended responses by individuals including valued employees voluntarily terminating (Hom et al., 2012).

Organizational culture varies from one workplace to another and is formed by the diversity of various individual attitudes, cultures, and beliefs (Mauno, Kiuru, & Kinnunen, 2011). Saad and Mohd Asaad (2015) emphasized that organizational culture improves organizational performance. Azanza et al. (2015) confirmed the importance of

organizational culture but added that authentic leadership improves the job satisfaction of employees. Flores and Combs (2013) presented the idea that organizational culture is based on workplace diversity; therefore, employee attitudes reflect customer loyalty and business performance.

Recruitment

Breaugh (2014) mentioned that recruitment is an important strategy for reducing voluntary employee turnover intentions. However, employees must be properly matched to the appropriate job to ensure career longevity with the organization (Van Hove, 2013). Reitz (2014) contributed to this idea by adding the concept of job embeddedness (JE), which explained that there must be a proper fit between employees and their organization for reduced employee turnover. Bambacas and Kulik (2013) expounded to mention the job embeddedness theory contains three elements of link, fit, and sacrifice, which encourages employees to stay with organizations. In a quantitative study conducted by Chetty, Coetzee, and Ferreira (2016), a cross-sectional survey revealed the importance of job embeddedness as a recruitment strategy to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Leupold, Ellis, and Valle (2013) conducted a study to confirm that job embeddedness is significantly and positively correlated to employee intention to leave.

Dahling, Winik, Schoepfer, and Chau (2013) mentioned that effective recruiting practices are essential for the reduction of voluntary employee turnover intentions. For example, the implementation of employee referral programs (ERPs) as a recruiting tool allows current employees to receive extrinsic rewards (Keeling, McGoldrick, & Sadhu,

2013). Bloemer (2010) added that affective commitment is a key factor in implementing effective employee referral programs.

Employee Training

Leaders with knowledge of human capital effectively communicate and train employees, which increases organizational productivity and efficiency (Muda & Rahman, 2016). Bogenschutz, Nord, and Hewitt (2015) emphasized previous literature on voluntary employee turnover indicated that organizations that lack professional development opportunities and training experience high voluntary employee turnover. Esteban-Lloret, Aragón-Sánchez, and Carrasco-Hernández (2014) conducted an empirical study that revealed productive investments in employee training increase organizational performance. Poon and Yin (2014) emphasized that employees with high skill levels increase innovation through knowledge sharing, which promotes organizational profitability.

Aharonovitz (2011) identified that on-the-job training creates a continuous cycle whereby promoted employees train newly-hired employees. Aragón, Jiménez, and Valle (2014) emphasized that learning-oriented training enhances organizational learning or high performance. Mehra, Langer, Bapna, and Gopal (2014) conducted a study which revealed that training investments increase an organization's profitability. These researchers outlined the importance of training as a component of human capital investment.

Tohidi (2011) recommended that companies should structure training practices to adhere to the following stages: (a) concrete experiences for the participants, (b) a period

of reflection on those experiences, (c) the time to integrate observations of those experiences into a theory of best practice, and (d) testing that theory in real world use. Liao (2010) perceived that trained employees are more satisfied with their job than untrained employees. Individuals require time to integrate what they have learned, take feedback on their experience, and create ideas and practices in their role. Training should not only be applied to individuals but should involve groups working together because group units form the core of modern institutions.

There is a collective knowledge that arises within a group that can act in a superior fashion to specific awareness of a situation. Soltis, Agneessens, Sasovova, and Labianca (2013) mentioned social support from coworkers or supervisors may improve voluntary turnover intentions within organizations. Workplace social support involves social interactions that enable employees to cope with stress (Ju, Lan, Li, Feng, & You, 2015). Increased social support may improve training effectiveness within organizations. Some employees may feel comfortable asking other employees for advice involved in their job expectations rather than their supervisor.

Scott, Zagenczyk, Schippers, Purvis, and Cruz (2014) acknowledged organizations could reduce costs associated with voluntary employee turnover intentions by ensuring employees feel a sense of belonging to the team. Marchand and Vandenberghe (2016) mentioned employees demand organizational support when their expectations on the job are higher. Organizational support may reduce emotional exhaustion, which improves employees' self-esteem toward their job expectations (Marchand & Vandenberghe, 2016). Kuvaas, Dysvik, and Buch (2014) added that

effective training strategies impact work-related stress levels. Employees have positive work attitudes when they are confident with their job responsibilities, which transfers to their co-workers (Bader, 2015).

Training should be a major priority for the food service industry because more than 16% and 24% of the workforce 16–19 years old and 20–24 years old, respectively, work in a restaurant as their first job (Y. M. Lee & Sozen, 2016). Leaders in the food service industry invest in their employees through formal and informal training, tuition assistance programs, or enrollment in certificate earning programs. Future productivity gains must offset the cost of training and diminished productivity during training.

Leaders in the foodservice industry must be nimble and demonstrate a high degree of adaptation to cope with rapidly changing markets and economic situations (Ravichandran, Cichy, Powers, & Kirby, 2015). Díaz-Fernández, López-Cabrales, and Valle-Cabrera (2014) agreed to the competitive advantage concept but added that employees are valuable in that they create levels of human capital within the organization.

Skills and knowledge. Skills and knowledge are the outcomes of human capital investments in the form of education or other types of training (Madsen & Bingham, 2014). Mayer, Somaya, and Williamson (2012) acknowledged that leaders' decision-making skills and knowledge sourcing are vital components of human capital. This approach is ideal when there is a correlation between human capital investments and the employee investment outcomes (Mendolicchio, Paolini, & Pietra, 2014). Pasban and Nojedeheh (2016) determined that human skill is vital for leaders to increase knowledge

information and innovation, which transfers to employees and leads to customer satisfaction and competitive advantage within the organization. Kogovsek and Kogovsek (2013) added that the initial acquisition of human capital begins with formal schooling; however, it is a continuous process as employees' knowledge increases in the workplace.

Advancement opportunities. Stanley, Vandenberghe, Vandenberg, and Bentein (2013) emphasized that employees are more likely to stay with organizations that provide career advancement opportunities. McPhail et al. (2015) added that career advancement is important for employee job satisfaction, which impacts organizational performance. Briggs, Jaramillo, and Weeks (2012) identified that employees commit to organizations with career advancement opportunities, which reduces voluntary employee turnover intentions. On the contrary, Juhdi, Pa'wan, and Hansaram (2013) argued that career advancement opportunities did not have an influence on voluntary employee turnover intentions.

de Beer, Rothmann, and Pienaar (2016) outlined that some employees have no desire to advance in their career, which may indicate that the voluntary employee turnover intentions of some organizations are reduced. Wen and Liu (2015) clarified both perspectives by noting that employees with a higher sense of belonging to organizations are more likely to desire career advancements. Croteau and Wolk (2010) added that leaders must develop career paths for highest performing employees for reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions. Harris, Pattie, and McMahan (2015) expounded on the concepts by adding that for employees to advance in a career path, leaders of organizations must value human capital.

Work environment. A primary objective of leaders in the food service industry is to increase their productivity while maintaining a positive work environment. Tsai, Horng, Liu, and Hu (2015) outlined that the work environment can be related to physical and social elements to facilitate organizational productivity. Physical demands in the food service industry include the preparation, processing, and packaging activities (Farahani, Grunow, & Akkerman, 2013). Laschinger and Fida (2014) found that authentic leadership reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions. Keating and Heslin (2015) noted a positive work environment fosters employee engagement, which increases their career development and sense of belonging to the organization. Chang (2016) exhibited the internal and external marketing promises in that they create a competitive employee engagement level. Based on this model, employee engagement is a contributing factor of customer service.

Work-related stress. Work-related stress is also a factor of the work environment. Work-related stress involves extended work hours, poor working conditions, and an unhealthy work environment (Tziner et al., 2015). Lugosi, Robinson, Golubovskaya, and Foley (2016) outlined the importance of food service leaders recognizing that social expectations, such as parental expectations, contribute to the work-related stress of their employees. Ryan, Ma, Hsiao, and Ku (2015) added to this concept by indicating that work-family conflict (WFC) which influences employee turnover intention.

From another perspective, Kao, Cheng, Kuo, and Huang (2014) indicated that employees in the food service industry encounter increased work-related stress due to

their interpersonal expectations. Elçi, Şener, Aksoy, and Alpkın (2012) added that work-related stress has a positive effect on voluntary employee turnover. Schmidt et al. (2014) outlined that effective leadership may determine levels of work-related stress. Overall, a positive work environment is a factor that motivates employees to stay with an organization.

Employee Engagement

Paek, Schuckert, Kim, and Lee (2015) emphasized that employee engagement is based on employee morale and job satisfaction. Employee engagement in the food service industry creates an organizational culture based on leaders and followers collectively reaching organizational goals (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Burke, Koyuncu, Fiksenbaum, and Tekin (2013) added that employee engagement significantly relates to employees' job satisfaction, turnover rates, and work behaviors. To support this idea, Shahpouri, Namdari, and Abedi (2016) mentioned that self-efficacy, organizational self-esteem, performance feedback, and support systems could affect employees' work engagement. Boroş and Curşeu (2013) extended to this concept by adding that the more one identifies with an organization, the more the person's future connects to the organization.

Organizational Performance

Licuanan, Sengupta, and Neelankavil (2015) mentioned that human capital enhances innovative and efficient strategies that result in increased organizational performance. Esteban and Rodrigo (2011) concurred that human capital is vital in acquiring various utilitarian resources for the success of the organization. Chatterji and

Patro (2014) mentioned that human capital is a requirement for extended learning and ensures the enhancement of organizational performance. Human capital influences whether available market opportunities succeed or fail based on profitability within organizations (Han, Han, & Brass, 2014).

Kanbayashi and Takenoshita (2014) emphasized that employees voluntarily leave their jobs to maximize their returns on human capital. Triguero-Sánchez, Sánchez-Apellániz, and Peña-Vinces (2016) added that human capital factors, such as education level, training, and tenure affect organizational performance. Such literature reviews outlined that organizations that with effective human capital strategies are more likely to be more successful than organizations the lack awareness of human capital.

Employee Compensation

Compensation systems may affect employees' attitudes and behaviors toward their job (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). In a study of highly skilled workers in Germany, job-seeking patterns linked to regional income differentials (Arntz, 2010). Skill compositions were found to have significant divides in varying regions of Germany, which related to changing policies concerning wages. Earnings related to a gap in the spatial allocation of human capital. Following an examination of these patterns, highly-skilled individuals were found to be motivated by income differentials and relocated to areas where income formed a best-fit for skill level.

In contrast, low-skilled individuals were motivated primarily by job opportunity. The employment opportunities accounted for differentiated labor compositions between regions. It also indicated that wages play a significant role in attracting highly-skilled

human capital. In some cases, employees do not voluntarily leave due to compensation. Renn, Allen, and Huning (2013) argued that some employees are motivated to leave their jobs because they are socially excluded.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Baden and Harwood (2013) outlined the importance of the proper terminology of corporate social responsibility. Baumann-Pauly, Wickert, Spence, and Scherer (2013) referred to corporate social responsibility as the societal responsibilities within organizations to engage ethically in sustainable practices. An increasing number of shareholders, scholarly researchers, employees, and community members are holding organizations accountable for corporate social responsibility.

Aguinis and Glavas (2012) mentioned that addressing knowledge gaps within corporate social responsibility is imperative for the organizational profitability. Ahamed, Almsafir, and Al-Smadi (2014) indicated that organizational performance enhances the implementation of corporate social responsibility. Organizations that fail to implement corporate social responsibility strategies suffer in comparison to organizations that apply this practice (Ofori, Nyuur, & S-Darko, 2014). Garay and Font (2012) argued that corporate social responsibility strategies increase competitive advantage for organizations.

Organizations implement corporate social responsibility differently. Some organizations direct their corporate social responsibility efforts in one dimension while others integrate all aspects (Melo & Garrido-Morgado, 2012). Part of this implementation strategy depends on factors such as the industry, demands of the customers, and the

organization's size (Van Rekom, Berens, & Van Halderen, 2013). When organizational leaders carefully plan and organize corporate social responsibility strategies, they achieve profitability (Mahon & Wartick, 2012).

Summary and Introduction to Section 2

In Section 1, the discussion was based on the background information and rationale for conducting this researched involving the human capital strategies leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. In Section 1, I presented an introduction to the study, the background of the problem, the purpose of the study, significance of the study, and review of academic literature. The conceptual framework of this study included human capital theory developed primarily by Schultz and G. S. Becker, and the two-factor theory, developed by Herzberg.

Human capital accumulation is a function of the quantity and quality of the available learning opportunities and one's ability to benefit from those experiences (H. Wang & Wong, 2012). Organizations with higher levels of human capital performed better than similar companies with less human capital. Employee knowledge and skill level were shown to affect competitiveness, profitability, and other measures of organizational profitability for leaders in the food service industry. Employees with higher levels of human capital benefited from human capital spillover, which represents job performance improvements due to proximity to leaders with higher levels of knowledge and expertise.

Section 2 includes the details of this study's research design and methodology. Sample size and powering, data collection and analysis, instruments, and procedures

will be described and related to the research rationale. Additionally, I discussed the roles and responsibilities of the researcher and reviewed the protocol for ethical research compliance, which included the privacy of participants for the study. Lastly, I reported the study findings, results from data analysis, and present conclusions and further recommendations in Section 3.

Section 2: The Project

This section includes a detailed explanation of steps I took to explore the human capital strategies leaders in the food service industry use to reduce employee turnover. Researchers must conduct continuous research to develop innovative strategies adequately for aspiring food service leaders. Moreover, human capital resources and information must be accessible for these future food service leaders. Section 2 includes the (a) purpose of the study, (b) role of the researcher, (c) information regarding the selection of participants, (d) research method, (e) research design, (f) population and sampling, (g) ethical research guidelines, (h) data collection, (i) data analysis, and (j) reliability and validity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive multiple case study was to explore the human capital strategies utilized by some food service industry leaders to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. The targeted population for this study consisted of food service leaders of casual dining restaurants located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina who successfully implemented human capital strategies that reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions. Implications for positive social change included the potential to contribute to the improvement of employees' well-being through increased work engagement. Increased work engagement may lead to improved employee well-being through increased earnings, which in turn promotes the welfare and development of individuals, families, and communities (Xie et al., 2016).

Role of the Researcher

My role in this study was as the primary data collection instrument; in that role, I conducted semi-structured face-to-face interviews with eligible participants. My role as a researcher included strategically developing the study to collect and analyze data and accurately reporting the findings of the study. The purpose of interviews is to explore participant views, experiences, and beliefs about a phenomenon (Mitchell, 2015). To address possible research validation issues, I used triangulation to increase the reliability of the study. Okoe and Boateng (2016) explained that researchers use data triangulation for the development of detailed and rich information about a research phenomenon. I followed an interview protocol to learn about the human capital strategies that leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

The food service industry topic sparked my interest in my doctoral discussions. In my doctoral class, I developed a sustainable solutions paper on a McDonald's restaurant and was intrigued with the importance of effective leadership within organizations. Several colleagues of mine are leaders of franchise restaurants; therefore, organizational leaders could use this information as a resource. Winston-Salem has expanded its food service attractions over the years; however, some organizations in the food service industry are suffering due to neglect to change in market trends. For these reasons, I wanted to contribute scholarly research to affirm the benefits of developing human capital strategies to create retainable employment opportunities for organizations within the food service industry and provide resources for aspiring food service leaders in the area.

Researcher bias can occur purposefully or unintentionally and cause invalid research findings (Šimundić, 2013). To ensure my research was not biased, I strategically defined the scope of the study in a qualitative format to conduct appropriate interviews. Fulgoni (2014) emphasized that strategically formatted interview questions reduce research bias for proper analysis and results. I used the journaling method to record and interpret the participant responses accurately (Chenail, 2011).

Another method I used to reduce researcher bias was member checking. Member checking is the process that researchers use to validate participants' transcribed responses (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). In the process of member checking, each participant chose to receive an electronic copy of their transcribed responses. I met with each participant to verify that all information was included and the transcribed information corresponded with their responses (Harper & Cole, 2012). I continued the process of member checking until there was no new data to collect (Neumann, Karl, Rajpal, Akl, & Guyatt, 2013).

I facilitated the interview process by asking the participants open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are constructed to address key concepts, processes, and skills that go beyond a correct answer (Husain, Bais, Hussain, & Samad, 2012). Aleandri and Russo (2015) outlined that semistructured interviews allow participants to provide additional responses based on the interview questions freely. For this research, I encouraged participants to share as much information as possible. To reduce researcher bias in the interview process, I ensured that I did not express my gestures, expressions, or opinions (Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Khoshnava Fomani, Shoghi, & Ali Cheraghi, 2014).

Scholarly studies must be conducted ethically to protect the rights of participants by certified standards of research (Bosi, 2015). Nijhawan et al. (2013) thoroughly explained ethics in research by mentioning that the Institutional Review Board (IRB), in accordance by the Belmont Report protocol, protects participants' rights, and provides them with knowledge of the purpose of the study. My role in this research was to interview the participants ethically, and maintain the participants' confidentiality as expected from the IRB. To uphold these expectations, I treated each participant with respect and fairness. To formally support assurance of ethical research, I submitted my study proposal to the Walden University IRB for approval. The approval number is 03-17-17-0450574 and it expires on March 16th, 2018.

Participants

Participant selection criteria depend on sampled participants based on the research questions and theoretical perspectives of a study (Eide & Showalter, 2012). In application to the business problem, I identified the population, sampling method, and appropriate sample size. The selection criteria of the food service organizations included four casual-dining restaurants that have existed for at least 5 consecutive years. Casual-dining restaurants are organizations with informal dining settings to serve customers moderately-priced food which averages between \$10 and \$30 per dinner (Dziadkowiec & Rood, 2015).

The participants of this study consisted of a total of four managers from four food service organizations in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The eligibility requirements of the participants included that they (a) must exhibit a general knowledge base of the food

service industry, human capital, and employee turnover, (b) must have worked part-time or full-time for the organization for at least 2 years, (c) be at least 18 years of age, and (d) have at least three employees who report to them. To gain access to the participants, I used business workshops, exhibits, and personal networking strategies via email.

Arifin (2012) mentioned that sampling is the process of categorizing qualified participants with the same interest for research data collection and analysis. Yin (2014) indicated that a sample of three to eight participants is appropriate for case studies. To obtain data, I used the purposeful sampling strategy to strategically select a total of four participants for this multiple case study. Through the purposeful sampling strategy, I carefully chose participants based on the phenomenon, central research question, and criteria of the study (Barratt, Ferris, & Lenton, 2015; Robinson, 2014).

I sent qualified participants an email invitation regarding the purpose and contents of the study. A follow-up email was distributed to those eligible participants who responded to the invitation. For participants that had further questions or concerns, I contacted them via telephone. Upon participant confirmation, I emailed a consent form to participants for recording purposes. Next, I asked participants to send the completed consent form via email.

To ensure a working relationship throughout the duration of the study, I gave the participants my contact information. I made myself available to participants to answer any questions or concerns they had about the research. I also followed the IRB research ethics procedures and frequently emphasized assurance of confidentiality to the

participants to establish a sense of trust. As stated in the rules of the IRB, participants did not receive compensation for this participating in this study (Ghooi, 2014).

Research Method and Design

Moed and Halevi (2015) explained that scholarly research includes information that stakeholders relate to, is rigorous, and provides pathways for future researchers. To adequately meet research objectives, researchers must correctly determine which data collection method applies to the research topic (Seidl, Meisinger, Wende, & Holle, 2012). Researchers use the qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods based on the framework of the study (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2014).

Research Method

The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because the lived experiences, based on the phenomenon, were the focus of this research. Qualitative research involves theoretical perceptions based on *what* or *how* research questions (Barnham, 2015). Qualitative research also includes the comprehension of complex topics (Singh, 2015). Richards (2012) stated that qualitative research involves a narration of explored themes.

Participants shared their knowledge and experiences regarding human capital strategies, and common themes emerged from their responses. The qualitative method, unlike the mixed method or quantitative method, allowed me to explore thoroughly the phenomenon by asking probing questions of leaders in the food service industry. I used interviews as a method to provide a deeper understanding of the human capital strategies these leaders use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Quantitative research restricts researchers from understanding the phenomenon based on lived experiences (Slife & Melling, 2012). Quantitative research includes analytical instruments that provide research findings in numeric format. Yilmaz (2013) explained that quantitative research involves the statistical investigation of numerical data that supports or fails to support the tested hypotheses. Because qualitative research supports explorations of lived experiences and is not used to examine or determine the relationship between quantifiable variables (Jervis & Drake, 2014), the qualitative method was deemed most appropriate for this study.

Yilmaz (2013) argued that combining qualitative and quantitative research methods results in advanced data findings. Mixed methods research covers the research phenomenon from behavioral themes and statistical measures, but requires both approaches to obtain data (Zachariadis, Scott, & Barrett, 2013). With this information, compatibility constraints restrict opportunities for the use of the mixed methods in research. Moreover, this clarified my decision not to use the mixed methods approach.

Research Design

Researchers use appropriate research designs to integrate components for effective data analysis (Venable & Baskerville, 2012). The research design I used was the multiple case study design. Mukhopadhyay and Gupta (2014) mentioned researchers commonly use the case study design for qualitative research. Researchers use case study designs to conduct in-depth investigations of a single person or a group (Barlish & Sullivan, 2012). Anderson, Leahy, DeValle, Sherman, and Tansley (2014) explained that

researchers use multiple case studies to produce repetitive patterns or themes, which strengthens the validity and reliability of the study.

Researchers use other qualitative designs, such as phenomenology and ethnography, to explore the research phenomenon (Pfadenhauer & Grenz, 2015).

Phenomenological research involves the psychological behaviors and lived experiences of individuals (Arvidson, 2014). In a phenomenological study, the researcher seeks to understand the perspective of participants through lived experiences versus business practices (Sousa, 2014). A phenomenological design was not appropriate because the focus on this study was on the human capital strategies of leaders in the food service industry.

Ethnography involves data collection strategies based on participant observation, formal and informal interviews, and proper document examination (Cruz & Higginbottom, 2013). Ethnography also requires the social interaction of culture groups (Reeves, Peller, Goldman, & Kitto, 2013). Because ethnography requires archival data and explores the social interaction of cultural groups, this design was not appropriate for this study. The purpose of this qualitative descriptive multiple case study was to explore the human capital strategies utilized by some food service industry leaders to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. The target population consisted of four food service industry leaders from Winston-Salem, North Carolina who implemented human capital strategies that reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions. For these reasons, the multiple case study design was deemed to be appropriate for the study.

Population and Sampling

The population of this multiple case study consisted of four leaders in the food service industry in Winston-Salem, North Carolina who have implemented human capital strategies that reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions. Shelton, Smith, and Mort (2014) emphasized that qualitative case study research may include interviews and analysis techniques. The scope of the study consisted of in-person interviews with one manager from each of the selected four food service organization in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Carter and Baghurst (2014) mentioned that using company-documented data and interviews enhances the validity in qualitative research, and broadens the understanding of the explored phenomenon. I used the organizations' employee handbooks, manager reference guides, exit interviews, and turnover trend reports as a secondary source for data triangulation. To ensure all themes were uncovered, I continued to interview participants until data saturation was reached (Fisher et al., 2017).

Palinkas et al. (2015) emphasized that purposeful sampling is widely used in qualitative research to provide holistic information regarding the research phenomenon. All participations (a) exhibited a general knowledge base of the food service industry, human capital, and employee turnover, (b) worked part-time or full-time for the food service organization for at least 2 years, (c) were at least 18 years of age, and (d) had at least three employees who report to them.

I sent qualified participants an email invitation regarding the purpose and contents of the study. I distributed a follow-up email to those eligible participants who responded

to the invitation. I also contacted the participants with further questions or concerns via telephone. Upon participant confirmation, I emailed a consent form to participants for recording purposes. Next, I asked participants to send the completed consent form to me via email. When I received approval from the Institutional Review Board, I conducted four separate semi-structured face-to-face interviews with participants at their desired locations. Initial interviews lasted 45-minutes, were audio-recorded, and I took notes based on their responses.

Ethical Research

Haahr, Norlyk, and Hall (2014) expressed that the researcher-participant relationship may create challenges for ethical research. Moreover, ethical research is required to eliminate the publishing of false or misleading conclusions (Wasserman, 2013). The ethical research protocol is important in scholarly research. To ensure research is of high quality, researchers must follow moral and legal standards in accordance with Institutional Review Board (IRB) procedures to protect participants from harm (Tangen, 2014).

Research data must be kept confidential to avoid legal lawsuits, and a tainted company reputation (Rothstein, 2015). Upon receiving approval from Walden University's IRB via the application process, I conducted procedures in compliance with research ethics. A consent form that explained the details of this study (see Appendix A) was included to ensure that participants were aware of the purpose of the study, benefits, and confidentiality of their information.

Before conducting the study, I informed participants that they would have access to the results of this study. Participants who did not agree with any elements of the research, withdrew from the study by dismissing the email invitation freely. In agreement with Walden University's ethical research standards, willing participants of this study did not receive incentives.

Teitcher et al. (2015) argued digital research may potentially be fraudulent if improperly conducted. To assure that ethical protection of participants was adequate, I did not disclose detailed features, names of the participants, or business affiliations. Each participant's identity was alphanumerically coded in all digital files, interview recordings, and transcribed interviews to protect their identity. Walden University requires scholarly researchers to maintain data records from their study for 5-years. I stored all data obtained in a password-protected Dropbox® folder. After 5 years, I will expunge all digital and hardcopy information from the study in a proper manner. I will erase the digital information from hard drives, and shred the hard copy information after 5 years.

Data Collection

Prior researchers paved the way for the framework of this study. Stake (2013) explained that in multiple case study research, the researcher often present data in cross-case analysis from interviews, direct or indirect observation, and archived records. The data collection portion of this study included the data collection instrument, data collection techniques, and data analysis method.

Data Collection Instrument

In qualitative research, researchers may serve as the data collection instrument when conducting interviews (Wasiu, Olubukunola, Akinlolu, & Oluwatosin, 2015). My role in this study involved me being the primary data collection instrument by conducting semistructured face-to-face interviews with eligible participants. Findlay, Hofmeyr, and Louw (2014) mentioned that adequately-developed interview questions require quality over quantity. Structured interviews and questionnaires are alike because they do not allow researchers to improvise the interview protocol (Rowley, 2012). Unstructured interviews are open-ended and allow participants to speak freely about their experiences (Doody & Noonan, 2013).

Semistructured interviews are developed to address the research question and allow participants an opportunity to offer new concepts to a study (Galletta, 2013). For the study, I conducted face-to-face semistructured interviews with four food service leaders from four different food service organizations based on the discussed phenomenon. Petty, Thomson, and Stew (2012) mentioned that secondary data collection sources include observations, individual interviews, and documentation. In this study, secondary data collection sources consisted of analyzing the organizations' employee handbooks, manager reference guides, exit interviews, and turnover trend reports.

I contacted four leaders in the food service industry via email about the nature of the study, permission to use the organizations in the study, and research process. I distributed a formal introductory letter (see Appendix B) to the food service leaders via email. I also made a follow-up telephone call to ensure they received the documents. The

expected deadline for the food service leaders to sign electronically and return the documents was within two days of the follow-up telephone call. Upon the receipt of the signed documents, the food service leaders received the informed consent form (see Appendix A) via email for recording purposes. I included the instructions to food service leaders that the completed consent form to be returned to me via email within two days.

The introductory letter and informed consent form, was in Microsoft Word® format. As an electronic signature, the food service leaders could either reply with the words “I Consent,” or digitally scan the signed documents via email. These documents ensured the ethical rights and confidentiality were properly secured in accordance under ethical research standards.

Upon receipt of the consent forms, I made a telephone call to the participants to schedule an interview date and time. I used Google Calendar to conduct the interview scheduling and appointments. With this scheduling feature, participants received interview reminders and notifications. Participants confirmed or rescheduled interview appointments. Two days before scheduled interviews, I called the participants via telephone for a friendly reminder to ensure the time and date were acceptable. Due to busy schedules, the interviews occurred outside of the participants’ work hours.

I conducted face-to-face interviews with four separate food service leaders from four different locations at a convenient location. Data triangulation increases the researchers’ opportunity to view and analyze the research topic from a different lens (Oesterreich & Teuteberg, 2016). I examined the organizations’ employee handbooks, manager reference guides, exit interviews, and turnover trend reports with each of the

participants at the beginning of the interview for data triangulation purposes. All interviews were saved and downloaded on a password-protected computer. I only have access to all research data. I designated unique identifier codes for each participant to maintain confidentiality. The in-person interviews were audio-recorded with a digital audio recorder and NVivo software for accuracy.

I followed an interview protocol to conduct the interview in an organized format. I used a case study protocol to maintain a focus of the topic for reliability purposes (Yin, 2013). The steps in a case study consisted of a study overview, interview questions, research procedures, and a narrative outline format for the report (Cronin, 2014).

I asked the participants open-ended questions and took detailed notes based on their responses. The interview questions involved themes about the human capital strategies used by food service leaders to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Participants elaborated on the human capital strategies they use in the food service industry. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes.

For credibility purposes, I used the process of member checking to ensure I interpreted all transcribed data accurately (Probst, Boylan, Nelson, & Martin, 2014). Member checking also allowed me to make changes or modifications as needed to support the research findings (Nottingham & Henning, 2014). In the process of member checking, each participant chose to receive an emailed copy of their transcribed responses. I met with each participant to verify I included all information and that the transcribed information corresponded to their responses (Harper & Cole, 2012). Lastly, I continued the process of member checking until there was no new data to collect

(Carlson, 2010). Once I conducted the member checking from the transcribed interviews, I imported the data into NVivo for Mac software. NVivo is a digital qualitative data analysis program used in research to organize interview responses and identify themes of the research (Deakin, Wakefield, & Gregorius, 2012).

Data Collection Technique

The data collection techniques for this study consisted of semi-structured interviews and a company documentation review. The semi-structured face-to-face interview method was appropriate due to the flexibility of time between working individuals (Marshall, Brereton, & Kitchenham, 2015). An advantage of semistructured interviews, based on this research is that I have a generalized knowledge of human capital, which reduced researcher bias (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). A disadvantage of semi-structured interviews is that some researchers are unable to effectively ask quick questions or probe responses from participants (Doody & Noonan, 2013). To eliminate this occurrence, I properly formulated my interview questions and followed a proper interview protocol.

Data triangulation involves using more than one data source to research a study phenomenon (Brown et al., 2015). For data triangulation purposes, I analyzed the organizations' employee handbooks, manager reference guides, exit interviews, and turnover trend reports. A potential drawback to using company records for data triangulation purposes is that the data may not provide sufficient details to answer the research question (Bowen, 2009). An advantage of analyzing the organizations'

documents is that it reduces researcher biases and increases the validity of a study (Schaarschmidt & Kilian, 2014).

Dinglas et al. (2015) emphasized that researchers must effectively plan a recruiting strategy to engage participants actively. I was actively involved in business workshops, conferences, and networked to recruit participants via social media sites such as LinkedIn. Participants were purposefully selected from Winston-Salem, North Carolina. I sent an email request, and details of the study to qualified participants. The response period for the requests of recruited participants was two days.

To organize the research, I kept a secured digital list of interested versus uninterested participants in an email folder. No demographic factors were required for participant selection. Before conducting the interviews, I performed an eligibility verification with the participants. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. Participants of the study did not receive incentives.

Data Organization Techniques

I used NVivo for Mac and research journaling logs that contained the interview questions and responses of the participants to aid in organizing the data. I identified the participants by labeling colored tabs in the research records to assure accurate responses were properly aligned. Alphanumeric label headings consisted of participants (i.e., P1, P2, . . .) and their company affiliation (O1, O2, . . .). I used NVivo software to organize and identify color-coded themes (Azeem & Salfi, 2012). Protecting respondent confidentiality is a crucial step in the research process (Richardson, Kwan, Alter, & McKendry, 2015). I systematically organized the data obtained from participants by the

participants' codes about their responses to each interview question. In accordance with the rules of Walden University, participant confidentiality was maintained, and data will be password protected for 5 years. After 5 years, electronic data will be deleted, and physical data will be shredded.

Data Analysis Technique

Qualitative researchers propose themes in the data analysis based on the central research question (Maree, 2015). For the data analysis of this case study, I used the process of (a) compiling, (b) disassembling, (c) reassembling, (d) interpreting, and (e) concluding (Yin, 2011). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to address one central research question:

What human capital strategies do leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?

Interview Questions

The open-ended interview questions that were used in the semi-structured interviews to address the research question posed in this study were as follows:

1. What human capital strategies do you use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?
2. How do these strategies reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions in your organization?
3. What rewards such as advancement opportunities or recognition do you use for your employees?

4. What work environment factors, such as pay, salary, work schedules, and benefits, influence employees' intentions to stay in or leave your organization?
5. What reasons have employees given you as to why they voluntarily left your organization?
6. What other strategic factors should be considered when seeking to reduce voluntary turnover intentions?
7. How do these strategic factors reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?
8. What other information or recommendations can you add to help leaders in the food industry reduce voluntary employee turnover?

Compiling

Researchers must develop a strategy for compiling and organizing data to increase an understanding of the phenomenon (Montague, 2012). Upon completion of each interview, I systematically organized the audio recordings and journal notes based on the participants' responses. Buckley (2015) outlined that researchers use multiple sources of evidence in the data compilation process. I examined and organized the company documents as secondary data and used methodological triangulation to examine the secondary data in the context of the interview results.

Disassembling

Disassembling data involves manual data analysis and computer-assisted data analysis (CAQDAS), which increases the validity of research findings (Yu, Abdullah, &

Saat, 2014). For manual data analysis, I alphanumerically coded each participant and my journal interview notes. Alphanumeric label headings consisted of participants (i.e., P1, P2, . . .) and their company affiliations (i.e., O1, O2, . . .). I used Nvivo as a computer-assisted data analysis tool to code, organize, and interpret the data (Markkanen et al., 2015). I constructed codes from each of the semi-structured interviews using keywords, sentences, and concepts as expressed by the participants. I used the NVivo software to organize and identify color-coded themes (Azeem & Salfi, 2012). I repeatedly examined the interview transcripts to establish the formation of research themes.

Reassembling

Ciemins, Brant, Kersten, Mulette, and Dickerson (2015) explained that the reassembling process involves grouping data to identify themes, clarify code definitions, and compare themes. Fully developed themes require effective interviewing techniques and data analysis (Connelly & Peltzer, 2016). I reviewed notes and audio recordings from the face-to-face interviews to ensure the data were accurate. I used NVivo to identify themes based on the participants' responses. I coded the emerging patterns and themes developed from the research. I compared emerging themes from the academic literature review and the conceptual framework of this study to the participants' interview responses.

Interpreting

Qualitative data interpretation involves an unbiased explanation of the phenomenon (Papadimitriou, 2012). Researchers interpret the data based on the process of reflexivity (James, as cited in Mason, 2002). Reflexivity is important because

researchers must compare, evaluate, and verify data while remaining aware of their presence in the process (Medico & Santiago-Delefosse, 2014). I do not have personal relationships with the eligible participants, which reduced interviewer bias for data interpretation (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010). I interpreted the data by using my knowledge based on the phenomenon, transcribed interviews, and the emerging themes.

Concluding

In the process of concluding, the researcher reports the new knowledge and emerging themes from all data sources to increase community awareness of the phenomenon (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). I used data triangulation in this multiple case study to identify, organize, and interpret the human capital themes that leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. I used member checking for the interpretation of participants' responses to be accurately confirmed to reduce validity and credibility issues (Shavers & Moore, 2014). Lastly, I concluded the data analysis to describe human capital strategies that leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Reliability and Validity

Yilmaz (2013) mentioned that in qualitative research, reliability refers to consistent research instrument variables, and validity relates to the proper use of study measures. Barker and Hunsley (2014) stated there are several types of reliability and validity issues that exist in research. This section on reliability and validity outlines the strategies toward accurate research based on the selected instruments.

Gaiziuniene and Cibulskas (2013) emphasized that inappropriate measures in qualitative research lead to validity issues, causing the contents of the study to be biased. To enhance the reliability and validity of this study, I asked the participants to review my summaries. To establish validity, I reviewed individual transcripts, looking for common themes in the participants' responses (E. Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

Reliability

Dependability of the reliability of a qualitative study is used to ensure proper research is conducted to enable a future researcher to repeat the work (Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). To properly conduct research, I explained the steps of the study and described the research method. I explained the selection criteria of the participants of the study, ethical research protocol, interview method, and data organization and analysis techniques. I also eliminated researcher bias and maintained participants' confidentiality. Lishner (2015) mentioned that research dependability involves sharing requested data with fellow researchers. After I collected data, I reported the findings of the research and provided future researchers with further study recommendations.

Validity

Credibility. Credibility refers to the accuracy and trustworthiness of research to support the validity of the study (Sorenson, 2016). To ensure the research was accurate, I established coded themes and examined the data for consistent results. To maintain the trustworthiness of the research, data triangulation, and member checking was conducted throughout the study. Carter and Baghurst (2014) acknowledged that the credibility of

research is strengthened through triangulation methods such as theory triangulation and data source triangulation.

I reviewed the organizations' employee handbooks, manager reference guides, exit interviews, and turnover trend reports to increase the credibility of the data further. Credibility involves member checking or validation interviews (D. R. Thomas, 2017). Member checking was a participant validation technique used to explore the credibility of research results (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbells, & Walter, 2016). I provided the study participants opportunities to review my transcribed interviews and research findings before I finalized the research. Once the member checking was confirmed from the transcribed interviews, I uploaded the recordings onto a password-protected computer. Then, I deleted the interviews from my audio recording device. I used NVivo for Mac software to transcribe the interviews. The credibility was improved by participants' verification of the accuracy of the statements based on the data analysis and research findings.

Transferability. Researchers must establish accurate details of the study phenomenon to determine whether the findings of research can be applied in other research settings to establish the validity of the study (Bickerstaff, Devine-Wright, & Butler, 2015). Transferability applies to this study because the research findings may benefit food service leaders who lack knowledge of human capital. Readers of this study will be able to use the research findings to become aware of the importance of human capital strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. Future researchers

will be able to utilize this study as a tool to examine opportunities that exist in other industries.

Confirmability. Researchers receive reviews from peers to increase the reliability, validity, credibility, and transferability of research (Simpson & Clifton, 2016). I received constant feedback which ensured this research conforms to the standards of scholarly research. In the confirmability process, researchers use the reported research findings, supported by accurate data, to minimize biased research (Hazavehei, Moonaghi, Moeini, Moghimbeigi, & Emadzadeh, 2015; McLaughlin, Bush, & Zeeman, 2016). I used purposeful sampling for this qualitative study to acquire information from experienced individuals to construct qualitative research (Suri, 2011). To maximize the confirmability of this study, interviews were audio recorded, and I transcribed participants' responses with NVivo for Mac software. I used saturation of the participants' interview data to ensure all information based on the phenomenon was revealed.

Summary and Introduction to Section 3

The purpose for Section 2 was to provide thorough details of the methodology and design for this study based on the phenomenon of voluntary employee turnover intentions. I used a qualitative multiple case study to explore the human capital strategies utilized by some food service industry leaders to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. In this section, I described the (a) population for the study; (b) ethical research guidelines I followed; (c) the data collection instruments and their organization; and (d) data analysis methods, including how I maximized reliability and validity in the study.

I provided an overview, and report the findings of the doctoral study in Section 3. I included the study's business relevance, applications to professional practice, and implications for social change. Lastly, I included recommendations for future research, and provided the overall conclusions for the study in Section 3.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the human capital strategies food service industry leaders used to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. I used the purposeful sampling strategy to select four managers of four different casual dining restaurants in Winston-Salem, NC. The participants were knowledgeable about human capital strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover. All participants received formal management training before they were assigned leadership positions. Two participants were internally promoted, and two were externally recruited into leadership positions. For methodological triangulation purposes, I reviewed company documents and conducted several semi-structured interviews with the four participants to reach data saturation. I used member checking to ensure all participants' transcribed responses were accurate. Finally, I imported the interview data into NVivo for Mac software for data analysis. The four emerging themes from this study were: positive work relationships, employee motivation, employee incentives, and employee selection. I include further description of the emerging themes in the presentation of the findings.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question of this study was: What human capital strategies do leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions? I used the purposeful sampling strategy to select four managers of four different casual dining restaurants in Winston-Salem, NC. I used member checking and methodological triangulation to strengthen the credibility and trustworthiness of this

study. I reviewed company documents with the participants before the interview process. These documents included employee handbooks, manager reference guides, exit interviews, and turnover trend reports. After document review, I utilized eight semistructured questions (see Appendix B) to interview the participants based on human capital strategies they use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

I used the journaling method to take notes during the interviews. I alphanumerically coded the first participant from the first organization as P1 of O1; and continued the same method of coding up to P4 of O4. I continued to interview the participants until there was no additional information to collect. I used Microsoft Word to transcribe the audio recorded interviews. Once I completed the transcriptions, I sent them to the participants to see if any information needed to be added or edited. After I received approval from all participants that the information from their transcribed interviews was correct, I began data analysis.

I imported information from the company documents and the four transcribed interviews into NVivo for Mac. I analyzed the data and four themes emerged: positive work relationships with employees, employee motivation, employee incentives, and employee selection. These findings are related to the peer-reviewed literature and conceptual frameworks of this study.

The conceptual frameworks of this study were Herzberg's two-factor theory and G. S. Becker's human capital theory. All participants mentioned that factors such as employee selection, ethical leadership, and leadership communication motivate employees to remain with organizations.

Emergent Theme 1: Positive Work Relationships

The strongest emergent theme was positive work relationships with employees. Several sections of all employees' handbooks aligned with the first emergent theme of this study. Employee handbooks are used to communicate policies and promote fairness in the workplace (Smith & Harris, 2014). All participants' handbooks contained the mission and vision of the company, which was based on a great work environment for employees. Every participant mentioned that positive work relationships increase employees' trust, which enhances employee engagement. Key drivers of employee engagement include belief in the organization's direction and leadership (Kang & Sung, 2017). P1, P2, and P3's employee handbook spelled out that "Our commitment is to provide you with a great place to work and an experience that is challenging, fun, and rewarding." P1 mentioned, "Sometimes simple things such as listening to your employees builds relationships, and allows them to trust you."

All participants' employee handbooks contained an open-door policy to address workplace issues. The participants' employee handbooks outlined that the fastest place to resolve issues is through an open-door talk with one of the restaurant managers. P2 acknowledged the importance of having an "open-door policy to allow employees to communicate with the leadership team about their concerns." The participants' employee handbooks also guaranteed that employees could discuss any issue without retaliation.

Every participant mentioned that inappropriate relationships affect the work environment. All participants' employee handbooks outlined that personal relationships between an hourly employee and member of management are strictly prohibited. P4

emphasized, “One of the main reasons employees leave our organization is due to managers’ choices . . . fraternization.” Exit interviews can help leaders identify reasons for employees leaving their organization which may reduce staff turnover costs (Guilding, Lamminmaki, & McManus, 2014). P4’s exit interview documents confirmed that most employees “did not like the work environment due to inappropriate relationships.”

The second factor of positive work relationships with employees was the concept of teamwork. When employees have a positive relationship with their coworkers, their job satisfaction and performance increases (Pandža et al., 2015). P4 noted, “Joining together and banding together is important for the teamwork concept.” P2 added, “Employees become teammates when they help each other.” P3 acknowledged the idea of a team atmosphere by adding a strategy of pairing two or three servers to large parties to encourage them to work together. Every participant mentioned that their exit interview review analysis revealed most employees voluntarily leave their organization due to some members’ lack of teamwork.

One hundred percent of the participants agreed that management must work together to set the teamwork example for their employees. One hundred percent of the participants also agreed that increased teamwork reduces work stress. This emergent theme aligned with Herzberg’s hygiene factor in that positive work relationships increases employees’ job satisfaction (Matei & Abrudan, 2016).

In addition to participants’ responses, information from the participants’ employee handbooks aligned with the importance of positive work relationships. P4’s

employee handbook states, “Your attitude toward yourself and fellow employees, as well as your attitude toward customers, is very important to your success and that of our company.” P1, P2, and P3’s handbook states, “The company is committed to maintaining a positive work environment.” Table 2 identifies the frequency of which the participants mentioned positive work relationships throughout the interview and answered the interview questions by referencing positive work relationships as a strategy to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Table 2

Number of Times Positive Work Relationships were Mentioned

Positive Work Relationships	Times Mentioned
Participant 1, Interview Questions 4, 5, 6, & 7	27
Participant 2, Interview Questions 1, 2, 4, 6, & 8	30
Participant 3, Interview Questions 1, 2, 4, 6, & 8	47
Participant 4, Interview Questions 1, 2, 5, 6, & 8	90

Emergent Theme 2: Employee Motivation

Emergent Theme 2 was employee motivation. All participants mentioned communication as a way of motivating employees. P1 mentioned the concepts of making employees feel appreciated by stating, “Even if employees do not have a great night, I still tell them, Hey, great job. Good job.” P2 explained, “Sometimes counseling and encouraging” motivates employees to perform the job duties. P3 mentioned the concept of learning what motivates employees and setting them up for success by stating, “If I know somebody is saving for a car, then every conversation I have about performance or

doing their job is going to be like ‘Hey, you want that car? Let’s go.’” P4 added similar strategies by adding, “It’s the smallest things such as candy or Red Bull that bring up their morale . . . I give my top performing cooks headsets which gives them the empowerment . . . they feel important to be able to communicate directly to me.”

P1, P2, and P3’s employee handbook states, “We will achieve results and share our successes.” One hundred percent of the participants mentioned that they have systems for employee recognition. P1 had a strategy to post and reward employees who received great customer feedback which included, “All good comments are posted and rewarded.” P2 mentioned,

I know bragging rights is a big thing. I have something called, top-dog where employees have to sell the most add-ons, which includes: alcohol, appetizers, desserts, any add-on thing to a meal, and highest check average, and the most great customer service comments.

P3 emphasized, “We celebrate our results and share our successes . . . we will run competitions on who can sell the most of this tonight or we’ll play a game like bingo.” P4 stated,

I try just to find the different little competitions they can get into and saying, whoever has the least amount of comps, food returns, or whoever has a complete check . . . the employees that actually take pride in it rubs off on the others.

This theme aligned with Herzberg’s intrinsic and extrinsic factors in that recognition motivates employees to improve job performance (McMillan, McConnell, & O’Sullivan, 2016).

One hundred percent of the participants mentioned that recognitions systems increase employee motivation and performance. One hundred percent of the participants also acknowledged the importance of making employees feel valued and appreciated for improved organizational results. Table 3 identifies the frequency of which the participants mentioned employee motivation throughout the interview and answered the interview questions by referencing positive employee motivation as a strategy to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Table 3

Number of Times Employee Motivation was Mentioned

Employee Motivation	Times Mentioned
Participant 1, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 7, & 8	23
Participant 2, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, & 8	13
Participant 3, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 7, & 8	38
Participant 4, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, & 8	63

Emergent Theme 3: Employee Incentives

Theme 3 aligned with Herzberg's intrinsic factors based on advancement opportunities, rewards, and job satisfaction. Herzberg et al. (1959) acknowledged that incentives are needed to motivate employees to stay with organizations. Theme 3 also aligned with G. S. Becker's human capital theory, which includes favorable working conditions and advancement opportunities (G. S. Becker, 1962).

All participants mentioned advancement opportunities as an incentive for their employees. All participants' employee handbooks instruct employees to notify managers

if they wished to be considered for promotional opportunities. P1 and P2 recently promoted one of their employees into management positions. P1 stated, “I may see talent and offer that hardworking individual a leadership opportunity . . . one server worked years for the company, but is a manager at one of our locations.” P2 mentioned,

I developed a plan for this person who had the potential to go into management . . . I’m big on giving books, so I’ll gave this individual manager books to read . . . later on he was promoted into management . . . I’m so proud of him.

All participants’ handbooks outline the concept of on-going training for skill development. P3 presented the idea of “cross-training” employees into different areas to get themselves promoted.” P4 remarked, “This particular company likes to promote from within . . . while I have not promoted any employees into management recently, I have a trainer system . . . these individuals are considered shift leads.”

One hundred percent of the participants gave top performing employees free meals as incentives. P1 mentioned, “Every employee gets fed well on busy occasions such as Mother’s Day . . . we cook breakfast for them, bring in food from Bojangles’ . . . give them Red Bulls, etc.” P2 stated, “My cooks are very big on our steaks, and we give them manager meals when they go above and beyond.” P3 stated, “We have pizza parties . . . and sometimes I trade food out with other restaurants.” P4 added, “If it’s their birthday, I’ll so something simple like buy them a cake . . . other employees eat it as well and it becomes a celebration which improves the work morale for the day.”

Other incentives included vacation time, money, gift cards, performance raises, and decreasing their side work duties. P2’s incentives included “\$20 rewards and

manager cleaning the top performing employee's sections for the shift." P3's incentives included "the manager working a Saturday night and giving the top performing employee they worked for the tips . . . and other gifts." P4's incentives included "freeing the top performing employees from rolling silverware and side work, giving them opportunities to win gift cards, and opportunities to win money at the end of shifts."

All participants' employee handbooks indicated that performance reviews are necessary to compare employees' performance to the company's job standards. P1, P2, and P3's employee handbook states, "Pay increases are based on merit, and reward improvements in skill, efficiency, and service." All participants acknowledged that if an employee is overdue for a raise, they make several recommendations to upper management. P1 mentioned, "If we are not paying somebody what they need to be paid I'll be like "Hey, listen . . . we need to give this person a raise, this is ridiculous." Table 4 identifies the frequency of which the participants mentioned employee incentives throughout the interview and answered the interview questions by referencing positive employee incentives as a strategy to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Table 4

Number of Times Employee Incentives were Mentioned

Employee Incentives	Times Mentioned
Participant 1, Interview Questions 1, 3, 4, & 8	24
Participant 2, Interview Questions 1, 3, & 4	23
Participant 3, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, & 8	47
Participant 4, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, & 8	39

Emergent Theme 4: Employee Selection

Theme 4 aligned with G. S. Becker's human capital theory which indicates leaders' decision-making skills and knowledge sourcing are vital components of human capital (Mayer et al., 2012). All participants' manager reference guides included a talent acquisition strategy. P1, P2, and P3's manager reference guide revealed steps to identify applicants based on their assessment results. This system measures each applicant's predicted success in "customer service, engagement, retention, and teamwork." P4 mentioned that "the company has a great management program designed to make sure managers are trained to identify strong candidates."

Effective recruiting practices are essential for the reduction of voluntary employee turnover intentions (Dahling et al., 2013). One hundred percent of the participants acknowledged that employee selection impacts voluntary employee turnover intentions. P1, P2, and P3's employee handbook states, "We will only hire people with the skills and potential to succeed." P1 stated, "We have a system before I even sit down to talk to you, you've filled out an application online, you've taken a test . . . I don't hire reds, and that could be for lots of reasons . . . maybe it's availability." P2 added, "I don't hire anyone unless they have two years or more of serving experience . . . If I do hire you with no server experience, you have to have an amazing personality." P4 indicated, "I take my time going through the applicants . . . I never make bad choices just to have a body in the building . . . I don't take rash jumps."

Every participant agreed that their interview process takes time because they select employees who are the best fit for the organization. P2 emphasized, "When I

started with the company, I had to weed out the people who did not care about our guests...this reduced our turnover.” P4 stated, “Sometimes hiring decisions affect not only the overall turnover rate, but things like food costs . . . overall profits of the store.” After analyzing the participants’ annual turnover trend reports, P4’s turnover percentage in 2016 was 19.6%. O4’s prime cost was at 40.8%. P4 emphasized, “I am always present . . . I get results because I roll up my sleeves to set the example for my employees.” All participants mentioned their ideal turnover percentage which ranged from 10-15%.

Deery, Nath, and Walsh (2013) emphasized that favoritism and unfair practices result in increased turnover intentions. According to the participants’ handbooks, managers are prohibited from hiring or supervising relatives. Table 5 identifies the frequency of which the participants mentioned employee selection throughout the interview and answered the interview questions by referencing employee selection as a strategy to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Table 5

Number of Times Employee Selection was Mentioned

Employee Selection	Times Mentioned
Participant 1, Interview Question 8	15
Participant 2, Interview Questions 8	12
Participant 3, Interview Questions 8	2
Participant 4, Interview Questions 1 & 8	16

Relating Findings to Peer-Reviewed Studies

The emergent themes connected to several studies mentioned in the literature review section of this study. All participants mentioned the first emerging theme, positive work relationships with employees 194 times. Keating and Heslin (2015) noted a positive work environment fosters employee engagement, which increases their career development and sense of belonging to the organization. Shantz, Alfes, and Latham (2016) agreed that positive work relationships improve employee engagement, and motivate employees to remain loyal to the organization. This first emergent theme contributes to the literature to confirm that leaders develop positive work relationships with employees to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

The participants collectively mentioned the second emerging theme, employee motivation 137 times. Hsiung (2012) emphasized that when leaders do not value employees' opinions or concerns, employee motivation decreases. The participants of this study innovatively developed strategies to motivate their employees. Ruben and Gigliotti (2016) emphasized that effective leadership involves clear communication, which

influences employee behavior. Osman et al. (2016) added that leaders who communicate clear job expectations and give constructive feedback develop positive relationships with employees. This second emergent theme contributes to the literature to confirm that simple things, such as communication or an open-door-policy, increases employee job satisfaction.

All participants mentioned the third emergent theme, employee incentives, 133 times. Employee incentives are effective for increased work performance, which increases organizational profitability (Tomohara & Ohno, 2013). This third emergent theme contributes to the literature to confirm that incentives may encourage employees to compete for rewards. All participants use incentives as a strategy for the employees to compete and feel valued at the organization.

The participants collectively mentioned the last emergent theme, employee selection, 85 times. Employees must be properly matched to the appropriate job to ensure career longevity with the organization (Van Hoyer, 2013). Reitz (2014) contributed to this idea by adding the concept of job embeddedness (JE), which explained that there must be a proper fit between employees and their organization for reduced employee turnover. All participants emphasized the importance of carefully selecting employees for reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions. This final emergent theme aligned with the literature on the importance of having an effective recruiting plan to keep employees with the organization.

Applications to Professional Practice

The specific business problem of this study was that some leaders in the food service industry lack human capital strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. The conceptual frameworks of this study were Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory and G. S. Becker's (1964) human capital theory. I used the tenets of both frameworks to address the overarching research question: What human capital strategies do leaders in the food service industry use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?

Organizational leaders with high voluntary employee turnover decrease their profitability due to employee replacement costs that range from 50%-200% of an employee's salary (Selden & Sowa, 2015). The findings of this study are relevant to improved business practice because the results include strategies that successful food service leaders use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. All participants have over five years of experience with effectively developing strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions.

All participants emphasized the communication and consistency are vital for the development of effective strategies to increase employee job satisfaction. Leaders with effective communication skills create positive employee work environments, which improves work relationships (Raina & Britt Roebuck, 2016). Herzberg identified that motivators are the satisfactory elements that encourage employees to perform well within the company innovatively (Mládková et al., 2015). All participants mentioned the importance of competition and reward systems to increase employee motivation within

their organization. Company records from the participants confirmed that these strategies improve food service leaders' organizational profitability.

The findings of this study apply to leaders in the food service industry who lack an understanding of human capital. Strategies such as positive work relationships, employee motivation, employee incentives, and employee selection may be used by these leaders to motivate employees to remain with organizations. Findings of this study may be helpful to food service leaders with increased voluntary employee turnover intentions. The findings of the study may also assist new food service leaders to develop a plan to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions in their organization.

Implications for Social Change

Implications for positive social change included the potential to contribute to the improvement of employees' well-being through increased work engagement. Increased work engagement may lead to improved employee well-being through increased earnings, which in turn promotes the welfare and development of individuals, families, and communities (Xie et al., 2016). Improving job factors that affect the employees' well-being and morale contributes to social change both individually and in the community. Reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions in organizations could improve social contributions as organizational leaders who achieve higher profits tend to have a surplus to donate to charities (Chen & Lin, 2015). Additionally, the implications for positive social change included the potential to contribute to the improvement of employees' well-being through increased job satisfaction.

Happiness and positive self-efficacy improve personal health and empowerment (Ouweneel et al., 2013). Employees with an increased sense of well-being tend to engage actively in training new hires, which in turn increases supportive social networks in the work environment (Chung et al., 2015). Organizational leaders may use the findings of this multiple case study as a resource to understand the importance of strategic initiatives. Particularly, leaders in the food service industry may use the research findings to increase their awareness of social responsibility as it relates to voluntary employee turnover intentions.

Recommendations for Action

Food service leaders with increased voluntary employee turnover intentions should use these results to develop strategies to motivate employees to stay with the organization. Based on the findings of this study, positive work relationships with employees, employee motivation, employee incentives, and employee selection, I have several recommendations for action.

The first recommendation is for food service leaders to find ways to develop positive work relationships with their employees. The first step begins with being compassionate and understanding that employees have feelings. Leaders who neglect to show compassion in response to employees' suffering at work increase stress and job dissatisfaction, which have the potential to do great harm to employees and the organizations (Won-Moo, Taewon, & Seung-Yoon, 2016). Leaders' communication skills are critical for positive work relationships. Findings of this study revealed that positive work relationships with employees increase organizational performance. When

employees feel comfortable communicating with leaders, they take ownership of their job responsibilities.

The second recommendation for food service leaders is to use incentives to motivate employees to reach organizational goals. Every participant in this study acknowledged that a budget allotted for employee incentives increases employees' work motivation. Simple strategies, such as contests and gift card giveaways, enhance competitive advantage, which increases productivity (Castellaneta, 2016). Findings of this study indicate that motivated employees are more likely to remain with organizations. Some employees achieve a sense of achievement in earning incentives while others desire advancement opportunities. Successful leaders acknowledge the importance of making employees feel valued and appreciated.

My final recommendation for food service leaders is to select employees to work in their organization carefully. All participants mentioned that hiring employees that fit with their organization takes time. Hiring unfit employees may increase voluntary employee turnover intentions within the organization. Participants mentioned that standardized assessments are an excellent tool for employee selection. It is also important to be proactive in the interview process to make the final hiring decisions (Nolan, Langhammer, & Salter, 2016). Findings of the study revealed that leaders with reduced voluntary employee turnover intentions strategically select employees for their organization.

All participants expressed interest in the results of this study. I will write a one- to two-page summary of the research findings for the participants of the study. If requested,

I will inform them of how they may gain access to the full study. The final study will be published in the ProQuest and Dissertations Theses database for other researchers to view. Other leaders may apply the recommended strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions in their organization. Business instructors may use the findings of this study to share this information with students who desire to be in leadership positions. I also plan to present the research findings in my college lectures, business workshops, and other conference opportunities based on human capital. My organization is also interested in the results of the study, so I plan to present the findings during a meeting.

Recommendations for Further Research

Because this qualitative multiple case study located was limited to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, my first recommendation for future researchers is to conduct a similar study in another geographical location. Additionally, researchers could combine counties or regions as a similar study. These researchers who select other geographic areas could use the quantitative or mixed methods design to improve the validity of the study. Other themes, such as training, work-life balance, could also be researched to expand the quality of the topic of voluntary employee turnover intentions.

The participants selected were limited to the food service industry. My second recommendation is for future researchers to conduct a similar study with a different industry. Expanding the body of research to other industries with increased voluntary employee turnover intentions may improve their working conditions and organizational profitability. Additionally, I recommend using a different sampling strategy to improve the validity of the study. If researchers employ an inadequate sample size, it may hinder

the research findings (Griffith, 2013). My last recommendation is to use a larger sample size of participants. Larger sample sizes may improve the transferability, credibility, dependability, and conformability of the study.

Reflections

Reflecting on my experience within the DBA Doctoral Study process, I experienced many different emotions. In my first class at Walden, I questioned if I could accomplish such a milestone. There were times where I felt as if I was not capable of conducting a study and other times where I felt inspired to make it to the end of my doctoral journey. Along the way, I encountered many obstacles which made me feel as if I wanted to give up. After signing up for my second residency, my grandmother passed away. I made the decision to balance my residency goal and attend my grandmother's funeral. The process of driving between two different states was tiring, but knowing that my late grandmother wanted me to finish helped me to push through the trials and tribulations. I sacrificed my time and energy, so I knew I had to reach my goal.

Although the process was rigorous, I learned that the DBA journey is not solely about conducting research for a *doctor* title. The journey is also about professional development, growth, persevering despite issues that may arise, and training my mind physically to withstand the emotional aspects of the doctoral process. This process has enhanced my decision-making skills, improved my leadership capabilities, and overall demeanor at my work organization.

In the development of my study, I learned the importance of quality over quantity. I did not base my progress on how many pages I developed but focused on whether each

section aligned with the DBA rubric. In every class, residency, discussion, etc., I heard recommendations to *follow the rubric*. I kept this in the back of my mind and made progress faster. An exciting moment for me was knowing my proposal made it to my second committee member. My second committee member gave me valuable feedback; I adhered and made it to my university research reviewer. I followed the same process and celebrated each step. In the data collection process, I was careful to follow ethical research guidelines. As I analyzed the data from the interviews and company documents, the emergent themes aligned with the framework of my study. Overall, I would advise those going through the process to be patient and trust feedback from their chair. I was finally blessed to receive a chair who was compassionate about me completing my study.

Conclusion

The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore the human capital strategies successful food service leaders use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions. High voluntary employee turnover intentions are a problem in the food service industry; therefore, leaders must develop strategies to motivate employees to stay with the organization. I conducted semi-structured interviews and reviewed the participants' company documents for methodological triangulation. The four emergent themes of this study were positive work relationships with employees, employee motivation, employee incentives, and employee selection. These emerging themes aligned with previous research; therefore, these strategies may reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions to increase organizational profitability.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. What human capital strategies do you use to reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?
2. How do these strategies reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions in your organization?
3. What rewards such as advancement opportunities or recognition do you use for your employees?
4. What work environment factors, such as pay, salary, work schedules, and benefits, influence employees' intentions to stay in or leave your organization?
5. What reasons have employees given you as to why they voluntarily left your organization?
6. What other strategic factors should be considered when seeking to reduce voluntary turnover intentions?
7. How do these strategic factors reduce voluntary employee turnover intentions?
8. What other information or recommendations can you add to help leaders in the food industry reduce voluntary employee turnover?