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Walden University
2018

Abstract

Employee Turnover and Its Effect on Remaining Colleague Motivation

by

Glenn Eric Windom

MS, San Diego State University, 1983

BS, University of California at Los Angeles, 1982

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

April 2018

Abstract

Voluntary employee turnover is damaging to the sustainability of child protective services (CPS) organizations, as 60% of social workers who contemplated leaving their organizations quit during the year of consideration. The purpose of this exploratory case study was to examine the strategies CPS leaders used to reduce voluntary employee turnover and motivate employees. The conceptual framework for this study included the motivational hygiene theory and the behavior engineering model. The target population consisted of 9 CPS leaders from a large metropolitan area in Southern California who had specific knowledge of voluntary employee turnover. Data collection involved face-to-face semistructured interviews, company memoranda, and statistical data reports. The data analysis process included inductive coding of specific word and phrases, word frequency searches, and organizing the data for theme interpretation. Based on the analysis of the data, 4 themes emerged: supportive leadership, effectual communication, teamwork, and training. These themes revealed that these were the necessary ingredients to reduce employee turnover. The findings from this study may contribute to positive social change through improved employee wellbeing from trusting relationships and open communication with managers understanding the factors that contribute to employee motivation, job satisfaction, and reduced employee turnover. Social change also extends from improved collaborative relationships between CPS, community-based organizations, and clientele to build supportive teams that can reduce the incidence of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study posthumously to my parents, Eddie Windom Jr. and Dora Windom. You come from humble beginnings yet instilled purpose of life in your children. "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye, not my law. For, I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also and said unto me, let thine heart retain my words; keep my commandments and live. Get wisdom, get understanding, forget it not, neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forget her not, and she shall preserve thee; love her, and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding (Proverbs 4: 1-7)."

Acknowledgments

I graciously take this opportunity to thank God for being with me through this tedious journey. It was the Love of the Father, the Grace of the Lord Jesus, and the Guidance of the Holy Spirit that kept me through the challenges of life and the DBA process. Without Him, I would not have achieved this significant milestone. I also want to acknowledge my doctoral committee. Dr. Velkova (Chair), your constant encouragement and support throughout my journey was priceless. Your commitment to my success exceeded my expectations to the point where I had no choice but to succeed. I truly appreciate you. Dr. Fan (Second Committee Member), I thank you for your quick review of my study document and the professionalism demonstrated during my oral defense. To my URR, Dr. Nwosu. Your scholarly comments propelled me to improve my skill in APA. Thank you for your careful review and thoughtful comments. Finally, I thank Dr. Davis (Program Director), for your unwavering support to the students and staff as well as your dedication to improvements of the DBA program.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Employee turnover has become a widespread concern for human resource managers globally (Pepra-Mensah, Adjei, & Yeboah-Appiagyei, 2015). In the United States, approximately 60 million employees left their jobs in 2015 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). Employee turnover negatively affects the economy, costing businesses over $25 billion per year (Corso, Visser, Ingels, & Perou, 2015). The Bureau of Labor Statistics data (2016) also suggested that over 37% of employees thought about leaving their jobs, which is 33% more than indicated by the statistics of 2011 (Elkjaer & Filmer, 2015). Rubenstein, Eberly, Lee, and Mitchell (2015) reported that employees leave organizations for varied reasons including limited promotion and growth opportunities, disapproval of organizational restructuring, and low satisfaction with company role and responsibilities. The employee is the backbone of any company, which implies that to sustain a business in a competitive market, the employers should seek opportunities to reduce the rate of employee turnover (Grawitch, Ballard, & Erb, 2015). Implementing strategies that are successful for employee retention and building respectful organizational relationships contribute to corporate loyalty and reduced voluntary employee turnover (Bonenberger, Aikins, Akweongo, & Wyss, 2014). Further research might help employers understand different strategies to lessen employee turnover, specifically in the field of Child Protective Services (CPS).

Background of the Problem

Employee turnover is damaging to the sustainability of business organizations (Pepra-Mensha et al., 2015). Instances where employees voluntarily resign from an

organization have become common among employees in the social services profession over the past decade (Boyas, Wind, & Ruiz, 2015). The turnover intention of child welfare staff is a direct reflection of their job satisfaction and the conflict between work and family. Employees are not motivated to stay on the job by the rewards that they receive but the level of satisfaction they have while balancing their work and family (Lizano, Hsiao, Barak, & Casper, 2014). The high rate of turnover can lead to uncovered caseloads, discontinuity of service to the children and their families, high administrative costs, and low morale of staff who stay on their jobs. Employers benefit from strategies that would enhance retention and recruitment of competent staff (Sayer, Barriball, Bliss, & Bakhshi, 2016). Since the complexity and demand for the services associated with the child welfare system continue to intensify, a need exists for employers to focus on interventions, which may include systemic changes to improve staff retention in such organizations (Heffernan & Viggian, 2015).

Problem Statement

Social workers leave CPS organizations in large numbers (Boyas et al., 2015). During the decade ending 2014, voluntary employee turnover increased from the prior decade in the United States workforce, and in 2015, more than 2 million individuals willingly quit their jobs (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). Sixty percent of CPS social workers who contemplated leaving their organizations quit voluntarily during the year of consideration (Auerbach, Zeitlin-Schudrich, Lawrence, Claiborne, & McGowan 2014). The general business problem is voluntary employee turnover influences organizational

performance, revenue, and sustainability. The specific business problem is that some CPS leaders lack the strategies to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, exploratory case study was to examine the strategies that CPS leaders used to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees. The target population consisted of nine CPS leaders from a large metropolitan area in Southern California. The implications for positive social change included the potential to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees to perform better, which in turn might impact or help improve the lives of children in the community through better services.

Nature of the Study

The decision to conduct quantitative, qualitative, or mixed method research depends on the nature of the problem under investigation (Fujii, Ziegler, & Mackey, 2016). The quantitative methodology is used to quantify data, present findings in a numerical or mathematical form, and generalize results from a sample of a target population (Brockington, 2014). The qualitative methodology, however, is a diverse activity where researchers embrace the assumptions, practices, and interpretations of social and business issues from the perspective of individual or group experiences related to an event or phenomenon (Pinder, 2014). Mixed methods researchers combine the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies for a holistic view of the study. The inclusive view helps to bring insight into a phenomenon that is difficult to understand by using a single methodology for the research (Eisner, 2017). For considering the turnover and retention rates of employees and exploring the different strategies to increase them,

the qualitative methodology was pertinent. The qualitative methodology is appropriate for understanding the lived experiences of individuals relating to a phenomenon or event using multiple data collection sources such as interviews, observations, and analysis of documents (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). To explore the subject in detail, I used the qualitative approach to understand and interpret strategies CPS leaders used to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees.

The design of this study was an exploratory case study. Other qualitative designs considered were phenomenology and ethnography. The case study design is a research strategy purposed to provide a detailed account of a person, company, or industry over time through multiple techniques of data collection to examine one or more case histories regarding single or multiple phenomena (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Researchers who use a phenomenological design explore participants' lived experiences related to an event or phenomenon (Thomas, 2016). The ethnography researchers focus on fieldwork with direct involvement in the lives of a group or population in a natural setting (Edirisingha, Aitken, & Ferguson, 2014). The case study design was most appropriate for my study as I proposed to analyze information of a case to gain an understanding of a problem or situation. Conducting a case study enabled me to use multiple data sources such as face-to-face interviews and review of company documents to understand the problem of voluntary employee turnover. Using a case study design allowed me to explore the strategies managers used to reduce voluntary employee turnover and motivate employees.

Research Question

The overarching research question was:

What strategies do CPS leaders use to reduce voluntary employee turnover and motivate employees?

Interview Questions

1. As a leader, how would you describe your role in motivating CPS social workers at your organization?

2. What strategies have you used to motivate your employees?

3. Which employee motivation strategies were most effective?

4. What experiences could you share concerning voluntary employee leave in your organization within the past two years?

5. What strategies have you used to address voluntary employee turnover?

6. How did your employees respond to those strategies?

7. What additional information would you like to share regarding voluntary employee turnover and employee motivation?

Conceptual Framework

The motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) and the behavior engineering model (BEM; Gilbert, 1978) served as the conceptual frameworks for this study. Under Herzberg et al.'s theory, both motivation and hygiene factors could influence employees' job satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Takawira, Coetzee, & Schreuder, 2014). Naidu (2016) described motivators and hygiene factors as being intrinsic and extrinsic to the work environment. The intrinsic motivators include achievement,

advancement, recognition, and responsibility; while the external hygiene factors are supervision styles, the level of relationships, and company policy and practice (Ahmed, 2015). Factors of motivation are essential for employees to experience job satisfaction, while the factors of hygiene contribute to the retention of employees (Siengthai & Pila-Ngarm, 2016). Given the context of this research, the motivation-hygiene theory holds that CPS employees' motivation is a positive aspect of the profession despite the high turnover rate.

The second theory I used as the conceptual framework of this study was the BEM. The BEM is used to identify obstacles that interfere with employee motivation and job satisfaction. The model distinguishes between individual skill set and organizational performance or the environment in which the employee operates (McFadden, Campbell, & Taylor, 2014). The BEM include six criteria of deficiency in the workplace, which are (a) data, (b) instruments, (c) incentives, (d) knowledge, (e) capacity and (f) motives. As related to this study, the BEM enabled participants to share their experiences with and insights into employee motivation as they pertain to voluntary employee turnover (Vogus, Cull, Hengelbrok, Modell, & Epstein, 2016). Both individual and environmental (employee workplace) interventions such as clear instruction of job expectations and relevant feedback on performance are helpful for retaining employees (Salloum, Kondrat, Jonco, & Olson, 2015).

Operational Definitions

The operational definitions below refer to the presentation in this doctoral study. The following definitions are from scholarly, peer-reviewed, and governmental sources.

Child-protection services: Refer to preventative and protective services to children who experienced abuse and neglect (Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 2016).

Child welfare: An array of services designed to ensure that children are safe and that families have the necessary support to care for their children successfully (Yampolskaya, Armstrong, Strozier, & Swanke, 2017).

Employee turnover: The change in the workforce during a definite period (Carpenter, Webb, Bostock, & Coomber, 2017).

Employee turnover intention: Employee consideration to voluntarily quit an organization (Korsakienė, Stankevičienė, Šimelytė, & Talačkienė, 2015).

Employee voluntary turnover: Voluntary movement of an employee out of an organization (Pepra-Mensah et al., 2015).

Human resource management: Managing people as assets that are fundamental to the competitive advantage of the organization (Pepra-Mensah et al., 2015).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions in a qualitative research study reflect characteristics or aspects believed to be true without confirmation or verification (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Pemberton-Jones, 2015). The assumptions of this study were (a) individuals would participate in the study, (b) individuals would respond to the interview questions truthfully, (c) individuals would respond quickly, (d) 100% of participants would

complete the semistructured interviews, and (e) participants would respond to questions similarly based on the definitions that this study provided.

Limitations

Limitations are weaknesses or problems in a research study that are out of the researcher's control (Baldo, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Rubin & Babbie, 2016). Limitations may result in bias, which might influence the reader's interpretation of findings (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2015). By stating the limitations and weaknesses of a study, researchers create a point of reference for the reader (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). Limitations of this study included (a) the focus is on only one government agency on the West Coast of the United States, (b) the findings may only be applicable to organizations of similar size and from the same industry, (c) the data is a snapshot of a moment in time, and (d) the data collection is limited to not-for-profit organizations.

Delimitations

The delimitation of a research study is a process where the researcher has control to limit the scope of information or data included in an investigation (Eisner, 2017). Thomas, Nelson, and Silverman (2011) stated that delitimations are decisions or choices researchers make to frame a workable research problem. Also, delimitations are restrictions reflecting the prevailing geographic, personal, professional, and community boundaries that researchers impose to focus the scope of a study. The delimitations of my study included the purposeful selection of nine CPS managers with at least 2 years experience as a manager who had intimate knowledge of the underlying factors of the

effect of voluntary employee turnover in the organization. Furthermore, geographic, community and professional boundaries served in the delimitation of the focus of this study. The research included (a) a large urban CPS organization in Southern California, (b) face-to-face interviews with CPS professionals of a Southern California organization, and (c) data collected through company documentation.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The study was significant because the findings may serve as an addition to existing knowledge on voluntary employee turnover and the motivation of remaining employees (Parker, 2014). Employee voluntary turnover negatively affects remaining employees' motivation (Boyas et al., 2015), job satisfaction (Khan & Qadir, 2016), and organizational performance (Salloum et al., 2015). Turnover can also negatively affect company earnings (Wang, Zhao, & Thornhill, 2014). The findings of this study may also prompt leaders to develop business strategies to address employee motivation, turnover intention, and job performance. Moreover, managers can use the findings to take a holistic view of the company's structure and improve the systemic processes in place to enhance employee commitment (Panaccio, Vandenberghe, & Ben Ayed, 2015).

Implications for Social Change

The results from this study may contribute to positive social change as this research may help CPS leaders understand how certain job aspects such as workload, anxiety, communication, policy, and procedure may contribute to employee intention to quit an organization. CPS leaders may use this knowledge in modifying current

organizational practices and policies and in developing training and development programs designed to help maintain or improve employee motivation. These findings may encourage leaders of CPS, local government officials, and the leaders of other community-based organizations to collaborate towards reduced employee turnover. Reduced employee turnover may bring stability to the relationship between the caseworker and client, thus enhancing the probability of a successful reconciliation of the family. Stability in social work includes making sure abused and neglected children receive the care and protection they require as well as CPS organization recruiting and retaining an experienced and well-trained workforce who are committed to attaining the goals of a child welfare program (Middleton & Potter, 2015).

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

A lack of knowledge of how voluntary employee turnover or employee intent to quit affects the motivation and performance of employees at CPS organizations (Terera & Ngirande, 2014) represents a gap in the literature. The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to examine the strategies CPS leaders used to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees.

This study may help organizational leaders identify employee-related and organization-related factors that lead to voluntary employee turnover, understand the effects of such voluntary turnovers on organizational performance and efficiency, and assist in developing strategies and practices to improve employee retention and organizational performance (Tangthong, Trimetsoontorn, & Rojniruntilcul, 2014).

The review of professional and academic literature connects previous research to the current study. Nowrouzi, Giddens, Gohar, Schoenenberger, Bautista, and Casole (2016) reported that the literature review provides the researcher with a comprehensive search of relevant information on the subject matter; as such, the literature review is vital to any research (Packard & Shih, 2014). This literature review builds on the research regarding voluntary employee turnover and the factors that relate to employee performance, motivation, and job satisfaction. Salloum et al. (2015) noted that employee turnover has the potential impact of influencing the performance, sustainability, and revenue of the organization. As employees quit, organizations may incur direct replacement costs, indirect costs of lost productivity (Takawira et al., 2014), or loss of classified information (Vogus et al., 2016). Hayes, Bonner, and Douglas (2015) stated that factors leading to voluntary employee turnover include job satisfaction, professional commitment, burnout, and depersonalization.

The historical perspective of work related to the research question allowed me to understand the emerging patterns and trends of pertinent existing research and the material conceptual frameworks. The organization of this review begins with the Herzberg motivation-hygiene theory and Gilbert's BEM as they pertain to employee performance, motivation and job satisfaction. The themes include voluntary turnover, turnover intention, job satisfaction, employee motivation, organizational cost, commitment, and performance.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature review includes past articles that focused on employee's turnover and retention strategies. The sources of data incorporated books, periodicals, and journals from the Walden University Library, and the websites of Google Scholar. I used the following academic databases: EBSCOhost, Sage, ProQuest, ABI/INFORM Complete, PsycINFO, and SocINDEX. To retrieve relevant content, I selected the keywords of *employee job performance, employee motivation, employee retention, employee turnover, employee quit, job satisfaction, organizational culture (policy and support) organization commitment, organizational costs, turnover intention,* and *voluntary turnover.* The total numbers of references used in this study numbered 155, with 151 or 97% between the years of 2013 and 2017, which is within five years of anticipated CAO approval date. Eighty-seven percent (133) of the articles included in this study were peer-reviewed and published within five years of completing the study (2013-2017). In addition to the peer-reviewed articles, the document contains references from four government sources, one doctoral dissertation, and 15 books published within the years 2013 and 2017.

Motivational Hygiene Theory and Behavior Engineering Model

The current study s in alignment with two theories: Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory of motivation and Gilbert's BEM. Researchers have used both theories in employee motivation, job satisfaction, and retention studies. Specifically, researchers often used the motivation-hygiene theory of motivation in investigating employee motivation and satisfaction (Kroon, Freese, & Schalk, 2015). Researchers referred to Herzberg's theory as a tool for predicting and identifying motivating factors in various

contexts and in understanding the employee's intention to leave the organization. The researchers concentrated in the field of education (Derby-Davis, 2014; Flinkman & Salantera, 2014), healthcare (Savoy & Wood, 2015), law enforcement (King, 2015), and businesses (Williams, 2015). For example, Benton (2016) used Herzberg's theory to identify the determinants to university students' motivation to remain in their chosen course during their first year, as well as their loyalty to their university. Okello and Gilson (2015) studied factors that motivated nurses who worked with the elderly and terminally ill patients. Salloum et al. (2015) outlined Herzberg's theory to identify motivators and hygiene factors that influenced the job satisfaction of soldiers and officers in the Korean army. Derby-Davis (2014) applied the motivation-hygiene theory to identify the factors behind nursing faculty's job satisfaction and intent to stay in academe and found that age, health-related circumstances, and even family responsibilities could not explain intention to remain in the organization. Derby-Davis (2014) found a significant relationship between the motivation levels and the nurses' intent to stay. Also using Herzberg's theory as a framework, Savoy and Wood (2015) learned that radiation therapists who perceived adequate levels of motivators, such as recognition and personal growth, and hygiene factors, such as salary and job security, were satisfied with their jobs and were less likely to leave their work.

King (2015) used the motivation-hygiene theory to understand the reasons for high employee turnover in law enforcement agencies. Gathering data from 12 former law enforcement officers from the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office, the researcher identified specific factors that influenced higher turnover rates. These factors included a poor

relationship with supervisors, low satisfaction levels, perceived preferential treatment of others, no defined career path, lack of communication, and poor treatment. King's (2015) study confirmed the motivation-hygiene theory's proposition that employees leave because of dissatisfaction with supervisors and colleagues. Williams (2015) noted the theory in determining how small family business managers retained talented employees who were not members of the family. Results indicated employees who had good professional relationships with their supervisors and colleagues and who had perceptions of adequate professional growth opportunities were satisfied with their work and were thus less likely to leave (Williams, 2015).

Gilbert's BEM was another model that served as a conceptual framework (Cloutier et al., 2015). Gilbert studied performance in the workplace by focusing on the effects of environmental factors on individuals' productivity. Under the model, six factors can improve individual, group, and organizational performances. These six factors include the following: (a) expectations, (b) feedback, (c) tools and resources, (d) consequences and incentives, (e) skills and knowledge, (f) selection and assignment, and (g) motives and preferences (Benton, 2016; Chevalier, 2014). According to Bailey et al. (2016), Gilbert explained poor employee performance for any given accomplishment. Deficiencies in performance reflect a deficiency in behavior repertory (P) or the environment that supports the repertory (E), or deficiencies in both. Overall, any deficiency in performance reflects a deficiency of the management system.

Gilbert indicated that there are three essential factors to consider in improving employee performance. The first factor is the relationship between behavior and

performance. The second factor involves specific methods that improve

employees' performance (Lizano & Barak, 2015). The third factor is organizations play a

huge role in shaping employees' performance (McWey, Holtrop, Wojciak, & Claridge,

2015). Previous researchers (Benton, 2016; Campbell, 2014; King, 2015; Winiecki, 2014;

Wooderson, Cuskelly, & Meyer, 2014) applied BEM theory to study work performance

in various organizational settings. Lemanski, Wisniewski, and Benson (2011)

regarded the BEM theory as fundamental analysis of a model that helps in increasing the

employee's performance. Results of the analysis suggested that employees with sufficient

knowledge, skills, and capacity showed exemplary performance. Additionally, results

showed that the availability of training and professional development opportunities

improved employees' performance. At the same time, barriers to improved performance

included limitations in information, resources, and incentives.

Arora and Tandon (2017) practically implemented the theory's expectations in

measuring employees' performance after experiencing proficient training through

asynchronous discussion, that is, in an online environment. Results revealed that the

positive influence of training and asynchronous discussions on employees' performance

is stronger than the influence of the employees' characteristics (Korsakienė et al., 2015).

Bonenberger et al. (2014) also applied the BEM in studying and determining how

organizational strategies can improve employees' performance and found that poor

alignment to performance management interventions hindered the strategic assessment

and management of human performance. In a discrete study, Payne (2015) mentioned the

BEM model assists in identifying approaches that business organizations may use to

improve employee retention and performance. The approaches that led to better employee performance included aligning individual employees' efforts with business goals, training to close skill gaps, forming craft job-focused goals, and promoting collaboration. Finally, Hui, Lee, and Wang (2015) studied how organizational culture shaped employee performance. Results from the study suggested that employees' level of productivity depended largely on organizational cultural factors. Thus, these findings of previous studies affirmed the BEM theory by showing that to motivate employees towards job excellence, company managers or leaders should focus on improving organizational forces or environmental supports rather than focusing on individual employees' skills and repertoire of knowledge and behavior.

Employee Voluntary Turnover

Employee turnover is detrimental to the sustainability of business organizations, industries, and sectors for decades (Pepra-Mensha et al., 2015). Voluntary turnovers or instances wherein employees voluntarily resign from an organization are the focus of this study. Leaders can avoid the consequence of voluntary employee turnover by improving employees' motivation and job satisfaction (Cloutier et al., 2015). Some motivational strategies include increasing the salary, providing more opportunities, and focusing on improving job satisfaction levels (Kroon et al., 2015). Studies on the relationship between voluntary employee turnover and job satisfaction, motivation, and management style began in the early 1900s with the development of management theories and studied extensively in the mid-1950s to present (Benton, 2016).

According to the study of Bailey et al. (2016), employers reflect preventive processes on voluntary turnover, as the associated costs are high. For example, employees who voluntarily leave the organization is likely to migrate to a competitor, which may present a problem to the organization, as the employee may possess sensitive information. Joseph, Gautam, and Bharathi (2015) found that employees, on average, switch companies every two to three years. Such high rates may result in companies losing top-performing workers to their competitors resulting in employees' suboptimal performance and poor overall organizational outcomes (Khan & Qadir, 2016). As such, company managers need to identify ways to reduce voluntary turnover (Erickson, 2015).

Turnover intention is a precursor to voluntary employee turnover (Cohen, Blake, & Goodman, 2015; Erickson, 2015; McWey et al., 2015). Turnover intention refers to the measure of the intent of an organization to relieve employees or the measure of the intent of an employee to resign from an organization (Rodwell, McWilliams, & Gulyas, 2016). The intention to leave is the last process in a sequence of withdrawal cognition. It can serve as an intermediary between evaluations of whether one should leave or not and actual turnover. Job dissatisfaction and stress are predictors of employees' turnover intentions (Cloutier et al., 2015; Korsakienė et al., 2015; Payne, 2015).

Researchers from previous studies posited that employees with low job satisfaction are more likely to develop the intention to leave (Han, Trinkoff, & Gurses, 2015). The intention to leave is often a precedent of job hunting, which, if effective, can lead to actual turnover (Woo & Allen, 2014). Therefore, organizations should give attention to employee intention to leave because it can become a detrimental factor in

organizational productivity. Because turnover intention often leads to actual turnover, researchers described turnover intention as an immediate antecedent or mediator of actual turnover (Cohen et al., 2015; Naim & Lenka, 2017). However, some authors found that turnover intention does not immediately lead to actual turnover; rather, the turnover intention is merely a sign of organizational ineffectiveness related to managerial strategies on human resources and organizational climate (Lloyd, Boer, Keller, & Voelpel, 2015). In literature, most studies including Ahmed (2015), Akhtar, Zahir, Tareq, and Mahdzir (2017); Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, Hasan, Al Mamun, and Hasan (2017) and Butali, Wesang'ula, and Mamuli (2014) used turnover intention as a useful surrogate measure of actual turnover.

Many researchers focused their investigations on turnover intention rather than actual turnover rates because, based on the general theory of planned behavior, behavioral intention is a good predictor of actual behavior (Tschopp, Grote, & Gerber, 2014). Moreover, studies have shown a relationship between intention to leave and actual turnover decisions (Cohen et al., 2015). Studies also suggested that multiple factors triggered intentions to leave and actual turnovers, such as job dissatisfaction, organization misfit, job mobility, negative working environment, unfavorable organizational culture, and lack of value-goal congruence (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017). According to such studies, organizations should focus on increasing employees' job satisfaction to reduce turnover intention.

Voluntary Turnover Intention and Actual Turnover

To address increasing turnover rates in organizations and businesses across industries in the country, many researchers have investigated the reasons behind, or the factors that influence turnovers. Such factors include job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work relationships, and the external business environment or the industry. Among the primary reasons behind voluntary turnover and turnover intention is low job satisfaction (Hong, Hodge, & Choi, 2015; Takase, Teraoka, & Kousuke, 2015). Conversely, satisfaction with certain aspects of a job can lower employees' intention to quit (Katsikea, Theodosiou, & Morgan, 2015). Conversely, dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the job is positively associated with the turnover intention (Katsikea et al., 2015).

Naim and Lenka (2017) and Cloutier et al. (2015) reported that job satisfaction components including career development and job avoidance, in particular, are resilient predictors of turnover intentions and actual turnover. Most of the time, those who are not satisfied with their job can become unproductive as well. Such unproductivity is the product of withdrawal acts. Examples of such acts are producing less output, not participating in team activities, and being absent frequently (Naim & Lenka, 2017). Employees with low satisfaction levels tend not to contribute to labor development activities leading to job frustrations (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017; Cloutier et al., 2015). According to studies, supervisors and managers may sometimes enact punishment on employees with low levels of productivity and high rates of absenteeism (Payne, 2015). However, punishment can only serve to fuel employee dissatisfaction further and make

them increasingly hostile (Korsakienė et al., 2015; Payne, 2015). On the other hand, employees who are highly involved in their jobs report high job satisfaction rates and are less likely to develop intentions to leave the organization (Zopiatis, Constanti, & Theocharous, 2014).

Organizational commitment is another factor that leads to withdrawal behavior, turnover intention, and ultimately, turnover (Chenevert, Jourdain, & Vandenberghe, 2016). Employees who experience positive feelings are more committed to the organization they are working for and therefore, would not have a strong desire to leave (Chenevert et al., 2016). An employee whose skills and values match their job responsibilities, and organizational values are more committed and less likely to quit the job (DeConinck, DeConinck, & Lockwood, 2015). However, there are also studies that claimed otherwise. No matter how committed employees are with their jobs, if some aspects of the job dissatisfy them, this can also lead to turnover intention (Rubin & Babbie, 2016).

Results of other studies revealed to researchers that job satisfaction was a predecessor to organizational commitment, while the commitment levels of the employees to their organizations are the true antecedent of turnover intention (Taylor et al., 2015; Peters, La 2014). Job satisfaction positively relates to organizational commitment levels, that is, if people are satisfied with their work, they become more committed to their organizations, jobs, and to the goals of their organizations (Dhar, 2015). With this commitment, employees are less likely to desire to leave. If employees

feel dissatisfied with their work, they become less committed, which would increase turnover intention (Chenevert et al., 2016).

McFadden et al. (2014) assessed factors behind employee turnover and focused on the effects of work relationships. Employing a social relational perspective on employee turnover, the researchers examined how receiving interpersonal citizenship behavior (ICB) from co-workers affected the recipient's turnover intention. Bonenberger et al. (2014) expected that receiving ICB and turnover intention could mediate job satisfaction. Also, the researchers indicated that employees' communion-striving motivation, i.e., the motivation to get along with others, and task interdependence could act as moderators of the relationship between receiving ICB and turnover intention. Results indicated that that receiving ICB has an indirect and negative effect on turnover intention. However, this is only true if community-striving motivation and task interdependence are high. If these factors are low, receiving ICB could not moderate the turnover intention of employees. The relationship between employees and employers viewed as an interconnected web increasing the number of links among individuals leads to a decrease in the probability of employees leaving their jobs (Hafer, Downey, & Zeigler, 2015; Maden, 2014; Vogus et al., 2016; Zopiatis, Constanti, & Theocharous, 2014). Employees who are involved in their jobs and their organization have no desire to leave their jobs (Akhtar et al., 2017; Hafer et al., 2015). Employees who are not involved or connected to the web may feel like leaving (Downey, van der Werff, Thomas, 2015; Naim & Lenka, 2017). However, before they quit their jobs, these uninvolved employees

perform poorly (Downey et al., 2015; Maden, 2014; Vogus et al., 2016; Zopiatis et al., 2014).

Apart from internal factors, the external business environment is said to act as an important antecedent to turnover intention as these can affect the psychological well-being of the employees (Akhtar et al., 2017; Bonenberger et al., 2014; Vogus et al., 2016). Certain external business environment factors, such as high unemployment rate, unfortunate job search stories, and compared alternatives, can all affect turnover intention differently (Akhtar et al., 2017; Vogus et al., 2016). For example, if unemployment rates are high and there are numerous unfortunate job search stories, employees are less like to develop the intention to leave. However, factors such as the availability of employment opportunities in other companies and an improving local economy increase the probability of employees developing the intention to leave. As such, turnover intention does not only depend on how organizations provide the employees what they want. If the economic, social, and political environment is favorable, a company can be materially affected, and ultimately those employed by the businesses (Akhtar et al., 2017; Vogus et al., 2016).

Another factor that increases or is indicative of turnover intention is prior absenteeism (Lambert, Griffin, Hogan, & Kelley, 2014; Peretz, Levi, & Fried, 2015). Specifically, employees who leave their organizations have had high levels of absences before their resignation (Lambert et al., 2014; Peretz et al., 2015). The absence in itself is an occurrence that can negatively affect an organization's performance to achieve the required objectives (Cloutier et al., 2015). Specifically, those who have low work

involvement and low job satisfaction (Cloutier et al., 2015) often perpetrate employee absenteeism. Studies have found a negative relationship between satisfaction and absenteeism. Peretz et al. (2015) showed that unhappy employees were the ones who would incur more absences. Organizations that accommodate the needs of the diverse workforce can attract and retain the best employees (Bonenberger et al., 2014; Peretz et al., 2015). Absenteeism is said to be a problem when employees absent without a purpose and not when they need it for health-related reasons and family commitments (Akhtar et al., 2017; Peretz et al., 2015).

Simon, Shaw, and de Sivatte (2014) used the context-emergent turnover (CET) theory and assessed the relationship between voluntary turnover rates and unit performance. Gathering data from 231 units of an international clothing retailer in Spain, the researchers looked to see if the relationship between voluntary turnover rates and unit performance would be strong if human capital accumulations of employees quitting were high. This relationship would be weak when the human capital accumulations of the employees who remained were high (Simon et al., 2014). Researchers hypothesized that the relationship between voluntary turnover rates and unit performance would be stronger than the patterns of the voluntary turnover cluster. If the patterns disperse, the relationship between the two variables will be weak (Simon et al., 2014). In a panel design that included 8,316 store-month observations, the human capital accumulations of the remaining workforce as well as the dispersed turnover partners both acted as buffers to the negative effects of voluntary turnover rates on unit performance (Simon et al., 2014).

In addition to bearing in mind the factors that provoke intentions to leave, managers should also be able to recognize behaviors symptomatic of intentions to leave. Employees with intentions to leave exhibit withdrawal behaviors that fall into two categories: (a) withdrawing from the job and (b) being oriented towards attaining future opportunities (Bonenberger et al., 2014). Signs that employees are withdrawing from their jobs could be both behavioral as well as verbal (Fida et al., 2015). Examples of behavioral signs include the employees engaging in more daydreaming while working, being less excited and enthusiastic about their tasks, coming in late, and incurring more absences. Verbal signs that an employee is increasing withdrawing from their jobs include announcing to peers of their intentions to quit their jobs (Fida et al., 2015).

Turnover Intention of Child Welfare Staff

Literature entitles a growing list of studies emphasizing on turnover intention among workers in child welfare services. Most of the studies including Cloutier et al. (2015), Naidu (2016), Okello and Gilson (2015) and Packard and Shih (2014) found that external rewards such as benefits and pay were not enough to make child welfare staff stay on their jobs (Akhtar et al., 2017; Salloum et al., 2015; Vogus et al., 2016). Moreover, studies could not find demographic variables to be strong predictors of turnover intention (Cloutier et al., 2015; Kim & Kao, 2014).

Instead of compensation and other external rewards, studies of Cable and Boyas et al. (2015), Bonenberger et al. (2014), Bernstein and Feldman (2015) and Salloum et al. (2015) revealed that child welfare staff stay on their jobs by the existence of job features that increase their levels of internal motivation to work (Boyas et al., 2015; Cloutier et

al., 2015). Akhtar et al. (2017) evaluated the effects of personal and organizational

factors on turnover intention of 2903 public child protection caseworkers as well as

supervisors around Texas, whether in urban, small-town and rural counties. Even if

geographically dispersed, results did not show that geographical location is a predictor of

their intention to leave. Caseworkers residing in small-town counties were older and

possessed longer tenure at the agency (Cloutier et al., 2015). The researchers,

Bonenberger et al. (2014) evaluated the effects of performance-based contracts on worker

attitudes and turnover intention. The researchers evaluated if organizational commitment,

as well as the conflict between work and family obligations, could influence 152 child

welfare staff's turnover intention if they are working under performance-based contracts

only. Results indicated that job satisfaction and work-family conflict could both influence

these workers intention to quit their jobs. The findings contained revelations to the effect

that employee's motivation is lower to stay by the rewards that they reap than how

satisfied they are with work conditions and the ability to balance their family obligations

(Lizano et al., 2014).

Work conditions that allow child welfare services staff's growth also influenced

their turnover intention or decisions to stay important (Auerbach et al., 2014); Cloutier et

al., 2015; McFadden et al., 2014). Professional development and growth opportunities are

important (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017; Claiborne et al., 2015; McFadden et al., 2014;

Naim & Lenka, 2017). Akhtar et al. (2017) specifically looked at factors affecting the

intention to leave of social workers working across voluntary agencies. Data from 538

prevention workers employed in 202 voluntary agencies as well as 222 childcare workers

across three voluntary agencies contained revelations that childcare staff viewed child welfare workers positively and would stay in the industry longer while prevention workers are more invested and committed to their jobs. Therefore, even though both childcare and prevention workers differ in their satisfaction levels with their jobs, their intentions to leave do not differ (Vogus et al., 2016). Workers did not have a high intention to leave because they had tenure at the child welfare organizations as well as had high levels of career investment, which made the workers more committed to their jobs (Vogus et al., 2016). According to the results of Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) and Akhtar et al. (2017), high standards of satisfaction and commitment with supervisors reduces the intention of subordinates or employees to leave child welfare centers. The above researchers used 289 caseworkers to gather the valuable data from northeastern state non-profit organizations and analyzed the information by using a structural equation modeling. The outcomes revealed the high impact of pay and benefits on employee's intention to quit, which results in personal growth, fulfillment, and career development (Naim & Lenka, 2017). These findings led the researchers to concede that administration and management may lower intention to quit by improving the caseworkers' growth needs. Administrators and managers can do this by enhancing the meaningfulness of daily practice, providing contingent rewards, as well as developing personal career goals of the employees (Naim & Lenka, 2017).

In addition, Vogus et al. (2016) claimed that the perception of inclusion in the workplace influences turnover intention among child welfare workers. Moreover, the researchers claimed that organizational commitment, which is an attitudinal variable,

could mediate the relationship between child welfare workers' turnover intention and perception of inclusion. Through a multilevel analysis, findings of the study revealed that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between organizational inclusion and individual turnover intention. Findings of the study also showed that interventions designed to reduce turnover and improve retention rates of quality workers might become more effective with a combined approach, wherein the individual attitude of child service staff and organizational structures are improved (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

Apart from conditions that make them more motivated intrinsically, as opposed to external rewards, stress and burnout can explain why child welfare staff will decide to leave (Cloutier et al., 2015; Kim & Kao, 2014; McFadden et al., 2014). Kim and Kao claimed that the severity and prevalence of turnover among child welfare workers pushed many scholars to study the phenomenon. Designing a meta-analysis of available literature on the issue of intention to quit among public child welfare staff in the United States, the researchers wanted to understand in an in-depth manner what could explain the high turnover rates among child welfare workers (Kim & Kao, 2014). From 22 studies, results indicated that attitudes and perceptions of child welfare workers make the strongest predictors of their intention to quit. Demographic factors such as age, race, and gender are weak predictors of turnover intention. The results of analyzing work environment indicators reveal that stress and burnout could affect intention to quit for a moderate-to-high level. In contrast, worker inclusion, as well as autonomy, could serve as buffers to intention to quit. Kim and Kao (2014) also revealed that company's policies and

guidelines influence employee's motivational needs and their intentions for quitting the respective jobs.

McFadden et al. (2014) also looked at how resilience and burnout in child protection social work affect their retention rates. McFadden et al. (2014) noted that child protection-related work could be very difficult and complicated; the stressful nature of the job pushed the profession to poor retention and high turnover rates. Gathering data from a meta-analysis of 65 articles, researchers evaluated the various possible factors that can affect the retention rates of child protection social workers, nine themes arose. According to the findings of McFadden et al. (2014), two fundamental themes behind the retention of child welfare staff: includes individual characteristics and organizational characteristics. For instance, some attributes of personal characteristics that influence the retention entitle employee's personal history of maltreatment, preparation of welfare work, and personal career and training opportunities given to employees during the work. Other factors include coping style, secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, and compassion satisfaction. Examples of organizational factors include the culture and climate of the organization, organizational and professional commitment, and level of job satisfaction (McFadden et al., 2014).

Retention of Child Welfare Workers

Yearly turnover rates for U.S. public child welfare workers is estimated to range from 20-40% (Cloutier et al., 2015) and these rates have maintained through the years. Studies showed that retention of child services staff remains a challenge, even if organizations have implemented programs to make employees stay (Johnco, Salloum,

Olson, & Edwards, 2014; Madden, Scannapieco, & Painter, 2014). Madden et al.

gathered a longitudinal data from 2001 to 2010 on all public child welfare caseworkers

and using Cox Proportional Hazards Regression analysis to understand the implications

of the data to determine the factors that can shape child welfare workers' decisions to

stay. Findings showed that a combination of personal and organizational factors could

affect the intention to stay of child welfare workers in their agencies. Findings revealed

that Title IV-E involvement of the organizations; the presence and perception of

organizational support, as well as job desirability affect the length of time that child

welfare workers stay with their agencies.

Johnco et al. (2014) theorized that high turnover rates for child welfare staff could

lead to negative effects on the organization, the remaining workers, and the families.

Johnco et al. (2014) also found that demographic, psychological, social, and

organizational factors related to high turnover. On the other hand, Johnco et al. (2014)

collected data from case managers as well as from resigned case managers with less than

one year and more than three years of employment. Furthermore, data gathered from

supervisors suggested that career opportunities and supportive environment for

employees are two most significant retention factors. Organizational issues such as

inadequate pay, challenging workload, as well as system issues and high levels of stress

are important turnover reasons. On the analysis of above discussion, Johnco et al. (2014)

concluded that employees need empowerment and freedom for decision-making in

welfare agencies to show a long-term commitment to their respective organizations.

Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) found the same as Johnco et al. (2014). Westbrook, Ellett, and Asberg (2012) claimed that high employee turnover in the field of public child welfare is increasingly becoming a serious problem. Carrying out a statewide study of public child welfare employees working in a southern state, Westbrook et al. used the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory to determine how employees perceive their organizational culture. Besides this, Zeitlin et al. (2014) recognized Employed-Child Welfare Scale as an effective tool for analyzing the motivating factors for the employees. These motivational factors and organizational culture directly impact the retention of employees to stay committed to their companies. Findings revealed that supervisory and administrative support act as strong predictors of intention to stay. Professionalism, as well as organizational ethos, can motivate child welfare staff to stay in their jobs. However, autonomy, collegiality, and beliefs did not have any predictive capacity on employees' intention to remain in their jobs in the child welfare industry (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

According to Zeitlin, Augsberger, Auerbach, and McGowan (2014), perceived organizational culture could strongly affect workers' intention to stay. Using a mixed methods study, researchers looked to support this assertion. By using thematic analysis, the study would indicate how organizational culture impacts the relationship between the values of the organization and employee's personal development. From these findings, Zeitlin et al. (2014) proposed quantitative measures to operationalize the various factors influencing organizational culture. Findings showed that organizational culture affects child welfare staff's intention to stay (Zeitlin et al., 2014). The consequence is that the

relationships with their co-workers and the organizational values that their workplace adheres to can both affect their intention to stay (Zeitlin et al., 2014).

Scannapieco (2015) looked at the factors that shape the length of the time caseworkers in the US remain in their positions, especially of the high turnover rates for the past 20 years. In their study, they examined these factors and their effects on the caseworkers' length of time in their jobs, using mainly the Cox Proportional Hazards Regression analysis. Results showed that both personal and organizational factors could affect the length of time that caseworkers devoted to their positions. Among the demographic variables, gender, social work education, Title IV-E involvement, organizational support and job desirability all have significant effects on the caseworkers' longevity with their respective agencies. The analysis revealed that males were likely to leave their jobs compared to females (Scannapieco, 2015). Caseworkers without a formal degree are more likely to terminate their employment compared to persons with a social work degree. Moreover, those with Title IV-E stipend students were 1.28 times more likely to stay in their jobs. The findings led to the conclusion that both organizational factors and personal factors should be paid attention to when designing interventions to retain caseworkers (Scannapieco, 2015).

Boyas et al. (2015) claimed that child welfare organizations have an important role in protecting their workers from experiencing stress and burnout, which lead to turnover intention. However, a gap exists in the literature with regard the length of organizational tenure can affect relationships between stress, burnout and turnover intention. To test a model of employment-based social capital, researchers gathered data

from 209 child welfare workers to evaluate if the factors job stress, job burnout, and turnover intention differ between caseworkers. The criteria included caseworkers who have been with their respective child welfare organization for less than three years compared to those who have with the agency for more than three years (Boyas et al., 2015). Through path analysis, results showed a reduction of job stress and burnout when dimensions of employment-based social capital exist within the organization. Social capital acts as a protective factor against stress and burnout, and therefore, indirectly shape child welfare workers' intent to leave based on organizational tenure (Boyas et al., 2015). The findings of the study led to the recommendations that organizations put into place unique intervention efforts for long-term and short-term caseworkers that would give them immediate and long-term structures of support. Moreover, access to resources and sound organizational practices are important to encourage caseworkers to stay in their jobs, especially since their group-specific needs may change with time (Boyas et al., 2015).

Effects of Turnover on the Organization and Employees

High turnover can lead to important and critical effects for remaining employees and the organization. Researchers found that voluntary turnover might influence remaining employees either positively or negatively. Voluntary turnover may either improve the organizational commitment of remaining employees or induce intentions of leaving in remaining employees (Ngirande, Terera, & Mutodi, 2014).

Ngirande et al. (2014) looked at the effects of downsizing on the job satisfaction levels of the survivor employees. The researcher also sought to understand if a

relationship exists between employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Gathering data from 123 participants using a survey questionnaire and analyzing these using the SPSS Software, results showed that workers tend to be highly satisfied and committed among the survivors of the downsizing (Ngirande et al., 2014). The researchers assessed the phenomenon among police officers asked to complete questionnaires before and within a month after a co-worker left. Through hierarchical multiple regression, researchers found that negative evaluation of departure outcomes not linked with stayers' intention to leave after one of their co-workers left. Stayers who can see that their coworkers' departure turned out positive were more likely to leave as well (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

Various studies have shown that high employee turnover can have significant consequences to the organization (Peltokorpi, Allen, & Froese, 2014). One of these effects is that turnover intention can also affect future turnover intention as well as actual turnover. The studies of Ahmed (2015), Naidu (2016) and Cloutier et al. (2015) revealed that motivation positively influences the intensity of next turnover intention rates more than the initial turnover intention. Besides this, the findings of Bonenberger et al. (2014) also concluded that intensity of initial turnover could restructure the intention of actual turnover. While some of the studies such as Packard and Shih (2014) and Bonenberger et al. (2014) also argued that previous rates have no relationship found with an actual turnover.

Apart from the turnover, intention of those who survived, high turnover also affect influenced the performance of the unit after some workers left. Call, Nyberg,

Ployhart, and Weekley (2014) stressed upon the context-emergent turnover theory to assess how these employee's turnover impacted the processing quality and quantity of human capital resources. Researchers also assessed how turnover happenings expanded over time. Bernstein and Feldman (2015) also observed at the changes in quality and quantity of replacement hires. Gathering data from retail employees across well-known US retail chain for over five quarters, Call et al. (2014) indicated that big turnover rates could affect unit performance. Findings of Bailey et al. (2016) and Bonenberger et al. (2014) revealed that the relationship between turnover rate change and change in unit performance could greatly impact the quality of those who left as well as turnover dispersion patterns. Besides this, the above study also showed that both the quitting human resource and the new individual who replaced the previous, influence the performance of the job carried out.

In other words, economically, staff turnover increases work for remaining employees, which subsequently increases job stress and decreases satisfaction and productivity (Butali et al., 2014). Such a scenario creates a cycle of poor performance, low profit, high stress, and subsequent turnover. Thus, managers should bear in mind the importance of guarding factors that influence intentions to leave to reduce employee turnover, whether voluntary or involuntary.

Literature Gap and Summary

The review of related literature revealed that CPS organizations face challenges in retaining qualified social work professionals (Vogus et al., 2016; Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017), the evidenced of high turnover rates showed in the field (Salloum et al., 2015). In

addition, around 60% of CPS social workers with intentions of leaving their

organizations eventually voluntarily quit during the year of consideration (Auerbach et

al., 2014). Therefore, Packard and Shih (2014) realized the need to understand how

voluntary employee turnover influences organizational performance, revenue, and

sustainability in the field of child protective services (Salloum et al., 2015). Moreover,

researchers observed a significant gap in the research of how voluntary employee

turnover or employee intent to quit affects the motivation and performance of remaining

employees at a Los Angeles CPS organization. The current study will help in closing the

gap.

Carpenter et al. (2017) claimed that to understand why retention rate is low

among public child welfare workers is important especially since turnover would also

affect social workers, clients, and their families, agencies, and even the states. Even

though there were some quality studies on the factors behind public child welfare

workers' high rates of turnover, there lack studies that are quantitative. Carpenter et al.

(2017) addressed the gap in the literature by designing a meta-analysis of the available

literature on turnover intention among child welfare workers. After reviewing data and

information from 144 qualifying studies, 22 studies qualified for the meta-analytic study.

Using Merriam and Tisdell (2015) method, Carpenter et al. (2017) evaluated the effects

of 34 predictors on turnover intention of child welfare workers. Results showed that

factors related the most with child welfare workers' attitudes and perceptions such

as organizational commitment and job satisfaction levels had the most influence on child

welfare workers' intention to leave (Carpenter et al., 2017). Particularly, the strongest

predictors of turnover intention were stress, job satisfaction, professional commitment, and organizational commitment (Carpenter et al., 2017). Demographic variables such as age, gender, and race did not show any significant effect on turnover intention of child welfare services staff. Also, work-related predictors of stress and burnout had medium to high influence on turnover intention. Those predictors that link to decision-making have medium effect sizes on turnover intention of child welfare services. Other factors behind turnover intention included factors found in the work environment. Examples of these factors included perceived fairness of the organization and the policies in place. Even though past studies that claimed case hold can predict turnover intention accurately, this meta-analysis by Carpenter et al. (2017) found no such relationship.

Transition

Section 1 of this study included the problem and purpose statements as well as the nature of the study to defend the reason for choosing a qualitative methodology and exploratory case study design for this research project. Also, the section encompassed the interview questions that aligned with the overarching research question. The section also contained details about the conceptual frameworks that best explored voluntary employee turnover, and the operational definitions of terms that might be unfamiliar to the reader. Also, section 1 contained details on the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations encountered while working on the study. The last two components of this section are the significance of the study and a review of the professional and academic literature. The literature review included an exhaustive analysis of historical and current research relevant to voluntary employee turnover and employee motivation.

Section 2 included information on the research methods and designs, including the chosen research methodology and design for this study. The section also required a discussion of the role of the researcher as the data collection instrument and detailed information on the data collection, organization, and analysis process. In addition, there is a segment on the reliability and validity of the qualitative research. Section 3 contains the presentation of findings, application to professional practice and implications for social change. Also included are the recommendations for action and future research on employee turnover and employee motivation as well as a dialogue of experiences during the doctoral study and conclusions from the data analysis.

Section 2: The Project

In this section, I explain (a) the purpose of the study, (b) role of the researcher, (c) participants, (d) research method and design, (e) population and sampling, (f) ethical research, (g) data collection instruments, (h) data collection techniques (i) data organization techniques, (j) data analysis techniques, and (k) reliability and validity of the study findings.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, exploratory case study was to examine the strategies that CPS leaders use to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees. The target population consisted of nine CPS leaders from a large metropolitan area in Southern California. The implications for positive social change include the potential to reduce the rate of employee turnover while motivating employees to perform better, which in turn might impact or help improve the lives of children in the community through better services.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in a qualitative case study is to become the research instrument for collecting and analyzing data from the respondents (Merriam, 2014; Roulston & Shelton, 2015). Eisner (2017) noted that researchers ask probing interview questions to gain a deeper understanding of the responses of participants to conceptualize meaning from their experiences. As the research instrument, I facilitated the flow of communication to gather rich data about the experiences of the participants. I also (a)

developed the interview questions, (b) recruited respondents for the interview, (c) conducted the interviews, and (d) coded and analyzed the interview responses.

My experience in the CPS industry includes administrative, investigative, and specialized child protective services. Furthermore, I have a working relationship with many employees with varied levels of operational responsibilities as well as knowledge of the current strategic plan of the CPS organization in Southern California. The prospective participants work for the same organization and may have established relationships with one another; however, I am not a direct supervisor or manager of any participant in this organization. Adhering to the general principles of ethics published in the study of Eisner (2017), the participant's well-being requires consideration of and a commitment to the three principles: (a) respect of a person, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice. As the researcher, I conducted face-to-face interviews, asked questions aligned with the study, collected data, and took field notes. Also, the participants received information about the specifics of the study, including that participating in my study was voluntary, that no harm would come to them, and that every participant would receive equal treatment.

In qualitative studies, researchers strive to minimize biases (Lewis, 2015). Holloway and Galvin (2016) noted that qualitative researchers should attempt to lessen individual feelings and perceptions when conducting research. Eisner (2017) suggested bracketing or epoche as a tool to mitigate researcher bias. Through bracketing, researchers suppress previous knowledge of the topic of study or phenomena (Eisner, 2017). To reduce bias in this study, I put aside my personal views and opinions of CPS

leadership and employees and focused on the information that participants provided.

Furthermore, to reduce researcher bias, I documented the data collection, analysis, and

reporting processes to maintain awareness of potential personal bias. According to

Merriam and Tisdell (2015), the journal process in the data collection phase enables a

researcher to mitigate personal bias as the researcher reflects on personal assumptions,

beliefs, and values that may affect the study.

To maintain continuity during the interviews, I utilized an interview protocol (see

Appendix B). Peters and Halcomb (2015) noted that an interview protocol enables the

interviewer to follow procedures to promote consistency throughout multiple interview

sessions. Utilizing an interview protocol enabled me to promote consistency and

continuity in my study and develop a positive and trusting relationship with the

participants.

Participants

The process for determining inclusion of participants begins with individuals

meeting the necessary criteria to extend information or knowledge concerning the

research problem (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Participants in a qualitative study must

have the specific knowledge or characteristics critical to answering the research question

and an understanding of the phenomenon (Bode, Singh, & Rogan, 2015; Smith, Straker,

McManus, & Fenner, 2014). The participants for this qualitative study were CPS

professionals from a single organization (volunteers) including nine leaders with a

minimum of 2-years of experience and an understanding of the roles and responsibilities

of the child protection social work professional in a Southern California county. The

research participants had an in-person familiarity with the consequences of colleagues who voluntarily left their jobs as well as understanding how voluntary turnover affects remaining staff members.

Rubin and Babbie (2016) stated that obtaining permission to carry out research and gain access to participants in the workplace setting is a challenging endeavor. Wanat (2008) particularly noted that having received official approval does not serve as a guarantee that participants would cooperate. To ensure participants' cooperation, researchers must be aware of participants' backgrounds and preferred mode of communications (Salloum et al., 2015). The use of gatekeepers may be valuable in identifying potential study candidates (Namageyo-Funa et al., 2014). For this study, gatekeepers were the staff of a CPS organization in Southern California who could assist in recruiting qualified participants. According to Boyas et al. (2015), gatekeepers use established relationships to provide researchers with potential participants for research studies.

Abadi et al. (2016) reported that an organization's computer database is a means for identifying research participants. Access to a company's database can provide a researcher with secondary literature that is purposeful to the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). I used the CPS database to reach out to potential participants. To retrieve information from the CPS database, I presented to the organization's leadership an approved study proposal and permission from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB). After receiving IRB approval, I contacted the CPS director to set up a face-to-face meeting to obtain permission to conduct the study. Upon approval from the

CPS director to conduct my study as well as utilizing the organization's database to recruit participants, I e-mailed invitations to potential participants to engage in the study. The first nine individuals who returned the query and met the criteria received a call from me to discuss the purpose of the research.

Keenan et al. (2017) noted that establishing a trusting or working relationship with participants might be challenging for qualitative researchers. Nielsen and Lyhne (2016) shared strategies for establishing trusting relationships with candidates including seeking common ground and presenting an open environment for discussion (communication), learning, understanding, and encouragement to work together. Time spent with the participants before the interview helped to establish common ground by earning mutual respect, thereby understanding and overcoming differences (Johnston, Bennett, Mason, & Thomson, 2016). Exploratory investigations require a close working relationship between participants and researchers who develop a symbiotic or balanced dynamic on listening; as a result, sharing information, trust, and respect can develop (Clarke & Mahada, 2017). I proactively managed potential conflict by establishing and maintaining open communication with participants, increased two-way feedback to strengthen the trusting relationship, ensured transparency, demonstrated personal integrity, and reiterated the purpose of the study on voluntary employee turnover. I called or e-mailed each participant a few days before the interviews to establish rapport and lessen any anxiety regarding participating in the study. I also listened to each interviewee and responded to questions or concerns about the interview process and research protocol.

Research Method and Design

Selecting the appropriate research methodology and design are vital for the credibility of a doctoral study. Researchers use qualitative methods for the examination and exploration of an event or phenomenon (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2014). Qualitative investigations include in-person interviews, collecting and analyzing information, and conclusions (Keenan et al., 2017). The most viable research method is one that supports the nature of the study under investigation (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2014). The research method for this study was qualitative, and the design was an exploratory case study. Qualitative researchers use information gathered from participants about their insights and views of an event or phenomena (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). The qualitative method and exploratory design enabled me to explore the strategies that CPS leaders use to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees.

Research Method

I chose the qualitative method to gain a better understanding of a phenomenon from the experience, attitudes, and perceptions of research participants. Corbin and Strauss (2015) stated that asking probing questions to gain an understanding of the human experience is the core of qualitative research. The research questions prompt open and honest responses from the participants regarding the *how* and *why* of an event; to the researcher may then gather experiences and understand the thought process and perspectives of the participant (Smith, 2015). According to Thunder and Berry (2016), researchers use the qualitative method to describe a phenomenon in the form of narratives that represent participants' attitudes, perceptions, or experiences with the subject.

The quantitative methodology involves statistical and mathematic techniques to analyze data to support the relational significance of a research question that includes findings or results on relational properties from hypothesis testing (Paiders & Paiders, 2014). The quantitative approach is pure research addressing questions of *what, where, how much*, and *how many* (Fellows & Liu, 2015). The use of numerical data and statistical analysis in hypothesis testing was not the purpose of this study. Quantitative researchers focus on measurable and repeatable findings, which was not the objective of this study.

Mixed method study involves combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, blending the different types of data for a comprehensive picture of research findings (Keenan et al., 2017). The mixed method study was not an appropriate approach for my study due to the inclusion of the quantitative approach. The quantitative approach is most suitable for collecting data from a nonpersonal, statistical format for finding relationships between dependent and independent variables (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). According to Keenan et al. (2017), the qualitative approach allows the researcher to elaborate on descriptions of experiences. The qualitative approach was appropriate for my study as it enabled me to explore the experiences and views of leaders and employees of a CPS organization about voluntary employee turnover and its effect on the motivation of the staff.

Research Design

Some of the designs available to researchers who wish to conduct a qualitative study include case study, ethnography, and phenomenology (Bode et al., 2015). The type

of design chosen provides the framework to gather information pertinent to the study

(Eisner, 2017). The use of a qualitative study design allowed me to determine what

strategies CPS leaders used to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees.

Qualitative studies involve face-to-face, in-depth interviews with individuals who

experienced or observed an event or phenomena (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). I selected

the qualitative methodology with the single case study exploratory design. The case study

design allows researchers to examine the *how* and *why* of a phenomenon purposed

(Salloum et al., 2015) to gain insight on surrounding events and experiences (Eisner,

2017). Yin (2014) mentioned that qualitative case studies are exploratory, descriptive,

and explanatory, centered on data from real-life experiences (individual or group) to

reach a better understanding of a phenomenon. The other types of case studies considered

were descriptive and explanatory (Yin, 2014). The descriptive case study (Yin, 2014) and

the explanatory case study designs are most appropriate when seeking answers to

questions (Yin, 2014). My goal was not to conduct a study to seek answers to questions

or to conduct in-depth scrutiny of the situation under research. Therefore, explanatory

and descriptive case study designs were not appropriate for this study.

The additional qualitative designs considered included ethnography and

phenomenology, but these designs were less appropriate for the study. Ethnographic

research involves the observation and interaction with lives of a native group or

population in a natural setting (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) as well as describing the

cultural nuances from behaviors, beliefs, or living conditions (Floerch, Longhofer, &

Suskewicz, 2014). I did not choose the ethnography research design as researchers who

use this design consider culture, race, or gender for understanding a way of life or culture through fieldwork. Such an approach would require immersion with an organization to observe professional and social behavior over an extended period.

Phenomenology is like the case study design in that the focus is on the events surrounding a human experience (Salloum et al., 2015). Researchers using the phenomenological design to explore lived experiences of participants through narrative research (interviews) to obtain the understanding of a phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The phenomenological design was not appropriate as the study's focus involved the interaction of self and the environment and the collection of data from at least two sources, such as documentation and interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

The fact that I did not select ethnography or phenomenology designs does not imply that they are not good designs. I selected the case study design to get a holistic view of the event from in-depth interviews and multiple sources of data. According to Lewis (2015), a qualitative case study enables researchers to use multiple sources of supporting documentation to discover varied points of interest.

In qualitative research, data saturation occurs at the point where no new or relevant information emerges from the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Based on the experience of qualitative researchers, data saturation happens when there are no new patterns or themes observed with additional data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Merriam and Tisdell (2015) noted that data saturation could occur with as few as six participants. The objective of achieving data saturation is to obtain quality information about the topic examined (Creswell & Poth, 2017). To ensure data saturation, I invited

nine CPS professionals and continued to interview qualified CPS professionals until the information became redundant.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was a group of professionals within one government organization located in Southern California. The sample consisted of CPS leaders from a single organization. The sample included nine leaders who have a minimum of 2 years of experience and an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of child protection social work in Southern California.

The purpose of sampling is to select a suitable representative part of a population to determine characteristics of the whole population (Creswell & Poth, 2017). According to Palinkas et al. (2015), purposeful sampling is the selection of individuals who are information-rich on issues of importance to the purpose of the research. In the proposed study, purposeful sampling was an appropriate means to collect sufficient data to answer the primary research question. According to Palinkas et al. (2015), purposeful sampling involves participants who have specialized expertise or characteristics applicable to the study. Barrat, Ferris, and Lenton (2015) noted that purposive sampling of individuals allows researchers to gather an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. The purpose of selecting nine participants from a group of experienced CPS professionals was to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies that CPS leaders used to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

The individuals selected for the study responded to the inquiries and met participation requirements. When selecting participants for this study, I ensured that they

observed colleagues who quit their jobs and experienced the effects that voluntary employee turnover has on remaining staff. According to Malterud, Siersma, and Guassora (2015), the sample size of a qualitative study includes sufficient information on (a) the aim of the study (b) use of established theory (c) sample specificity and (e) analysis strategy. Creswell and Poth (2017) noted that appropriate sample size for a qualitative exploratory case study ranges between five and 25 individuals. Furthermore, Smith (2015) articulated that the recommended sample size in qualitative studies is between five and 25. The sample for this study consisted of nine participants who observed voluntary employee turnover and the effects that turnover had on employees.

According to Fusch and Ness (2015), data saturation occurs when enough information has been gathered to replicate a study and when further coding is no longer feasible. Creswell and Poth (2017) stated that the sample size of a qualitative study should be large enough to extract rich material (data) and small enough to obtain information saturation. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) found that saturation might occur before or after the completion of 10 interviews. Data saturation occurs when additional data collection does not add significantly to the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). I ensured data saturation by continuing to interview participants until no new information emerged.

I selected interview locations that were comfortable and convenient for participants. Because I conducted face-to-face interviews, choosing a quiet location (e.g., participant's place of business, library, room, or office) was imperative so that I may use professional recording equipment (with the participant's permission) to make a quality

recording. Aldert, Hope, and Fisher (2014) noted that the interview location and the type

of interview questions might prompt nervousness and anxiety in a participant.

Furthermore, Wilson (2016) stated that a face-to-face or technology-based interview

should take place in a setting that is comfortable for the participant yet conducive to a

recorded session. Thus, I discussed with each participant the location best suited to

conducting his or her interview. The goal was to have an open and honest dialogue with

participants that can reveal new information about the phenomenon under investigation

(Corbin & Strauss, 2013). Equally important, I called the participant on the day before

the interview as a reminder that electronic equipment (e.g., telephones, pagers) should be

placed on vibrate or off mode during the interview session. I also requested that a "do not

disturb" sign be placed outside the meeting room informing people not to interrupt the

interview.

Ethical Research

An essential requirement for conducting research is ethical integrity (Creswell &

Poth, 2017). Therefore, I followed the three general principles included and discussed in

Belmont Report's Ethical Principles and Guidance for the Protection of Human Subjects

of Research, which are (a) respect for persons, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice (National

Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral

Research, 1979). I maintained the highest ethical standards required by Walden

University and its Institutional Review Board (IRB). Salloum et al. (2015) noted that

researchers should obtain approval from the IRB before conducting a research study.

Eisner (2017) stated that all research participants must receive full disclosure of the risks

and benefits associated with a study before participation. For that reason, I provided research participants with consent forms electronically and in person. The consent implied in-person or written communication between the participant and researcher on the protection of data, the integrity of research, and global understanding of the study (Helft, Williams, & Bandy, 2014). The consent forms included discussions about (a) the purpose and the nature of the study, (b) confidentiality safety measures, (c) procedures for the interview process, and (d) Walden University's IRB approval number and its expiration date. The participants received a copy of the signed consent for their records. In general, the consent process is the beginning of a trusting and responsive relationship between researcher and participant (Creswell & Poth, 2017). I stated in clear and concise language that participants' consent is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study at any time (a) by phone, (b) by e-mail, (c) before their scheduled interview, or (d) verbally at any time during the interview. I also reassured the participants that their information would be confidential and anonymous.

Giles, Sniehotta, McCall, and Adams (2016) noted that research involves providing participants with incentives to engage in a study. Chen, Lei, Li, Huang, and Mu (2015) mentioned that cash incentives increase participation rates in research studies. However, Bernstein and Feldman (2015) suggested that coercive incentives may influence or induce a person's response; therefore, researchers should avoid providing incentives to study participants. For this study, participation was voluntary, and I did not offer any incentives (money or gifts) to participate. I chose to forgo incentives because I did not want to influence the behavior or responses of participants in this study.

Creswell and Poth (2017) suggested that pseudonyms replace study participants' names to achieve anonymity. Furthermore, Smith (2015) shared that it is crucial for researchers to assign codes in place of participants' names to assure confidentiality. Also, Creswell and Poth (2017) noted that using codes instead of participants' names helps to ensure confidentiality. Therefore, to protect the identity of the participants along with the identity of their employer, I assigned alphanumeric codes and coding numbers to all participants after verifying their availability. The alphanumeric combinations M1 through M9 were the confidential code identifiers of the participants.

Addressing ethical concerns is an important aspect of preserving participants' interests, rights, and wishes. To ensure transparency and obtain approval from the Walden University IRB (07-06-0288084), I offered the research participants full disclosure of the steps to conduct the study. Receiving approval from officials from the IRB may be challenging because the research involves people and there are privacy concerns with audio recordings (Eisner, 2017).

I am responsible for documenting and securely storing all research data for five years to prevent unauthorized access, disclosure, or loss. The data stored on my computer hard drive is password protected, and all field notes and interview transcripts stored in a security password safe. I did not include the identities of employees, managers, or the employer in this study to maintain confidentiality. Most importantly, participants will receive a copy of the study findings to keep for review and their records. Furthermore, during the 5-year period, all data will be available for review to comply with regulations governing the conduct of research. After five years, I will destroy all electronic

recordings (removable hard drives, thumb drives) using a heavy-duty metal shredding machine, and I will shred all documents (transcripts, field notes, etc.).

Data Collection Instruments

In qualitative case studies, researchers serve as the primary tools for collecting and analyzing data (Merriam, 2014). Researchers use a variety of data collection techniques to obtain information, including direct observation, review of documents, and interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Interviews may be structured, unstructured, or semistructured (Baskarada, 2014). Researchers often consider which data collection method to employ early in the research process and decide whether evidence exists to support the problem (Lewis, 2015). Whether the data are considered generated (group discussions and in-depth interviews) or naturally occurring (observation), the collection method chosen should be the one best suited to the research topic (Keenan et al., 2017). I used semistructured face-to-face interviews for this study.

Face-to-face dialogue allows participants to speak freely and comfortably to provide rich, in-depth information about a phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). According to Lewis (2015), semistructured research questions allow researchers to probe for responses that encourage participants to share experiences learned from observation or direct involvement related to the phenomenon. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) stated that qualitative research questions are open-ended and not restrictive for the participant, allowing clear meaning to emerge regarding experiences. The interview questions prepared for the nine leaders were open-ended to gain an understanding of voluntary employee turnover. As the primary collection instrument, I was responsible for ensuring

that there is cohesiveness between the research questions and the overreaching central research question. I also employed interview practice strategies Hunt, Chan, and Mehta (2015) developed for data collection. The interview strategies include (a) being mindful of body positioning, (b) listening attentively to the language used, (c) being observant of facial expressions, (c) being attentive to participants' verbal and nonverbal cues, and (d) reflecting on participants' prior interview experiences. I also displayed calmness and confidence to ensure that the participant was comfortable as I explained the interview protocol as well as the need for me to use a recording device and take notes. Yin (2014) stated that data from memos, reports, and interviews contain references to events that researchers can review to determine their significance to the study.

To enhance the reliability and validity of data collection for a study, researchers use member checking and an interview guide or interview protocol to reduce inconsistencies during data collection (Keenan et al., 2017). The purpose of member checking is to ensure the accuracy of the interviewer's interpretations of the participant's transcribed responses (Onwuegbuzie & Byers, 2014; Taylor et al., 2015). According to Killawi et al. (2014), member checking researcher used to prevent misunderstandings in data interpretation, strengthening the credibility of the research. Further, Keenan et al. (2017) noted that member checking provides an opportunity for the participant to challenge and clarify any incorrect interpretation of the interview. The process of member checking can commence through in-person interaction or electronic media (Eisner, 2017). To enhance the reliability and validity of my study, I used member checking to confirm the accuracy of the transcription by providing each interviewee

access to the interpretation of the interview for review before moving forward with the

research. I used the Internet to transmit the transcript to the participant.

An interview protocol is a tool researcher used to maintain focus to collect data

without bias (Taylor et al., 2015). According to Eisner (2017), researchers use interview

tools to maintain focus on the topic and solicit the best information possible. Baskarada

(2014) shared that by following an interview protocol, a researcher has a guide to

promote consistency in the research process. Use of the interview protocol (See

Appendix B) enabled me to focus on the interview session and maintain consistency in

the data collection process across all participants by ensuring that each step in the

interview process is the same with each person.

Data Collection Technique

Data gathering techniques among researchers include the use of electronic media

(visual or audio recording), written documents, observations, and interviews (Merriam &

Tisdell, 2015). The primary data collection technique for this study included asking open-

ended interview questions through face-to-face semistructured interaction, field notes,

review of company documents, and written documentation (company records,

newsletters, and journals), as well as archived records. Researchers using semistructured

interviews have the flexibility to interact with participants to draw meaningful

information through open-ended questioning (Baskarada, 2014; Yin, 2014). As

mentioned previously, data collection for this qualitative case study included

semistructured, open-ended interview questions. Additionally, I took notes as well as

used a digital electronic media recorder to assist me in recalling information from the

interview sessions, with the participants' permission. Taylor et al. (2015) stated that clear recording with an electronic device requires a quiet location. Patton (2015) pointed out that the use of digital recording devices and notebooks is beneficial for data collection. Taking notes during the interview allow for collecting information through observation, body language, and facial expression (Rubin & Rubin, 2016). Secondary data came from company documents on employee attrition from the years 2013-2017, as well as newsletters and emails.

Interviews were the source of data collection for this study. As the primary collection tool, face-to-face semistructured interviews had its advantages, as well as disadvantages. The advantages of semistructured interviews are that they provide valuable information from the participant's experiences (Fitzgerald, Platt, Heywood, & McCambridge, 2015). Also, face-to-face dialog enables a researcher and participant the opportunity to explore a topic to gain insight into a subject or problem (Taylor et al., 2015). Furthermore, the interviewee may respond to a question that may remind him or her of forgotten information or an event that previously seemed non-important (Creswell & Poth (2017). The disadvantages of interviews extend to potential interviewer influence, interview viewed as being intrusive, extreme time commitment, and participant answering questions to please the interviewer (Yin, 2014). Also, there is the possibility of misinterpretation of questions and responses (Baskarada, 2014). Topkaya (2015) stated that face-to-face interviews require the time-consuming commitment to collecting and analyzing data. To manage the disadvantages of the data collection, I encouraged participants to take time responding to questions and ask for clarification during the

interview if necessary. Company or archival records consist of government-provided

public use files, service records, organizational records, maps, charts, and data from

surveys (Lewis, 2015). The company records available for review in this study are

historical documents, newsletters, and journals. According to Dunn, Arslanian-Engoren,

DeKoekkoek, Jadack, and Scott (2015), archival records as secondary data also have

advantages and disadvantages. One advantage of using secondary data in a case study is

the format. The format is written and less obtrusive than interviews (Dunn et al., 2014).

Written documentation provides the researcher with detailed information on a subject that

might seem less important during a face-to-face conversation. DeMassis and Kotlar

(2014) mentioned using a variety of data is important to obtain objective information.

DeMassis and Kotlar (2014) also stated that archival or historical data is a moment in

time information collected from multiple sources thereby enhancing the credibility of the

study. Disadvantages of archival or company information include accessibility, biased

selectivity, and reporting bias (Lewis, 2015). To minimize collecting material not specific

to this case study, I was specific to the data requested and triangulated like information

that may support the face-to-face interviews.

Member checking involves allowing participants to read the transcription of their

interview to ensure accurate recording (interpretation) and therefore credible and valid

data (Taylor et al., 2015). Member checking also engages participants in theme

development as well as enabling both researcher and participant to correct errors (Patton,

2015; Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). I collected written and recorded data from the

interviews, transcribed the information from the journal for transcription, and checked the

document for accuracy by listening to the recorded sessions. The participants reviewed their transcribed documents to clarify and submit any errors presented in the copied material.

Data Organization Technique

The organization of the research data for this study protects the confidentiality of the participant. Proper organization of data helps to maintain the integrity of the participant's identity, the interview data, and the reliability and validity of the research (Eisner, 2017). Taylor et al. (2015) suggested that the interview transcript, interview recordings, consent forms, and journal notes store in electronic files. Margarian (2014) shared that researchers should name the folders to the last name or alias of the participant, the data type, data, and results of data analysis.

Lewis (2015) recommended storing case study documents in electronic databases. I placed the data in electronic folders by (a) document type, (b) document file name, (c) collection date, (d) reflective journals, (e) research logs, (f) data analysis, and (g) findings. The hard data of journals, notes, and transcripts and other pertinent information are in folders coded with the personal identifiers and securely locked to maintain participant confidentiality. Keenan et al. (2017) stated that researchers have various ways to store raw data to ensure confidentiality of research participants. Taylor et al. (2015) mentioned that proper storage protects against loss of data and ensures the confidentiality of participants. Taylor et al. (2015) posited that a researcher lock research documents in a secured file cabinet. I contained all raw data for this research in a locked file for five years; however, after the five-year period, I will shred all documents. In this study, a

unique number protects the identity and disclosures for each participant. The identifiers

for the leaders run from M1 to M9. For the field notes, transcripts, and recordings, I used

the participant's unique identifier. I will safeguard the integrity of this research by

securing the identity of the participants by assigning unique code and not using names or

other identifying information. According to Lewis (2015), safe storage and accountability

procedures for maintaining research instruments allow presentable data for future studies

Data Analysis

Data analysis is systematic process researchers use to categorize, condense,

evaluate and summarize information from the data collection process (U.S. Office of

Research Integrity, 2013). Data interpretation and analysis are essential elements when

conducting research (Yin, 2014). There are different methods for collecting and

analyzing data in a qualitative research study, including the inductive process of

understanding developing patterns, themes, and interrelationships amongst the patterns

and themes (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015) and methodological triangulation of multiple data

sources. Methodological triangulation involves the use of different methods of data

collection to validate and strengthen study findings, thereby establishing credibility

through the sources of information (Patton, 2015). Lewis (2015) noted that

methodological triangulation enhances the validity of research findings by collecting data

from various sources and different methods regarding a phenomenon. I used

methodological triangulation as the principal method of data investigation.

I collected data for analysis from organizational documents of policy and

procedure, records on employee retention, and face-to-face interviews. The review of

evidence from different types of data sources such as interviews and company records enabled me to analyze information related to my study as well as increase the credibility of research findings. The process of methodological triangulation helped to identify similarities and discrepancies between voluntary employee turnover in social work and the motivation of the remaining staff. I reviewed all data collected (organizational documents, written notes, interview transcripts, journal, audio recordings) multiple times to identify themes and specific statements pertinent to the study. Any overlapping or repetitive data reduced to common and like terms to meet the horizontal (grouping) criteria of labeling. I analyzed the data for specific or categorized units of meaning and emerging themes from data. Furthermore, I utilized computer software specifically designed to assist in analyzing qualitative data, storing, and managing large amounts of data.

The NVivo 11 is qualitative data analysis software researchers use to compare words and phrases to identify emerging themes, subthemes, categories, and tags through a word recognition and auto-coding function (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). Using the software results, I identified and categorized codes and patterns from multiple sources of information for analysis. I organized data into themes and patterns derived from open-ended questions identifying similarities to analyze and interpret. Alberti-Alhtaybt and Al-Htaybat (2010) stated that identifying or naming codes is critical to the analysis process. Providing pre-determined codes to participants by group and individual helps to maintain the participants' privacy (Wagner, Lukassen, & Mahlendolf, 2010). For example, letters identified the employment (job) categorization of the participants while the number

identified the order of the interview. The classification of organization leaders is M1 through M9. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), researchers are obligated to be transparent about coding procedures for others to understand the information collected. Roller and Lavrakas (2015) stated that coding provides data on individuals, places or settings while themes describe the ideas within the structure of the study. I verified the developed themes for consistency with the conceptual frameworks of the motivation-hygiene theory and the BEM. Researchers using the Herzberg motivation-hygiene theory can analyze the causes of positive and negative job satisfaction, and performance associated with events over a period, and researchers utilizing the BEM can present information on job performance as a function of an interaction between a person's behavior in his or her environment.

Reliability and Validity

According to Eisner (2017), reliability in research consists of statements of truths, uniformity, and accuracy in measurement. Qualitative researchers seek to establish rigor through trust in sound research practices (Taylor et al., 2015). In a qualitative study, building trust begins with sound methods of analysis and practice of research principles involving the confirmation of data collection and assessment (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). According to Taylor et al. (2015), there are several attributes of qualitative rigor or validity. The attributes include dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability (Morse, 2015; Roller & Lavrakas, 2015).

Reliability

Implementing strategies for data reliability and validity in qualitative research is necessary to present a study that is trustworthy (Taylor et al., 2015). Reliability in research is the consistency of qualitative study results over time (Nobel & Smith, 2015). Researchers can establish the reliability of research by ensuring dependability. One way to establish dependability is to ensure the research method and design align with the research questions and the overreaching question (Munn, Porritt, Lockwood, Aromataris, & Pearson, 2014). An additional method to ensure dependability of research is data stability throughout various research settings over time (Elo et al., 2014). Lewis (2015) stated reliability demonstrates when data collected from one study can result in a similar finding in other studies using the data collection instruments of the original study. Throughout this study, I showed detailed examples of the alignment of the research question to the research design and overreaching question. Roller & Lavrakas (2015) stated that dependability in research is a progression of actions by the researcher during the early stages of the research project requiring clear direction. Roller & Lavrakas (2015) also shared that ensuring dependability occurs in the preparation stage of research and requires the researcher to be clear in the research question, literature review, and framework. According to Taylor et al. (2015), research studies show evidence of dependability if the process of selecting, justifying, and applying research strategies and methods project clear explanations. Member checking is a strategy researcher used to ensure dependability.

Fusch and Ness (2015) suggested that qualitative scholars use member checking to increase the dependability of findings. Morse (2015) stated member checking is the preferred validation method for qualitative interviews. Through member checking, the participants may clarify and correct erroneous interpretations of their interview (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). According to Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, and Lewis (2015), member checking involves taking the researchers interpretation of the data back to the participants of the study to confirm the credibility of the interpretation. I asked the participants to verify the interpretation of the themes that emerge from their interviews and company documentation. Allowing participants, an opportunity to review their statements and viewpoints permit them to be comfortable with my interpretation of their interview responses that reflect voluntary employee turnover. I also used a reflexive diary to record thought about decisions made to improve dependability and highlighted the clarity of the research process. I used identical open-ended questions for each participant. Identical questions provided consistency in the interview process where the participants shared insight on the strategies used with voluntary employee turnover and the effect on remaining colleague motivation. The technique of using identical open-ended questions for each interviewee participating in a case study increases dependability (Rubin & Babbie, 2016). I used this technique to help assure the availability of data and collection to reach the point of saturation.

Validity

The validity of a qualitative research study involves the researcher's forethought of the study's design and methodology before engaging in the research process

(Matamonasa-Bennett, 2015). The validity of the research study encompasses the suitability of the selected methodology, design, sample size, data collection techniques and analysis as they relate to the central research question (Leung, 2015). Criteria used by researchers to determine the quality of a study includes (a) credibility, transferability, and confirmability (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). Percy et al. (2015) defined credibility as conducting research that yields plausible findings. Nyhan (2015) referred to credibility as the level of trust readers, other researchers have in the findings of the study, and Matamonasa-Bennett (2015) posited that credibility results as the researcher present the accurate or true picture of the studied phenomenon. I confirmed the credibility of this study by using methodology triangulation and member checking. Taylor et al. (2015) defined methodological triangulation as using multiple data collection sources to study a phenomenon. I ensured the credibility of this study by utilizing methodological triangulation through semistructured interviews and company documents. An additional way to promote credibility is by using member checking. Through member checking, researchers validate the accuracy of the interview with the participant to ensure accurate interpretation of the interview (Morse, 2015). I addressed issues of credibility by having the study participant review and confirm the accuracy of my interpretation of their response to the interview questions.

Percy et al. (2015) referred to transferability as the ability of the researcher to apply the findings of one research study to another setting. To ensure transferability, researchers must provide a detailed description of the research context (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Providing a thorough description allows future readers of the study to

decide whether the findings of a study are transferable to another context (Lewis, 2015).

Taylor et al. (2015) stated that researchers should include in research clear description of

events, interviews, culture, context, and characteristics of participants. Threats to

transferability in research derive from researchers providing an inadequate description the

research (Morse & McEvoy, 2014). To ensure transferability of my study, I provided a

rich description of the research context, participants, analysis, and findings whereby,

future readers and researchers can determine whether the results of this study are

transferable to another context.

According to Taylor et al. (2015), confirmability is the degree to which the

findings of a research study accurately convey the experiences of the participant rather

than the researcher. To improve confirmability in a qualitative study, researchers should

provide readers or reviewers of the study with the original data, interpretations of

interviews, transcription, tables, and charts (Salminen-Tuomaala, Leikkola, Paavilaimen,

2015). One strategy used to promote confirmability is member checking (Fusch & Ness,

2015). Through member checking, research participants can review the interpretation of

their interview transcripts. Review of the interview transcripts allows the participants to

confirm the meaning of their words (Percy et al., 2015). To ensure confirmability, I used

member checking to improve or confirm the validity of my study. An additional strategy

researcher used to enhance confirmability is the audit trail (Percy et al., 2015). The audit

trail is a detailed log researcher used to document the decisions and activities that took

place throughout the study (Percy et al., 2015).

Reaching data saturation or the point where no new themes emerge from new data is critical to the quality of qualitative research (Elo et al., 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Percy et al., 2015; Taylor et al., 2015). Because there is no specified formula for calculating data saturation for qualitative research, researchers often collect data past the saturation point to ensure redundancy (Eisner, 2017; Elo et al., 2014; Percy et al., 2015; Taylor et al., 2015). To this effect, I conducted nine semistructured face-to-face interviews with organizational leaders and reviewed secondary documentation including company newsletters, and statistical data on voluntary employee turnover. The sample size of a recent explorative case study (Campbell, 2014) aligns with this sample size. Percy et al. (2015) warned against the possibility of missing opportunities to link concepts when working with an unsaturated data set. Similarly, Marshall and Rossman (2016) found that the quality of qualitative research continues to increase to the point of saturation. Collecting data after the saturation point may prevent researchers from conducting a deep and rich analysis of the data (Percy et al., 2015). Therefore, the need for the researcher to aim for achieving data saturation is a necessity to achieve high-quality qualitative research.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I included a detailed account of the qualitative research study process and the rationale for a qualitative case study research design and methodology. As the researcher, I developed interview questions, recruited interview participants and asked probing questions to gain a deeper understanding of participant experiences. I presented the explanation and application of principles for ethical research covering the

meaning of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. I also provided an overview of

the data collection, organization, and analysis process. Careful consideration went into

describing to the participants the member checking criteria where participants evaluate

the accuracy my interpretation of their interview responses. I also discussed in section 2,

sampling techniques, data reliability and validity of qualitative research, as well as

approaches to enhance the reliability and validity of the study.

In Section 3, I introduced the findings of this research study. I discussed how the

findings apply to professional practice and the implications for social change. I also

discussed recommendations for action and recommendation for further research on

voluntary employee turnover. Furthermore, I shared my reflections on the research

process and provided the conclusion to the research study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

This study involved the use of thematic analysis to provide insight into the different motivational strategies CPS managers used to encourage employees to remain committed to their employers or organizations. This section includes the following: (a) overview of the study, (b) presentation of findings, (c) applications to professional practice, (d) implications for social change, (e) recommendations for action, (f) recommendations for further study, and (g) reflections. This study concludes with my reflections stemming from completing the study and with my conclusions.

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to examine the strategies CPS managers used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. I conducted semistructured, in-depth interviews with nine managers who had spent at least 2 years in a managerial position in the CPS profession. The interviewees experienced the effects of voluntary employee turnover on staff yet helped to contain the negative sentiment and improve organizational sustainability. Other sources of information used for the data analysis were statistics on employee turnover for the past 5 years (i.e., 2012 through 2016), memoranda, and excerpts from company newsletters related to employee retention. Before starting the interviews, all participants reviewed and signed the consent forms to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. Each participant received a copy of the signed consent. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and took place via telephone or in person at a private location as requested by the participant. I used seven interview questions (see Appendix A) to gain an understanding of strategies

that were effective in reducing voluntary employee turnover in the CPS profession. I found that the managers' retention strategies of a positive and supportive work environment, open interpersonal communication, and job-specific training contributed to reduced turnover intention in the CPS organization.

Presentation of the Findings

The central research question in this qualitative exploratory case study was: What strategies do CPS leaders use to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees? In the United States, approximately 60 million employees left their jobs in 2015 costing businesses over 25 billion dollars (Corso et al., 2015). Sixty percent of CPS social workers voluntarily quit their organization during the year of consideration (Auerbach et al., 2014). To gain an understanding of the strategies CPS managers used to reduce employee turnover, I conducted semistructured, in-depth interviews with nine CPS managers in Southern California. To establish a trusting relationship with each participant, I followed the interview protocol (see Appendix B) that included: (a) a description of the interview process, (b) member checking, and (c) confidentiality and privacy of the participants' information and identities. Semistructured, open-ended interview questions enabled the participants to share their experiences of voluntary employee turnover and how it affected their organization. Participants shared their perspectives of the factors that contribute to voluntary employee turnover and the strategies they used to reduce the intent to leave the organization. I recorded the interviews, took notes, and transcribed the interviews. I used the member checking process following the completion of the interviews to confirm the accuracy of my

interpretation of the participants' responses. Boblin et al. (2013) noted that member

checking increases the dependability of the findings of a research study. I gathered and

grouped the written data, clustered information into themes, and uploaded the interview

transcripts, organizational documents, and notes into NVivo 11. After analyzing the data

in NVivo 11, to maintain participant confidentiality, I applied the participants' assigned

codes (i.e., M1 through M9) to the corresponding uploaded data. Four themes emerged.

These themes included: (a) supportive leadership and voluntary employee turnover, (b)

effective communication reduced turnover intent, (c) teamwork improved employee

morale, and (d) training improved job satisfaction. I reviewed newsletters and

memoranda, and statistics on voluntary employee leave for the past 5 years (2012 through

2016). Collecting data from a variety of sources allowed me to gain insight into the

strategies that managers of the CPS organization used to reduce employee turnover and

motivate employees. I used methodological triangulation to explore the various

perspectives from the data collection and analysis process. Researchers use

methodological triangulation (two or more sources of data) as a tool to reduce data

misinterpretation and strengthen the quality of the research (Cho & Lee, 2014). Patton

(2015) emphasized the importance of methodological triangulation as it enables

researchers to take advantage of the strengths of each method of data collection, thereby

establishing credibility through the sources of information.

The data analysis phase involved several steps. I gathered and grouped the written

data, clustered information into themes, and uploaded the interview transcripts,

organizational documents, and notes into NVivo 11. The participants received codes (M1

through M9) in the corresponding uploaded data. Four themes emerged from the data analysis: supportive leadership and voluntary employee turnover, (b) effective communication reduced turnover intent (c) teamwork improved employee morale, and (d) training improved job satisfaction.

Theme 1: Supportive Leadership and Voluntary Turnover

Supportive leadership positively impacted voluntary employee turnover was the first theme that emerged from the participants' responses and the review of organizational documentation on voluntary employee turnover and employee retention. Each manager (M1 through M9) expressed that the work of the child protection professional is diverse and challenging and can become overwhelming at times. The managers shared the need to provide support to social workers in every aspect of work responsibility (i.e., office and field) to ensure individual growth in learning the job. CPS participants M1, M3, M4, M7, and M8 said they dedicated time to engage employees with their work responsibilities. M2 stated supportive leadership played a significant role in decreasing employee turnover by motivating and inspiring employees toward excellence in their work performance. All nine managers expressed that core practice model (CPM), the current business model adopted by the CPS department, was a strength-based (supportive) approach to interactions with staff, clientele, and the community. The managers also stated the CPM helped to build the confidence of social workers in work-related issues, which reduced the intent to leave the organization.

Supportive leadership. Analysis of the information obtained from the interviews indicated CPS leaders who engaged staff and developed personable relationships had a

positive effect on job satisfaction and employee intent to stay with the organization. M5, M7, and M9 shared that being supportive helped build trusting relationships, as employees considered supportive managers to be approachable and helpful. Supportive managers nurture and encourage employees to engage in their work roles (Beckmann, 2017). M3 recalled assisting a social worker on a crisis home visit:

> A social worker in training was fearful to go on an immediate response child abuse referral and shared her reasons with me. I told the social worker to go to the visit, and I will meet her at the location. As I arrived at the location, the expression of the social worker was shock, joy, and elation because I kept my word to support and assist her. I later learned that her impression of management was primarily of data collection. She vowed to remain loyal to my team as long as possible.

> Two managers (M2 and M3) shared that the work of CPS professionals was difficult and stressful and that supportive and engaging leadership helped build staff confidence. Some participants stated managers who interacted with staff, listened to staff, answered staff questions, and openly discussed the direction of the organization increased job satisfaction and reduced the desire of employees to leave (M3, M4, and M8). M7 mentioned:

> I do not have an employee turnover problem. I support my team by making myself available to them by walking the floor, being approachable, and interacting with the team in activities to support morale. I am willing and prepared to assist staff and be helpful when possible.

Managers noted one-on-one consultation regarding staff workload could enhance the employee-manager relationship by establishing trust, as both had the same understanding of work responsibility. Additional approaches to leadership included accompanying or consulting staff on abuse investigations, encouraging open communication, and implementing staff suggestions on policy. These approaches increased employee knowledge of their work responsibilities and interest in their jobs. M3 stated, "I support staff during one-on-one meetings by creating a comfortable environment and sharing my experiences in hopes to give the social worker insight into social work practices."

Learning the intangibles of social work comes from experience (M3). This included knowing where to park the car in the event of a child detention, learning to continually survey the location (i.e., being aware of surroundings) for situations out of the ordinary, and knowing how to de-escalate a crisis (i.e., approach and address a family) for the safety and well-being of all involved (M3). The diverse experiences and knowledge gained from working a caseload helped managers reduce the risk of uncertainty by preparing staff for the expected and unexpected. Deery and Jago (2015) stated managers should use a supportive leadership style that leads to the positive reinforcement of employee performance and strengthening their motivation to work with the organization.

Motivation. The analysis of the interviews demonstrated all participants (M1 through M9) seemed enthusiastic and attentive when it came to supporting and motivating their team or subordinates. Three of the respondents (M1, M5, and M7)

mentioned that managers instituted different strategies for keeping motivation high among employees and believed the integration of motivational strategies made the majority of employees highly satisfied and happy with their jobs. Some motivational strategies included empowering workers to manage their workload, their time, and responsibilities. Motivating and empowering employees to manage their day-to-day activity signals trust from management and responsibility from the employee. Two managers, M2 and M4, reported motivational strategies directly and positively influenced employee retention within the organization. The positive work environment benefitted the employee and employer as management efforts to motivate staff helped build employee morale, increase job satisfaction, and inspire the energy to perform well in the organization (Keskes, 2014). M7 stated, "I have supportive behavior and use empathy versus sympathy and experiential exercises to create positive reinforcement among the employees to keep them loyal to the company." M1, M3, and M5 suggested that certificates for employee achievements and subordinate-sponsored activities of appreciation helped increase motivation and build morale. M3 shared:

A morale committee of staff and management was developed to find ways to build and maintain employee job satisfaction. The committee agreed to celebrate birthdays, organize potluck meals, family fun days, and developed a snack bar to have food and drink readily available for staff.

M7 stated it was important to celebrate different occasions with the staff because celebration helped motivate employees. John (2017) noted organizations that invest in

other than monetary rewards such as appreciation, growth, vacations or holidays, job rotation, and job recognition, have higher levels of employee retention.

Other managers (M2, M7, and M8) shared that they communicated the organization's policy and goals on work responsibility to help staff understand the organization's strategic plan that supported their work function. Meanwhile, the majority of the participants (M2, M3, M5, M7, and M8) suggested the main reason behind their motivation effort was to help staff understand their role in the organization and communicate all the information directly about the organization's goals and objectives. Staff learned of new company policy and procedure through updates of "For Your Information" (FYI) bulletins or a formal review process. The process included general staff meetings with all staff or section meetings. Staff participated in meetings by asking questions on policy implementation or how the change in policy affected their jobs. Each job function was critical to the team, and therefore any suggestion on effectual implementation was taken seriously by the unit facilitator or leader.

I reviewed the organization's strategic plan for the years 2015 through 2017 to gain insight into the strategies included to address employee voluntary turnover and retention. About staffing and the retention of staff, the plan showed that by January of 2020, the department leaders intended to increase staff retention and job satisfaction by providing an environment that was safe, supportive, and rewarding, as well as by conducting job satisfaction surveys. I also reviewed documents on voluntary employee turnover from the last 5 years (i.e., 2012 through 2016). The information listed in the organization's data reports related to the findings from the interviews and the

organization's newsletters and statistical spreadsheet report. I reviewed several newsletters from the years 2009 through 2016. The newsletters contained information on the state of the department and varied topics, including excerpts on social worker attrition. Most of the newsletters included a comparison of the rate of attrition of social workers in large urban child welfare organizations to that of the study organization. The attrition rates fluctuated over the years. However, the rate at the study organization consistently was lower. For example, the director reported on June 29, 2015, "Our attrition rate is still between 8%-9%, which is very good since other large jurisdictions have an attrition rate of over 40%, and one California County lost 60 of 100 new CSW hires during a 2-year period."

During the years 2012 through 2016, the study organization increased its workforce of social workers by 78%. Figure 1 reflects the findings from a review of organizational spreadsheets on voluntary employee turnover. Despite an increase of social workers, the rate of voluntary employee turnover for social workers increased by 1% each year except for 2016 where the data showed a 1% decrease. Overall, the percentage of voluntary turnover averaged approximately 5%, which was lower than the rate (8% to 9%) reported by the director in the June 2015 newsletter.
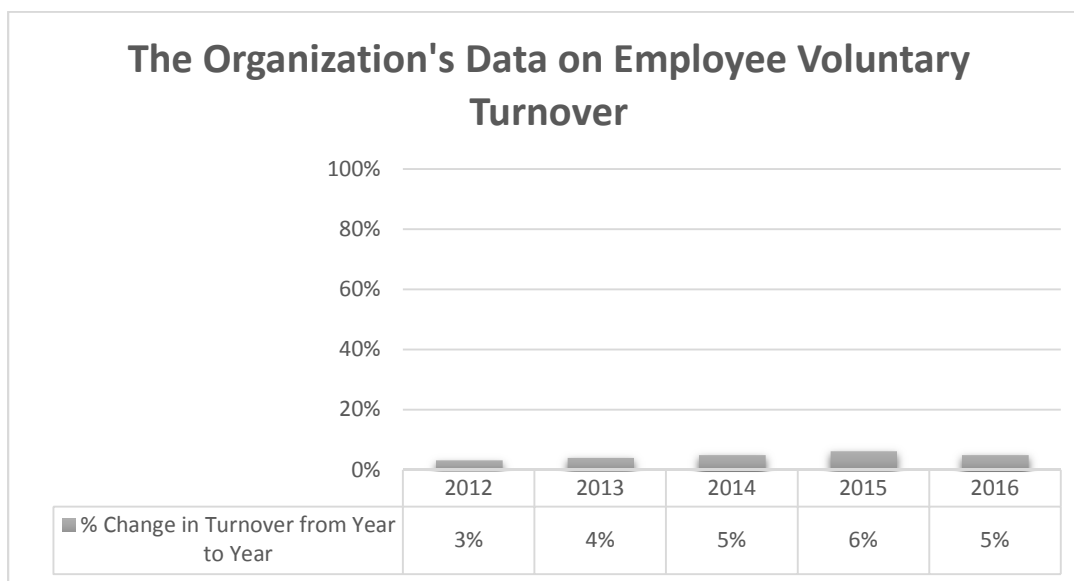
Figure 1. Percentage change in social worker voluntary turnover.

In a different newsletter, the Director reiterated to management the need to continue the momentum in incorporating the CPM. The CPM was used to prioritize child safety while emphasizing strengths over deficits, underlying needs over behaviors, and empowerment over helplessness. For social workers and other staff, the CPM helped build trust with children and families and enabled stronger teamwork and job satisfaction for children and families; the CPM fostered the opportunity to be heard and empowered that was grounded in strong community support. If implemented with fidelity, such an approach can improve child safety and permanency and provide hope for healing and recovery.

Shared core practice model builds employee confidence. M2, M4, and M6 expressed the positive role of shared CPM in CPS for increasing employee engagement and involvement to work positively in addressing the issues of a child in social development programs. Meanwhile, M1 and M8 claimed that employees needed constant

support, assistance, and help from supervisors. Two managers (M4 and M6) depicted the positive implication of the shared core practice model and stated it involved practices to overcome the challenges of employees and provide continuous support for applying the strengths-need practices to actual cases of children. M6 also depicted that it was vital to design quality service reviews (QSRs) and improve the performance indicators to improve employee proficiencies, inspirational factors, and focus. All these strategies significantly assisted in changing employees' attitudes, level of commitment, and motivation for performing their duties and responsibilities effectively.

The literature showed prominent outcomes by expressing the benefits of applying the shared CPM in different CPS organizations (Keskes, 2014; Sharif & Scandura, 2014). The shared CPM helps in measuring the effectiveness of key practices, evaluating outcomes, and conducting the QSR periodically (M4 and M8). M1, M2, and M6 concluded that the application of this model also acted as an active model of the learning process that gave specific feedback and reviews to employees regarding their working practices, in return strengthen the weak areas. The shared CPM addressed the personal development needs of employees with supervisors to provide an overview of the complete performance of individuals in parallel to the CPS objectives (Benton, 2016). Two managers (M2 and M5) shared that the CPM reflected different approaches, relationships, and techniques used by managers to provide stability, safety, well-being, and permanence to employees about their job fulfillment. M5 claimed, "I believe in guiding principles and practice standards to the employees that help in letting them know about the company's situation as well as giving them exposures."

M9 concluded the shared CPM was a tool that helped managers improve the practices and outcomes by outlining a set of principles or standards for employees to let them know about the company's mission, objectives, and goals. This exposure was a source of strong connection between the managers and employees that reduced voluntary turnover and enhanced the company's performance and overall productivity.

Correlation to the conceptual framework. Theme 1 is reflective of Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) motivation-hygiene theory and the BEM coined by Gilbert (1978). The initiatives undertaken by the CPS managers (e.g., achievement, feedback, recognition, and responsibility) had a positive influence on social workers' job satisfaction. The motivation-hygiene theory refers to what Herzberg et al. called *motivators* (satisfiers) and *hygiene factors* (dissatisfiers). Motivators and hygiene factors are intrinsic and extrinsic to the work environment (Naidu, 2016). Intrinsic motivators include advancement, recognition, and achievement; whereas external factors include company policy and practice, supervision styles, and the level of relationship. Researchers have used the motivation-hygiene theory to determine whether motivation and job satisfaction affect employee retention and found that both motivational and hygiene factors have a bearing on job satisfaction and employee intention to leave (Ahmed, 2015).

Supportive leadership and work responsibility are satisfiers that contribute directly to employees' feelings about the workplace. Specifically, Herzberg et al. (1959) suggested company policies should be fair and clear and include information on job expectations. Herzberg et al. emphasized that relationships among employees, peers,

superiors, and subordinates should be appropriate and acceptable by policy and citizenry. All managers (M1 through M9) adopted the organization's directive (i.e., CPM) of supportive leadership and responsibility to make a positive impression on the staff, clientele, and the community. The managers and organizational leadership have taken measures to keep their staff satisfied in the workplace. The staff, managers, and organizational leadership implemented practices (e.g., establishing a morale committee, open door policy, and understanding the policy and practice of the organization), thereby fostering a supportive climate and creating a satisfying workplace. In addition to the correlation of Herzberg et al.'s motivational hygiene theory to Theme 1, the BEM associates with identifying obstacles that interfere with employee motivation and job satisfaction. The model distinguishes between accomplishment and behavior, identifies methods for potential improvements, and includes six components of behavior that can manipulate performance.

Gilbert (1978) stated organizational leadership and management must determine the influences on employee behavior as individual behavior relates to personal characteristics and the environment in which the behavior occurs. The CPS leadership established office protocol that supported engaging relationships between management and staff that enabled them to identify strengths and the underlying need for a trusting, positive work environment. As previously mentioned by M2 and M5, the CPM includes different approaches, relationships, and techniques used by managers to provide stability, safety, well-being, and permanence to employees about their job fulfillment. Another manager stated that regular in-person conference meetings with staff on workload matters

were motivating, inspiring, and encouraging for the employees to work toward

performance excellence. The overall leadership and management approach to understand

and influence the environment of the staff was open communication, availability to

address staff concerns, and clear expectations, leading to a reduction in voluntary

employee turnover.

Theme 2: Effective Communication Reduced Turnover Intent

The second theme that emerged from the data was effective communication

reduced turnover intent. M8 stated communication was more than the exchange of words,

as it included understanding the emotions and the intent behind what was said. Effectual

communication is important to the culture of the CPS organization. An open, clear, and

consistent message is imperative for managers and employees as the CPS profession can

be chaotic and unpredictable (M2). The regular dialog enables the learning of each

other's behaviors and attitudes regarding matters in the workplace. One manager (M8)

shared that being an assertive communicator (i.e., openly expressing thoughts and needs)

helped with two-way discussions and could boost self-esteem and decision-making.

Another manager mentioned that direct, uninhibited discussions allowed for intense and

critical conversations on workload issues addressed with a level of comfort and trust

(M3). Merriam and Tisdell (2015) signified the concept of effective communication and

suggested it helps enhance employee fulfillment of their personal and professional needs

and thus reduces the possibilities of voluntary employee turnover.

Effective communication extends to verbal and nonverbal mediums. All leaders

(M1 through M9) mentioned that being an active or engaged listener allowed them to

hear the subtleties of voice that helped them understand the emotions behind the message communicated. M1 mentioned the use of active listening, which included focusing on the speaker, showing interest in what was said, and providing feedback. M1 recalled a conversation between a colleague and a social worker regarding a change in practice for providing services to an infant who had been surrendered by a parent. The social worker was unsure of how to proceed. The protocol changed, but the policy had not reflected the change in practice. The conversation centered on whether to follow the written (outdated) policy or follow the suggested new protocol. After discussion and recall of the circumstances for the change in practice, both were comfortable with the decision to follow the new protocol. M1 said he recalled the conversation because it was an open, direct, factual, and respectful dialog that resulted in an understanding of the decision. Open communication creates opportunities for managers and employees to share opinions, insecurities, and concerns, thereby enhancing relationships and helping to foster employee motivation to stay on the job (Demirel & Tosuner-Finkes, 2014). Each leader (M1 through M9) mentioned that engaged listening and cueing on nonverbal signals were valuable in understanding the mindset of the employee when involved in the open dialog. Nonverbal communication (e.g., body movements, eye contact, postures, and gestures) is an alternate yet reliable means of communicating, as it adds support to verbal dialog (Haneef, Faisal, Alvi, & Zulfiqar, 2014). M7 mentioned, "Nonverbal cues are as important to what the employee states verbally. At times the nonverbal actions do not match the verbal statements. In such instances, having a relationship with the employee can help disclose the intended message."

Contradictory signals can also bring suspicions of dishonesty. M7 recalled at one time suspecting data entered into the computer system were incomplete and inaccurate. When having a discussion with staff about the suspicions, M7 noticed incongruent body language. The body language did not match (arms and legs crossed, inconsistent nodding to words) to what was said. M7 felt the employee was dishonest. Understanding body language can help with the meaning of the message (M3). An open stance, sitting on the edge of one's seat, and arms crossed or uncrossed are all examples of nonverbal communication. M3 mentioned that effective communication involves focused listening and assessing nonverbal cues together to receive an understanding of the message.

The managers used communication as part of their training strategy to establish a positive working environment (M8). M8 shared that training afforded staff and management an opportunity for two-way communication. Managers used meetings, one-on-one conferences, and training as avenues to communicate performance expectations to employees as well as to provide opportunities for employees to share the practices that were beneficial to the job. Keskes (2014) stated that managers communicate to influence employee behavior and clarify organizational standards. Communication is also a strategy to build organizational support and empower employees (M9). All managers (M1 through M9) indicated effective communication between employees and management regarding organizational goals and vision created a sense of belonging within the workforce, which increased their inner motivation and led to a long-term commitment to the company. Bode et al. (2015) claimed management needs to construct a well-defined and strong communication system to the corporate culture that conveys

updated information about the organizational mission and goals. In addition to the

freedom to seek consultation from office leadership, employees felt empowered to make

decisions on their workload. The social worker communicates the plan with the

supervisor or manager and is then responsible for ensuring the mandated requirements of

monthly in-person visits and reports to the court take place. The focus of the manager is

to provide a supportive environment for staff by listening (engagement) and providing

applicable feedback, which is critical to achieving a positive atmosphere for reducing the

intent to leave the organization (M5, M6, and M7). Honest and direct communication is

imperative when engaging staff. Each participant (M1 through M9) indicated active

listening was needed to engage employees and to get to know them. All nine managers

(M1 through M9) stated direct two-way communication permitted an avenue for

employees to gain the confidence to express themselves to managers.

Direct communication is crucial when a manager desires to gain employee

engagement and build trust with an employee (M2). M3 noted, "I do not resort to

intimidation or belittlement because it is not motivating to the employee." M6 believed

that clear and direct communication was an effective strategy to engage employees as

well as an avenue for "sharing business strategies and innovative processes of success."

M9 reported on having an open-door policy where employees could express their

concerns at any time and directly communicate with the manager. M4 used direct

communication to encourage employees to share vital company information and improve

customer relations. Each participant (M1 through M9) understood the importance of

effective communication as a tool to improve employee engagement and enhance job

satisfaction. Engaging employees also helps managers and supervisors balance the needs of the organization with needs of the employees and develop a sense of continuity (Skinner, Elton, Auer, & Pocock, 2014).

Correlation to the conceptual framework. Herzberg's et al. (1959) motivational hygiene theory was used in this study to explore the strategies the CPS organization used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Researchers have found that both motivational and hygiene factors have a bearing on job satisfaction and employees' intention to leave (Ahmed, 2015). CPS managers applied the intrinsic factors of promoting team building, empowering employees, and active communication to prevent employee dissatisfaction and encourage employee engagement. Participants' (M2, M3, M8, and M9) responses revealed the application of Herzberg et al.'s hygiene theory, such as appreciating employees and managers advocating empowerment over workload responsibilities and tasks. The practices are vital elements of Herzberg et al.'s motivation-hygiene theory. Communication between employees and managers that reflected a caring and supportive work environment, as well as a growing relationship, was one strategy CPS managers used to decrease employee turnover intention.

The findings of this study indicated CPS managers believed effectual communication was important and did affect employee morale and turnover intention. All participants (M1 through M9) used an open-door policy to allow for direct communication from employees, which created a positive work environment where employees could communicate freely with their managers. Direct communication helps to present an interconnected work environment and enables engaged employees to

perform their work responsibilities (M9). According to Williams (2015), direct communication reflects closeness between employees and managers, directly influencing organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. Therefore, managers who practice direct communication with their employees might improve business operations, leading to a positive work environment.

The BEM employs a framework of guidelines to address behavioral and environmental factors that management optimized by providing the appropriate information, instrumentation, and motivation to support the work environment and the behavioral repertory of individual employees (Gilbert, 1978). In regards to the theme of effectual communication and the reduction of voluntary employee turnover. The managers created an environment where relevant information was timely distributed or communicated to the employees providing clear expectations to serve as a guide for performance. The managers understood that clear, open, and consistent messaging between the management and the employees were imperative to learning each other's behaviors and attitudes regarding matters of the workplace. All managers reported that effectual communication is a strategy to influence employee behavior and clarify organizational standards as well as build organizational support and empower employees. The managers also provided a supportive environment for the employees by listening (engagement) and providing applicable feedback to questions or concerns which was critical in achieving a positive atmosphere for trust thereby reducing the intent to leave the organization.

Theme 3: Teamwork Improved Employee Morale

The third theme that emerged from the data was teamwork improved employee morale. "Teamwork is a connection of interpersonal relationships of people within an organization (M7)." According to M8, the department operated as a team. The department consisted of many divisions and sections, including human resources, risk management, contracts, procurement, business information systems, and community-based service, to name a few. Each division worked independently of the others. However, each manager was willing to provide information and data from his or her section and collaborate on an assignment if needed (M2 and M8). M1, M3, and M4 mentioned the department was about providing employees an environment that increased teamwork and a collaborative working culture to increase positive morale. All nine managers (M1 through M9) expressed that teamwork increased employee confidence and trust, which enhanced employee growth and job satisfaction. Teamwork maximizes individual strengths, which are then complemented by the strengths of others as a unit or team (Vasquez, 2014).

M7 mentioned, "Having friends and respectful colleagues on the team reduce[s] turnover as the staff is more likely to come to work and be productive if they like their unit or coworkers in the office." M9 shared that banding together and working together was an important concept of teamwork. M9 added, "teaming happens when staff helps each other." Two managers (M2 and M5) stated sometimes it was a challenge for individuals to bond and work together as a team. M5 mentioned:

We managers must set the example for the employees in demonstrating unity and

teamwork in working for the goals of the department. Management unity

demonstrates when working together in presenting information during staff

meetings. Another example of our teamwork is when we plan an appreciation

lunch for the staff. We come together and discuss and plan events for the staff that

will allow them to relax and have fun.

M7 mentioned that encouraging individual and group activities around the office

as well as away from the office helped build relationships and foster teamwork. Taking

breaks in the conference room or walking the floor for exercise was a way to establish

positive relationships (M3 and M8). A friendly unit competition also encouraged

teamwork such as annual events days where staff decorated their workspace

corresponding to a holiday theme. Through these events, employees worked together to

create an environment of teamwork to win the prize (M8). M6 also indicated "team

activities outside of the work environment are important as employees can separate from

work and enhance relationships (develop friendships) that are personal."

Team building activities like unit retreats, birthday lunches, and holiday events

built relationships, were fun, and developed friendships amongst staff. The goal of team

events away from the office was to separate from the usual day-to-day routine and create

an environment of trust (M2, M3, and M9). Vogus et al. (2016) communicated that

today's organizational leaders believe in developing strong social relationships by

engaging in different activities, such as an invitation for lunch or organizing a party,

which helps strengthen bonds and build healthy relationships. Meanwhile, Eisner (2017)

stated that setting up cordial interactions with coworkers also supports the ability of

employees to focus on their jobs, responsibilities, and duties more effectively. One of the largest events used to foster teamwork was the organization's annual health challenge, a department-wide event to promote a healthy work environment. Staff comes together and selects colleagues, friends, and associates to build a team to challenge other teams in a weight loss competition. Team building has a positive impact on employee attitudes, thereby influencing feelings toward remaining on the job (M2, M4, and M7). Cross-cultural teamwork helps to develop employee engagement, growth, and productivity, all of which support a reduction in turnover intent (Keenan et al., 2017). Teamwork among social workers is a given as the work is overbearing and nearly impossible to complete without the help of unit mates (M9). During times of an emergency or even day-to-day activities, assistance is needed at some point during the workday as the job responsibilities are overwhelming and can lead to turnover intentions (M9). M9 also stated that managers who support team building or strong interpersonal relationships and the professional growth of their employees find that employees are engaged to help one another and are less likely to quit.

Correlation to the conceptual framework. Theme 3 correlates to Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivational hygiene theory. CPS managers understood the importance of how teamwork contributes to a satisfied workforce. The basis of the motivation-hygiene theory is what Herzberg et al. called *motivators* (satisfiers) and *hygiene factors* or (dissatisfiers). Motivators promote satisfaction from intrinsic aspects of the job, such as responsibility and growth. Hygiene factors are external to the work and include matters such as company policy and interpersonal relationships. Teamwork is a motivator in this

theme as it relates to the employee's dedication to the work itself as well as the appeal or satisfaction achieved working as a unit or team to complete a task. According to the Herzberg theory, relationships with coworkers is a hygiene factor. However, such factor is needed to ensure the employee is not dissatisfied. This study reflects how CPS leadership has committed to encouraging teamwork through building relationships, setting examples, empowering employees, and participating in teaming activities. When employees have the option of working in teams and choosing their method of working, they are likely to feel a sense of control and satisfaction, reducing the risk of voluntary turnover (Scandura, 2014). Three managers (M2, M4, and M7) shared that team building had a positive impact on employee attitudes, thereby increasing feelings toward remaining on the job. The findings of this study support that teamwork in CPS organizations has a positive relationship with several aspects of job satisfaction (i.e., supervision, security, and growth) with teamwork being the strongest aspect for day to day support. Gilbert's BEM also categorized teamwork as a motivator. Teamwork is a non-financial motivator that supports the capacity or performance of the individual employee. The CPS profession is unpredictable and overwhelming to the social worker subjected to secondary trauma associated with removing children from family to the legal, federal, state and local mandates of detaining a child (M4). As a non-financial motivator, teamwork becomes a bond or connection of relationships of individual strengths working collectively to assist a unit member or address a need within the section (Vasquez, 2014). M9 reported, "teaming happens when staff helps each other." Another manager shared that working together and banding together is an important

concept of teamwork (M3). The motivator or incentive associated with teaming helps to reduce the tension or turnover intent as the staff is more likely to increase productivity if they like their unit or coworkers in the office (M7).

Theme 4: Work-Related Training Improved Job Satisfaction

Work-related training improved job satisfaction was the fourth theme that emerged from the data collected from the participants' interview responses. Training was a strategy that all managers (M1 through M9) identified as improving job satisfaction. According to the managers, the department provided a variety of training opportunities for employees, beginning with internships for college students, the academy for new hires, mentoring and conferences, and computer-based learning (e-learning) for career advancement. M6 shared, "Training at the workplace promotes employee accomplishment and empowerment. I engage my employees in one-on-one and group training. Training also improves employee productivity, increases employee motivation and retention, and subsequently employee job satisfaction."

For this perspective, M1, M3, and M5 showed consistent outcomes by claiming that managing people in the new millennium was becoming more about development and empowerment and less about command and control. To increase employees' skills and abilities in managing their job responsibilities, managers are focusing more on employees' personal as well as professional development through integrating different counseling and training practices

(King, 2015). In a similar perspective, M5 mentioned, "I prefer coaching as a form of employee training in which I use different mediums such as panel sessions,

videos, and meeting for encouraging the employees to develop their competencies."

According to M3 and M8, employees desire to advance in their jobs, and managers are

challenged to provide the necessary training opportunities to meet the needs of the

employees. One aspect of job development is employee shadowing. Shadowing is a

technique used by managers to designate an experienced employee to mentor a less

experienced worker who learns the job through direct observation. Another technique is

the manager mentoring the employee for a specific job. M1 stated:

> I have mentored staff by allowing them to review cases or referrals and close
>
> them once they meet the mandated requirements. I also encourage employees
>
> seeking promotion to attend supervisor and manager meetings to gain insight into
>
> discussion points and expectations.

Other managers mentioned that many of their employees took advantage of the

state clinical licensing hours made available by the department. Employees obtained

clinical licenses to advance their careers or establish their business practice (M4 and M5).

M3 conveyed that employees felt valued when the department invested in them with job-

related training and conferences. M1 further revealed that employees shared the

knowledge gained from training with the team so all could benefit from the latest

information and improve their work performance. Some managers mentioned that

encouraging employees to attend training demonstrated to staff that management was

there to support them (M2, M3, and M5). Training is an impactful demonstration of

organizational support that leaders can provide to employees (Jehanzeb, Hamid, &

Rasheed, 2015). All managers (M1 through M9) mentioned the CPM as the overarching

training method for the office. The CPM is a tool with emphases on serving the client.

Customer service training prepares staff to communicate and interact with the public in a

professional capacity. M6 shared that he overheard staff discussing the interactive

component of the CPM and the benefits of learning clients' strengths. One social worker

reported as saying that hearing the clients' stories and hearing from their support systems

was insightful and helped in developing the case objectives.

According to all managers (M1 through M9), employee knowledge and job

performance improved by staff engaging managers and job-specific training including

conferences and electronic learning (e-learning). E-learning is a computer-based network

program primarily offering mandated training from the federal, state, and local

government (M4 and M7). Computer training included Title IV updates, employer, and

employee workplace behavior training, as well as human resource and performance

management information. M6 mentioned that "Training is an opportunity for employees

to succeed." The department offered myriad training opportunities for staff development.

Training extended for new hires to the experienced staff who were looking for new

techniques to those preparing for career advancement. Managers who encourage, train,

and motivate their employees improve organizational productivity and job satisfaction

(Stephan, Patterson, Kelly, & Mair, 2016).

Correlation to the conceptual framework. The findings of Theme 4 aligned

with Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory. The training opportunities the

CPS leadership and management undertook (e.g., mentoring, conferences, e-learning, and

shadowing) are what Herzberg et al. called *motivators* (satisfiers) that are intrinsic to the

work environment. The learning from the training had a positive influence on social workers' job satisfaction. All participants believed that job training improved employee performance by learning new skills and enhancing the current skills to the benefit of staff and the customer (M1 through M9). The organization's directive (CPM) of supportive leadership and work responsibility made a positive impression on the team as managers implemented what Sarti (2014) identified as opportunities for employee learning and personal growth. Managers encourage employee training as an essential workplace strategy to create an improved organizational environment (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015). Organization training and development strategies assisted managers in creating a knowledgeable and motivated workforce that encourages employees to seek career development or individual learning opportunities that will enhance sustainability and job satisfaction. In addition to the motivation-hygiene theory, the BEM correlates to the theme from the perspective of instrumentation and knowledge or training. To ensure a worthy performance by the employee, the manager supported desired behavior by providing the employee with the appropriate tools, materials, and resources to be successful with the job. Also, the BEM emphasized how an employee's performance at the workplace might attribute to the employee' behavior repertoire of the environment that supports the behavior. The BEM addresses behavior as a factor that management can influence or identify methods for improvement. According to the BEM, an employee who lacks knowledge or the skill to be efficient at a job specific task, the manager implements strategies that improve the employee's behavior to that of a worthy performance. Management can increase employee knowledge of the desired position

through systematic job-specific training to match the requirements of the position or matching a position to the individual which in turn improve workplace attitude and job satisfaction.

Applications to Professional Practice

Employee turnover is a concern of human resources personnel worldwide (Pepra-Mensah et al., 2015). As voluntary employee turnover is disruptive to the productivity and sustainability of an organization, managing employee turnover is vital to the functionality of business operations (Pepra-Mensah et al., 2015). Implementing effective employee turnover reduction strategies helps leaders and managers with organizational growth and productivity, thereby increasing the sustainability of the organization (Gonzalez, 2016). Employee motivation and job satisfaction are factors in facilitating CPS organizational outcomes, including the reduction of voluntary employee turnover (Kehoe & Wright, 2013).

I conducted this qualitative, explorative case study to learn about effective employee voluntary turnover reduction strategies managers used at a CPS organization. The interviews and organizational documentation obtained provided information on effective strategies for stabilizing employee turnover. Based on the data collected, most participants agreed that voluntary employee turnover was not an issue in their organization. However, some participants indicated the employees who did quit were the recent college graduates who left within a year or two of employment. Overall, the data supported that managers of the CPS organization reduced voluntary employee turnover and increased job satisfaction through communication, employee support, team building,

and flexibility. Dhar (2016) mentioned that job satisfaction positively relates to organizational commitment levels. As individuals become more satisfied with their work, they become more committed to the goals of the organization.

Findings of this study may provide managers and organizational leaders with information that may enable them to understand the complexities of an effective employee turnover strategy. Managers who demonstrate supportive leadership, open communication, and a positive work environment are more likely to enhance job satisfaction (Fallatah & Laschinger, 2016). Furthermore, the findings of this study may allow employers to appreciate the benefits that turnover reduction can have in an organization including job satisfaction, improved morale, increased motivation, and retention. Additionally, the findings from this study provide information to other large urban CPS organization on how effective employee turnover strategies may positively affect employees, which, in turn, can positively affect work production, client satisfaction, and relationships with community organizations.

Implications for Social Change

The results from this qualitative case study on voluntary employee turnover can contribute to positive social change as CPS leaders can use them to understand the conditions of the work environment that influence employee performance. Gilbert (1978) posited that organizations play a huge role in shaping employees' work performance. CPS leaders might also consider how policy and procedure contribute to employees' intention to quit and use this knowledge to modify current organizational practices and policies. Furthermore, the CPS leadership can use the results of the current study to

develop a training program designed to maintain or improve employee motivation. These findings might also encourage leaders of CPS, local government officials, and leaders of community-based organizations to collaborate toward reducing employee turnover, which, in turn, might strengthen relationships and efforts to develop strategies and tools to serve clientele. Collaboration between CPS, clientele, and community-based organizations can improve the safety and well-being of children. Collaboration may help children and families build supportive teams that can help them identify their strengths and underlying needs in a trusting, positive environment. Findings from this study might lead to social change through increasing the awareness of employee support and motivation strategies through employee engagement, which could lead to an overall decrease in employees' intent to leave their organizations. According to Herzberg et al. 1959), motivated employees in a high hygiene environment have positive job satisfaction and retention.

Recommendations for Action

The objective of this study was to explore the strategies CPS leadership used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Many factors influence employee turnover and retention. The findings of this study provided evidence that supportive leadership, job-specific training, team building, and communication between managers and employees reduced the incidence of employee turnover. CPS leadership should encourage a work environment with open and respectful communication among all staff. Improving communication (verbal, memorandums, and electronic) can reduce confusion, thereby improving employee knowledge of work-related responsibilities. Effectual

communication can also help establish trusting relationships between management and

employees where mutual respect builds into concern for personal and professional

development. Organizational leaders should also create a positive and constructive

working environment to decrease stress or anxiety and improve employee motivation and

productivity. Positive work environments include training opportunities that support

employees' desire for advancement or improved skill levels. Conducive environments

can also improve morale and the overall work experience. The continuity of staff lends to

teaming, which enhances a positive work culture and job satisfaction, thereby reducing

the intent for employees to leave the organization. Based on the information available in

this study, the recommendation is that CPS leadership take a holistic view of the

operations from the perspective of an outsider and address the issue of voluntary

employee turnover. The examination should include a look at work relationships

beginning with the manager, supervisor, and social worker and extending to include

community-based partners. The goal is to work together to provide the best services to

the families involved in the CPS system.

I will present the findings of this study at professional conferences, in the

ProQuest Dissertation and Theses Database, and in other academic research journals and

publications. Leaders of the CPS organization reflected in this document will receive an

executive summary and a copy of this study.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this research was to explore effective strategies managers in a

CPS organization used to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Although this study

extends the existing research on voluntary employee turnover, the results reflect a single CPS organization from Southern California. For this reason, I recommend that researchers conduct similar qualitative studies with large urban CPS organizations throughout the United States. Also, quantitative and mixed method researchers may want to examine the relationships between voluntary employee turnover and other variables that may influence an employee's intent to leave an organization.

The scientific approach could be used to examine the relationships between employee voluntary turnover and leadership style, work and life balance, compensation, recognition, or developmental programs. Further research in these areas might provide organizational leadership with new knowledge to reduce voluntary turnover and increase productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational sustainability.

Reflections

As I look back on this DBA process, I recall experiencing many challenges on a personal level as well as the encouragement I received from classmates throughout my academic journey. The most difficult experiences were the home going of my parents and the loss of two nephews to murder and suicide. I was able to persevere and continue in the DBA program through faith in God and the unconditional love I received from family and friends. The unexpected blessing was the positive encouragement I received from classmates and the program chair while completing this doctoral study. I recall the words of my classmates "stay focused, be positive, take a break, future doctor, and follow the process." These and many other words and phrases resonated as I made many revisions to my study document. I remember being excited when completing the coursework and

advancing to developing a problem statement. Unfortunately, I learned from consulting with a methodologist that the basis of the study was a borderline business problem and I should consider a different approach. I changed the topic with assistance from the chair.

My role as the researcher was to collect, interpret, and analyze data received from interviewing participants at a CPS organization in Southern California. The focus of the study was on voluntary employee turnover and employee motivation. The organization chosen for this study happened to be my employer for over 30 years. Although I did not personally supervise or manage the participants, I needed to be cognizant of possible ethical issues and any personal bias or preconceived ideas and values that had the potential to affect the outcome of the study. The topic of employee satisfaction and employee turnover was a daily discussion among employees of the organization, thus making the research topic relevant. I put aside potential conflict by suppressing knowledge of the study topic. I focused on asking the same questions to all the participants to promote consistency and continuity and listened to the participants' responses and took notes to lessen personal assumptions.

Earning a DBA was a personal goal, as it will not help advance my career. However, the knowledge I obtained from the DBA program and the Walden decree of social change are important assets that will help me determine how to best be of service to the global community.

Conclusion

The purpose of this case study was to explore the strategies CPS leaders used to reduce employee turnover and motivate employees. The results of the study revealed four

components to an effective employee turnover reduction strategy: supportive leadership,

communication, teamwork, and training. Data from participant interviews and a review of

organizational documents revealed managers who actively engage employees increase

job satisfaction and reduce voluntary employee turnover intent. By implementing the

strategies recommended in this study, managers might establish office protocol

encompassing supportive and engaging relationships between management and staff

identifying strengths and the underlying need for a trusting, positive work environment

for increased productivity and enhanced sustainability.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Interview questions include the following:

1. As a leader, how would you describe your role in motivating children social workers at your organization?

2. What strategies have you used to motivate your employees?

3. Which employee motivation strategies were most effective?

4. What experiences could you share concerning voluntary employee leave in your organization within the past two years?

5. What strategies have you used to address voluntary employee turnover?

6. How did your employees respond to those strategies?

7. What additional information would you like to share regarding employee voluntarily turnover and employee motivation?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview Title: Examine the insight of CPS leadership on the interruption of customer service and staff morale as employees' voluntary leave their jobs.

The interview protocol will incorporate methods to build trust and a positive relationship between the participants. The participants will have reviewed and agreed to the instructions on the informed consent form prior to returning the document to the researcher via email.

1. The interview session will begin with introductions between the interviewer and interviewee.

2. I will thank the participant for the willingness to participate in the research study. I will inform the participant of the recording of the interview and the subsequent transcription of the session. I will also inform the participant on the member checking process which allows the participant to confirm the transcript interpretation to ensure reliability and validity of data.

3. The participant will be provided a copy of the signed informed consent letter.

4. Each participant will be identified by a code, assigned by grouping. The code S-1 will represent the first Supervising Social Worker interviewed. The code C-1 will represent the first Children Social Worker interviewed and the code H-1 will be the first Human Resource staff interviewed. The letters and numbers will follow sequentially.

5. I will confirm the interviewee comfort level and begin the interview by recording the date, time, location and code identifier of the session.

6. Each participant will be allowed the allotted time agreed upon for the session. The session will be extended only and the request or approval of the interviewee.

At the close of the interview, I will share my appreciation to each research participant for their time volunteering to partake in the study.

Appendix C: Letter of Cooperation

To fulfill the requirements for earning a doctoral degree, I am completing a qualitative research study. The focus of my research is to determine the need for effective motivational strategies to positively impact employees when a colleague voluntarily leaves an organization. I have chosen to focus my research on managers and leaders of a child protective services organization. I am requesting your employees' participation in the study. I will assign a code in place of your name, so the identity of the organization and the participants will remain confidential to my research committee and the names of the organization and participants will not appear in the published study.

Participation requires a 45-60-minute interview in person at a location of the participants' choosing or via telephone. The interviews will occur outside of work hours.

The participants will confirm their willingness to participate via email and I will send a consent form to review and sign prior to the interview. The participants' names will be coded for discussion of the findings in the published study. The organization's name will not appear in the published study.

Printed Name of Approver   _____

Date of Consent   _____

Approver's Signature   _____

Researcher's Signature   _____

Appendix D: Certificate of Completion

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Glenn Windom** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants."
Date of completion: 11/10/2012
Certification Number: 1045996