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Retaining Employees in a Higher Academic Institution During A Volatile Job Market

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RETAINING EMPLOYEES IN A HIGHER ACADEMIC INSTITUTION DURING A VOLATILE JOB MARKET

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Approval Page

This dissertation was submitted by Benjamin Elliott Novak under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Gardner-Webb University College of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the root cause of the increased rate of employee turnover at a higher educational institution and how to retain their current employees. The importance of this study was to help the educational institution reduce their employee turnover so they do not continue to struggle to find new talent to replace their former employees. The methodology that was utilized in this study was mixed methodology with a convergent design where both the quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously. The quantitative data was collected through an anonymous survey that utilized a 4-point Likert scale and open-ended questions for qualitative data collection. The participants chosen for this study were employees who worked in three different departments and had the highest employee turnover. A chi-square analysis was utilized to determine the significance of the quantitative data and if the responses occurred by chance or if there is a commonality regarding the responses between all participants. The key findings in this study showed more positive responses than negative. The majority of the participants had less than 5 years of experience. All the participants agreed they enjoyed their job and had good working relationships with their managers and colleagues. The responses that all participants disagreed on is they were not comfortable expressing themselves to management and did not get recognition for their achievements. The findings in this study supported similar studies that explained why employees chose to leave their employers and utilize strategies to retain their current employees.

Keywords: employee retention, higher education, consulting, resignation

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Throughout my life, I have always enjoyed going to school. I always liked most of my teachers and at some point, I figured I wanted to be one. I always thought of school as a way to make a difference and was always entertained when going to school and learning new knowledge and skills. After looking up to those teachers who inspired me, I decided to become a teacher myself.

I have always been an educator in multiple areas of my life, not just professionally but also informally by teaching my parents about topics I believe I am an expert in and playing school with my younger brother. Even though I knew the term management, I did not think of myself as a leader. The terms leader and teacher did not link together in my belief. Over the years of teaching in primary and secondary education, I had been told multiple times that I was a leader. I was the leader of the classroom. During the time I have spent in the DEOL program at Gardner-Webb, I learned that a leader is not just an individual who is a manager. Leaders can be managers, and they can be influencers, facilitators, and guides to all individuals. Due to the fact that I am a teacher and I influence and facilitate learning, I came to the realization that I am a leader.

Before I learned about leaders being influencers, facilitators, and guides, I only saw leaders as CEOs, managers, and other individuals who told followers and subordinates what task they needed to complete and the specifics of how to complete the task. After I reflected on what I learned about the characteristics of a leader, my interest peaked in how I can become a better leader in my current role.

Once I got into my first managerial position, I wanted to dig deeper into my career and determine the strengths and weaknesses I possess as a leader.

After being in the role of an adjunct instructor for almost 5 years, I became a leader of other instructors and teaching assistants. Becoming a leader was a huge learning curve for me even though I have been an instructor in the classroom at a handful of higher educational institutions. The biggest learning curve I had to learn to develop was what are the specific underlying problems that my followers were encountering. Even though I have faced problems such as instructor disagreements, below-average performances, and low recognition of their employees, sometimes I did not know how to handle those problems properly. These few examples were always difficult to handle since my leadership skills were at a minimum and I usually played the peacemaker and had the “I’ll fix it” attitude. For many employees of a team, the quick fix to solving many problems is to disconnect themselves from the team. At times, the disconnection from the team resulted in leaving permanently by resigning.

During my professional career, I was a follower and leader. While I was in both of those roles, I encountered multiple individuals who have resigned from their employment. Even though this is not atypical to organizations, it seems that sometimes employees may leave suddenly when they never have shown that they had any dismay against their employer. Some examples of why an individual resigns may be personal, frustration with the environment, lack of trust, no support from their team members and leaders, and the lack of potential to grow through their employer’s organization. Even though these examples may be the most obvious reasons for resignation, there most like were other underlying reasons that were not explained. What makes it the most challenging for leaders regarding resignations is when they have a significant number of employees resign in a short amount of time.

During my time as a leader, I have been through many training sessions with human resources, and resignation has always been a topic discussed. As a current leader, I wanted to do an investigation regarding why employees decide to resign and gain a better understanding of what the common reasons are for an employee's resignation. One way I conducted this project was to act as a consultant to investigate their excessive employee turnover and to obtain the root cause explanation for the excessive resignation. My overall goal for this project was to develop strategies and recommendations regarding how to reduce an organization's attrition rate and how to improve the organization to make it a place more attractive to its current employees and potential future employees.

Myself as a Leader

The concept of leadership can be difficult to grasp. When most individuals are asked "what is leadership," many may say it is someone who manages a group of individuals or followers. DuBrin (2016) defined leadership as inspiring confidence and support among individuals to obtain the goal of the organization. A misconception many believe about a leader is they are well-rounded and good at everything (Rath & Conchie, 2008); however, if one is good at everything, it would only create mediocrity (Rath & Conchie, 2008). With this said, every leader could use improvements, and all have their strengths and weaknesses.

My Current Leadership State

Just like any leader, I have strengths and weaknesses. Before I evaluated my leadership state, I was unable to know the strengths of my leadership. As a leader, I always wanted to create an image of myself where I did not seem overpowering, nor did I want to create an image to the team that the operation of my team is my way only and no deviation from that operation would be tolerated. With this being said, I needed to determine my specific characteristics and if I am making myself seem more of a weak leader and not holding myself up to leadership standard behaviors.

My leadership strengths include possessing a followership partner-based behavior, agreeableness, consistency, trust, self-secure, and commitment. My leadership weaknesses include conceptual skills, active listening, self-management, relationship management, and soliciting feedback.

Assessments to Determine My Leadership Skills

In order to determine these strengths and weaknesses, I took multiple surveys that give me a better understanding of these strengths and weaknesses. Each of these surveys gave some useful feedback. The following assessments were taken, and the feedback was based on the answers I provided.

Followership Assessment

The followership assessment allowed me to determine what type of follower I am based on my personal characteristics. The results of this assessment determined I fall into a pragmatic type of follower. A follower who is pragmatic falls in the middle between being an independent thinker and being actively engaging. This result explains my characteristic as a follower accurately.

The Clifton Strengths

This specific assessment determines where an individual can grow in their leadership role. The assessment is based on four different domains which have a variety of different themes in each. The four domains include strategic thinking, relationship building, influencing, and executing.

The themes that fall under strategic thinking include analytical, context, futuristic, ideation, input, intellection, learner, and strategic. Leaders who fall into this domain in their leadership style tend to keep the entire team focused on what needs to be achieved. They are usually analytical thinkers and help the team make the best decisions. With these characteristics, a strategic thinking leader tends to look at the future and prepare in advance.

The themes that fall under the relationship-building domain include adaptability, connectedness, developer, empathy, harmony, includer, individualization, positivity, and relator. Leaders who fall into this specific domain tend to be the adhesive that holds the entire team together. These leaders also tend to know how to create appropriate groups and organizations that are greater than the sum of their parts.

The themes that fall under the influencing domain include activator, command, communication, competition, maximizer, self-assurance, significance, and woo. Leaders who fall under this type of domain tend to be present at the moment and assertive. They do not want to be looked upon by their followers as being indecisive but are more conservative and achieve their goals.

The themes that fall under executing include achiever, arranger, belief, consistency, deliberative, discipline, focus, responsibility, and restorative. Leaders who fall under this type of domain tend to make things happen and do not ponder whether it is a good idea to do so.

The first result of the Clifton Strengths assessment claims that I am harmonious, which makes me avoid conflict but tend to be very agreeable with others. I agree with this outcome of the Clifton Strengths assessment since my personality is to be harmonious with the team, and I do not want any conflict between myself and my followers. I also find specialists that guide me toward the right solution. I do agree with this point as well since I tend to ask others for help and guidance on almost any decision I make.

The second result of the Clifton Strengths assessment says I am good at communication. This was not surprising; however, it seemed to be a little inconsistent with respect to other assessments I took. According to this result, I find it easy to put my thoughts into words. Based on what I know about myself, I am not sure if that is true. However, another part of this result claims that I engage others in conversation about anything.

SelfStir 360

The SelfStir 360 assessment is a tool for a leader to determine how they view themselves as a leader and how their followers and other leaders view the leader being assessed. The results of this assessment claim that I follow through with my commitments, I desire to learn from others, and I am motivated to continuously learn and professionally develop myself as a leader. The results from this specific assessment were expected since I do believe that in order to learn, it takes not just a leader teaching their followers but followers and other leaders teaching new techniques and strategies that can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the team’s operation.

The areas where I am weakest are having a clear idea of where I want to reach; following through with future plans and milestones; expressing myself clearly and effectively; and being aware of how my own biases, emotions, values, and beliefs impact my behavior. I do agree with many of these weaknesses, and when linking them to my leadership behavior, I can see how these weaknesses can make my leadership not as strong as it should be.

Interpersonal Communication Profile

The findings of the present assessment revealed a noteworthy area for improvement concerning my proficiency in active listening during interpersonal communication. This outcome carries particular significance as it challenges my preexisting perceptions of possessing adept listening skills. Contrary to my belief in being an attentive listener who genuinely values comprehending others' perspectives, concerns, and inquiries, the assessment outcomes suggest room for enhancement in this domain. While I actively seek clarification when necessary and employ summarization techniques to demonstrate understanding and address any potential misinterpretations, the assessment results lend credence to the notion that occasional tendencies to interrupt others during conversations and prematurely conclude their thoughts may undermine my overall listening efficacy.

Emotional Intelligence

The point of understanding emotional intelligence is to see how an individual's emotions can affect them. Bradberry and Greaves (2009) mentioned that emotions are based on five core feelings, which include happiness, sadness, anger, fear, and shame. It should be no surprise that all these feelings of emotions can affect how individuals react to situations; however, it is also important to understand why these specific reactions occur.

When assessing an individual's emotional intelligence, it is important to understand the four skills that are linked to these emotions. The four skills are divided into two competencies that include personal competency, which describes me, and social competency, which describes how others perceive me. Personal competency contains two subtopics, which include self-awareness and self-management. Social competency contains two subtopics, which include social awareness and relationship management.

According to the results of this assessment, my emotional intelligence is the lowest in relationship management and self-management. The results of this assessment were a little surprising because I always believed I had good relationship management with everyone with whom I interacted, whether they were a customer, student, or colleague. However, my scoring of self-management was not too surprising, since most of that falls under self-motivation, stress management, time management, and adaptability. Based on what I understand about myself, I do agree with the results claiming I am low on my emotional intelligence of struggling with stress, self-motivation, and time management.

Johari's Window

The Johari's Window assessment was the last assessment I took to determine my leadership style. The point of this specific assessment is to allow an individual to see four specific awareness qualities of themselves. The four awareness qualities of Johari's Window are openness, hidden, blindness, and unknown. Openness determines an individual's own conscious self-based on their behaviors, attitudes, motivations, and way of life. The hidden part is the area of ourselves that we know about but do not disclose to others. The blindness part is the areas we do not see about ourselves but others can see the most clearly. The unknown is the area where both others and I are unaware. Usually, many surprising unconscious characteristics and abilities are revealed. It is an area where the revealing of something that we did not know about ourselves is discovered.

Based on the results, I scored low on openness, and I have a large amount of unknown about myself. Even though I always saw myself as an individual who is open to almost everyone I know, I also know that as a leader, I do not always disclose important information to everyone. The purpose for why I have this behavior is that I am an individual who is not good at delivering bad news to any of my followers. Since I like a harmonious environment with others, I would prefer to not be open with everyone.

I do agree with the results that there is a lot about me that is unknown. This could be because as a leader and sometimes as a follower, my confidence in myself is not always high so that leads to me taking fewer risks. This lack of confidence and not being a risk taker has limited the amount of knowledge I have about myself.

Personal Leadership Development Plan

Once I gained an understanding of my current state, I developed a professional leadership development plan to show where I want to go to get to my desired state as a leader. The first part of my plan is my leadership development needs. Those needs include developing self-awareness in my leadership, becoming a more active listener, and learning how to gain skills for how to evaluate and give appropriate and transparent feedback. The first rationale for why these needs are appropriate to grow to my desired leadership state is because Johari's Window Model Assessment claims that I have a low amount of openness about myself, which has led to a low level of self-awareness. The second rationale for why these needs are appropriate to grow to my desired state is because of the results of the interpersonal communication profile assessment. This assessment claims that I need to improve my listening skills. The third rationale for why these specific needs are appropriate is due to the fact I avoid conflict. which is why I have a difficult time appropriately evaluating individuals and giving honest and transparent feedback.

Map to My Desired Leadership State

In order to obtain my desired leadership state, I drew up three goals, which include the objectives, resources, and time frame it will take to obtain the goal.

Goal 1. The first goal is to gain courage in giving direct feedback on strengths and weaknesses to my followers. The objectives in order to obtain this first goal are to get advice from other experienced managers, to practice evaluations on known colleagues, to be as specific as possible, and to give examples of strengths and weaknesses. The resources I need are training and tips on how to properly conduct evaluations and give feedback to others. The specific time frame to obtain this goal is 1 year.

Goal 2. The second goal is to improve my coaching skills to improve my active listening skills. The objectives I need to focus on to obtain this goal are to turn a mistake committed by a follower into a learning experience, ask my follower to give their view on their performance on a specific task, and ask them what I can do to help them succeed. The resource I need to obtain this goal is to reference other experts from books or talks about how to actively listen to followers. Additionally, I can take a professional development course on how to become an active learner. The time frame to obtain this goal is 2 years.

Goal 3. The third goal is to take my department to the next level to benefit my organization. The objectives I need to focus on to obtain this goal are to get the right people who want to help achieve my goal and get feedback and strategies from followers to help achieve the goal. The resources I would need to meet this goal are support from my supervisors and to obtain some possible monetary grants. The time frame to obtain this goal is 1 year.

Strategies to Improve My Leadership

In order to improve my leadership behavior, I need to determine some strategies I can utilize. One type of development I can start with is self-discipline. DuBrin (2016) claimed that any type of leadership development requires continuous self-monitoring in order to stay focused on their efforts and energy to obtain their goals. Over a period of time of evaluating myself, I would retake some assessments to determine if I have improved on any of my weaknesses.

Another type of development strategy I can couple with self-discipline is to work with a mentor. The mentor is “a more experienced person who develops a protégé’s abilities through tutoring, coaching, guidance, and emotional support” (DuBrin, 2016, p. 493). Utilizing a mentor can help keep me on track with my goals and self-improvement.

One last strategy I can utilize is participating in certain types of leadership development programs. Some examples DuBrin (2016) mentioned are feedback-intensive programs, skill-based programs, conceptual knowledge and awareness programs, socialization programs, and action learning programs. Considering the diversity of these programs, I would choose the one or ones that would give me the best strategies for improving my current leadership behavior.

My Leadership Styles

Participative Leader

When I lead in a participative leadership role, I tend to give my team members an option to express their feelings and keep an open mind. The style of a participative leader consists of listening to group members whom they lead and allowing team members to have input and make decisions on how the team can achieve their goals. DuBrin (2016) mentioned that as technology advances and organizations become more decentralized, it is important to allow team members who are on the front lines to be heard by their leader, especially if the leader is not an expert in specific duties that are required for the organization to function properly.

This definition of participative leadership defines my leadership style identically. I have always been a believer that my team members are what makes the team work effectively. I also know that as a leader; I am not an expert in everything. This is where I believe opinions and input from team members would be important.

Participative leaders can fall into three different subtypes of leadership styles. These subtypes include consultative, consensus, and democratic leaders (DuBrin, 2016). The subtype style I fall under as a participative leader is consultative. In consultative leadership, the leader tends to get input from those they manage. Additionally, they can be less authoritative since the specific type of leadership involves more team members making decisions to make their organization run more efficiently (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021). By understanding both descriptions of the consultative subtype of a participative leader, I can determine my best way of leading others.

During the times when I have led others on a team, I always have asked my team members to give some thought as to what type of changes we could make to allow our department to run smoothly. If I had an idea to make our team work more proficiently, I would give a few ideas and ask them which of the ideas could possibly work best for the team.

This specific leadership style I developed came from other teams I have worked with in previous organizations. I always had the belief that a leader should listen to their follower's concerns due to the fact they are the central part of the team's operation. Another reason I follow the participative leadership style is that I feel individual team members should be expected to perform their specific responsibilities by holding them accountable for their specific tasks. When a follower is given specific responsibilities by their leader, it teaches them discipline and to become an expert in their responsibilities. This can be one way to allow an individual who is a follower to become a leader since they can show self-discipline by being responsible and accountable and having the ability to train others on their expertise of a specific duty.

Servant Leader

A servant leader is an individual who tends to help others and does not lead based on their own self-interest. DuBrin (2016) mentioned that there are seven aspects of a servant, which include placing service of others before themselves, listening first to others, expressing confidence in others, inspiring trust by being trustworthy, focusing on what is feasible to accomplish, providing emotional healing, and acting as the role model for others in the organization.

When I lead as a servant leader, I tend to help and serve others in the organization. The largest number of individuals I serve are students, which means my goal as a leader is to make sure I am giving students the best learning experience they can get. I always have been trustworthy to others since I do follow ethics and morals. This is true since I usually am never being watched by other senior leaders in my organization. One last trait that I use as a servant leader is I try to give emotional healing to my followers since I feel that if someone has been hurt either physically or emotionally, I can be there for someone to be a sounding board.

DuBrin (2016) summarized that many individuals who act as servant leaders tend to feel their organization has a greater ethical environment. Based on this definition, I classify myself as having a servant leadership style since I always have a concern for all my employees' well-being to enable them to be efficient for the organization.

Followership

The term followership is not a new concept; however, many leaders and followers are not familiar with the term. Many individuals, when first introduced to followership, may define the term as an inverse of leadership. When defining a follower, the most popular answer would be an individual who follows a leader; in other words, those who are known as subordinates. However, followers can do more than just perform a task they are assigned to do.

There is more to being a follower than just performing tasks or jobs that are assigned by the leader. According to Rosenbach et al. (2012), "The most effective followers know that they cannot be fully effective unless they work with both a commitment to high performance and a commitment to developing effective relationships with colleagues (including their supervisor)" (p. 1). Rosenbach et al. continued by claiming that followers who effectively develop relationships with their colleagues and supervisors have the mindset of giving their best potential on every task and responsibility they are expected to perform. The outcome of a follower building effective relationships leads to developing trust of that individual among everyone on the team.

No matter what role an individual plays in an organization (formal or informal), everyone is a follower in certain situations. Curphy and Roellig (2011) used the hierarchy of an organization to demonstrate how everyone follows another individual. Some examples include first-line supervisors reporting to mid-level managers, mid-level managers reporting to vice presidents, and vice presidents reporting to CEOs. These specific examples support how everyone is a follower.

During my experience in being in a leadership role, I have viewed that any individual has the ability to grow into a leader. The best way I have grown into a leadership role was by being a follower first. During my experience as a follower, I was able to observe a leader’s characteristics and what makes someone a leader. Additionally, I was able to see how leaders differ in their specific styles when managing a team.

When I became a leader, I utilized my followership skills and put myself in my followers’ shoes, which helped me become a participative leader. In previous jobs, where I was a follower, I never thought of myself as a mentor to my leader. Most leaders and followers would agree that a follower’s job is to do what they are told in order for the team to succeed. During the previous years of being in a leadership role, I realized that a follower can be at so many levels. The best followers need to become a partner or contributor in order to assist the leader, the team, and the organization. The way a follower can be considered a partner or contributor to a team is they can assist their teams if they are needed to help fill in for others and additionally, they can help “pull their weight” in order for the team to succeed.

The concept of leadership can be a difficult concept to grasp. When most individuals are asked “what is leadership,” many may say it is someone who manages a group of individuals or followers. DuBrin (2016) defined leadership as “the ability to inspire confidence and support among the people who need to achieve organizational goals” (p. 2). A misconception many believe about a leader is they are well-rounded and good at everything (Rath & Conchie, 2008); however, if one is good at everything, it would only create mediocrity (Rath & Conchie, 2008). With this said, every leader could use improvements, and all have their strengths and weaknesses.

Project Manager

Before I began this project, I did an assessment regarding my strengths and weaknesses. Based on my research, project managers must have specific leadership characteristics that make them successful in completing a project.

Some specific skills of a project manager are they need to be knowledgeable, be organized, have the ability to build relationships, be an inspiration to others, and be forward-thinking. In order to determine which of these characteristics I am the strongest and which characteristics I need to improve, I took the Leadership Characteristics of a Project Manager.

Managers Assessment

The assessment results claim I am strong at being inspiring to others and building relationships. The areas where I need improvement are being organized and forward-thinking. I was a little surprised that I was strong at being an inspiring leader because I never viewed myself as an inspiring leader; however, I am not surprised that I had the strength of being able to build relationships. In my current leadership, I am an advocate for creating relationships between others, including students, followers, and colleagues. Kloppenborg et al. (2019) claimed that project managers and teams seek to develop strong working relationships with important stakeholders. These stakeholders can include internal and external individuals who are involved and benefit from the completion of the project.

With respect to my organizational skills, I do agree this is a characteristic I need to improve. After reading about the importance of possessing organizational skills as a project, I need to look at how I can become more organized. The results of the assessment explain that being organized as a project manager is important due to the fact that followers feel the most comfortable and trust those who are organized when completing a specific project.

The results that suggested I need to improve in forward-thinking skills were a little surprising. The reason this result was surprising to me is that I always viewed myself as one who plans for the future and unforeseen obstacles. The assessment claims that a project manager who is forward-thinking is about being open-minded to new possibilities, diverse ideas, and unconventional approaches to leading and managing others. Based on this specific information, I do agree that I do not utilize many unconventional approaches when leading others. Instead, I see myself as an individual who utilizes routine and habitual strategies when leading others and completing tasks. This specific characteristic does not allow me to “break out of my shell,” and those whom I lead may see me as an individual who is not specifically open-minded.

This new information I gained from taking the assessment will benefit me in two ways when conducting my consultancy project. First, it will help me understand the required characteristics of a successful project manager and where to continue to thrive in my strengths. Secondly, it will assist me in utilizing specific strategies for how to improve on the characteristics I may fall short of in my current leadership state.

Consulting

At some point in an organization's existence, leaders may feel a need to obtain some guidance with a problem where their in-house experts may not be able to pinpoint the actual cause. Even if an organization's expert may possess knowledge of how to handle a specific problem, they may still need the assistance of a consultant. Since this project focuses on determining the underlying reasons for employee retainment, it also is a way to understand why employees decide to resign in the first place. I had to understand the definition of a consultant and what characteristics I need to have to properly conduct this consulting project. A description of a consultant and how consulting works was done in order to determine how I got to my ultimate outcome of this project.

The most common description many individuals may use to define a consultant is one who provides advice and specializes in a specific problematic area. More times than not, consultants are used in an organization facing a problem; a consultant can be utilized by anyone who may need advice on a problem they may be experiencing.

Even though this description of a consultant is not incorrect, there is more to consulting than just advising a professional. Consultants have experience to solve problems that may not be visible to members of the organization.

An example of where a consultant may be beneficial to an organization is handling employee conflict that human resources may be struggling to solve. This may include behavior that may not be illegal but still causes a problem with the entire team or organization. Another area where a consultant may be beneficial is by assisting managers with operating their organization more effectively and efficiently. This could include how to prevent waste, engaging employees to be more productive, and keeping employees looking forward to coming to work. Another example where a consultant may benefit an organization is finding root causes that may not be obvious to their internal experts. Most likely, an organization's expert on how to handle personnel problems may not have a full understanding of the root cause of problems, and a consultant can help to find the problem and draw up recommendations on how to potentially solve the underlying problem.

Steps Taken When Conducting a Consultation

When an organization gets a consultant, they usually go through a 7-step framework. The 7-step framework from start to finish is as follows: defining a problem, determining the structure of the problem, prioritizing the issues, developing an issue analysis and an analysis plan, executing the analysis, synthesizing the findings, and developing recommendations from the outcomes for the organization with which they have partnered.

Step 1: Defining the Problem

When a consultant defines a problem, a consultant clearly explains to the management team the central theme they are facing. This is usually done by the consultant asking core questions that the management wants to be answered. Usually, a question that needs to be answered is understanding why something is occurring and how to fix it. Once this information is given, the consultant has a place to start in investigating the problem. A consultant will conduct research on similar problems other organizations have faced. One point to make regarding the research the consultant conducts is it is only a base point and not a concrete solution since all organizations are unique. This is why it is important for the consultant to determine the question that needs to be answered. One way this is done is to gain a general idea of how the organization is structured and if that reflects the structure of the specific problem.

The way I took this step as a consultant, I had to gather information from the human resource manager in order to determine what the problem was that they were experiencing; once I was informed of the problem, I did some research on other similar organizations and what they did to get to the root cause of their problem.

Step 2: Structure of the Specific Problem

After the problem is defined, a consultant will need to obtain background information regarding the structure of the organization and the specific problem the organization is experiencing.-A good tool for any consultant is the issue tree to determine the structure of the specific problem.

An issue tree is a diagram that helps team members of the organization identify key issues, discuss the issues, determine what is working and what is not working, and finally identify a potential solution to the problem (Kenny, 2023). When a consultant uses an issue tree, it allows the client to have a visual regarding how the question to the problem may be answered. The issue tree helps to determine if there is a pattern to solve the specific problem and if the organization’s structure is the root cause of the problem.

Step 3: Prioritize the Issues

Once a pattern is determined, the consultant will prioritize all concerns that potentially may be the root cause for the problem the organization is experiencing. The main goal of prioritizing the issues is to see what are the most important issues that need to be solved and in what specific order. Most times, the issue that is the most visible to everyone may not be the top priority issue to tackle first.

The most common way a consultant will prioritize the issues is by using the McKenzie Model. The McKenzie Model focuses on seven different components which can help determine which of the issues is the most important to tackle and how tackling the issue will positively affect each area of the organization. Of the seven components, two areas are divided into what is known as the hard S's and the soft S's. The hard S's include strategy, structure, and systems. These three S's focus more on the actual operation of the organization. The soft S's include staff, style, skills, and shared values. These four S's focus more along the lines of the actual person and their willingness to work together to achieve the organization's mission and vision.

The seven components are strategy, structure, systems, staff, skills, style, and shared values (Wayland & Wayland, 2015).

Strategy. When looking at strategy, the main point is to develop a plan or review a specific plan to stay competitive in the market. The strategy will need to be specific and concrete, which will have long-term benefits in the specific market they fall into. The caveat of the strategy is it needs to align with the other six components of the McKensie 7S Model.

Structure. The structure of an organization may seem obvious to many, but there are some points to be made aware of when determining the structure. The common way to determine an organization's structure is to observe and understand the makeup of the segments, departments, or divisions that make up the entire organization. Once those are determined, there has to be a defined purpose for each segment, and they all have their own specific responsibilities. This also will make each segment accountable for its own actions.

Systems. The systems of an organization may be viewed as daily operations. As this may be true, operations need a specific strategy or procedure to operate. An organization's system can also be a way to determine how it conducts business and it is what the management team needs to focus on.

Staff. The staff of an organization can define a couple of points about an organization. The first point is it can determine the culture of an organization. The second point is it can determine if they have the correct individuals performing the specific task required for organizational operation.

Skills. The skills part of the McKinsey Model determines the skills needed by each employee. Usually, this specific segment can determine if the organization has the correct individuals in its appropriate segment in the organization. This will be done by evaluating which individuals are competent and capable of performing their specific job well. Many times, then not, an organization may need to reevaluate what skills are needed when new changes occur. This may require current personnel to be placed in different segments of the organization, especially if they do not have the specific skills to successfully implement the new expected duties.

Style. The style of the McKinsey Model focuses on how the organization is managed by top-level managers, how they interact with everyone in the organization, and what actions they take. When the style of an organization is looked upon, the manager's behavior will need to be evaluated to see if the main problem could be at the top of the organization and not necessarily at the bottom of the organization.

Shared Values. The shared values of the McKensie Model can be viewed as the center of where all the other six components are connected. They are usually viewed as the standards that guide employee behavior and the actions an organization takes.

By determining each of these components of the McKensie Model, the consultant can objectively evaluate and compare the solutions for each issue.

Step 4: Analysis of the Problem and an Analysis Plan

After the problem and the issues are defined, an analysis of the problem and an analysis plan will be conducted. Usually, the problem analysis and analysis plan will consist of either interviewing others who may be part of the problem or distributing an anonymous survey. At times, both an interview and survey of individuals from whom the consultant wants to collect data may be appropriate, especially if there is an even split of the data, which is known as a bimodal distribution.

If an interview is conducted, usually it will consist of open-ended questions to gain a better understanding of how all individuals view the problem and issues that need to be solved. If a survey is conducted, usually it will include a Likert scale where those who volunteer to be polled will be required to give an opinion without being neutral. Even though many organizations give a neutral option (neither agree nor disagree) to choose from, that can make the problem more difficult to solve since many may not have the courage to give their honest opinion in a survey. More times than not, participants who choose the neutral opinion when responding to a question most likely disagree but may not feel it is appropriate to say anything negative about their employer or organization.

Step 5: Conduct Analyses

By the time the consultant gets to conducting their analysis, most of the information they need should have been obtained. The previous four steps are sometimes considered the preparatory steps for the consultant to analyze the data, which most likely will include the quantitative data obtained from surveys and qualitative data that usually included open-ended questions or interviews.

The main task when conducting the analysis is undertaking the groundwork to come up with suggestions and recommendations for the clients. When a consultant conducts their analysis, they may conduct some additional interviews, provide workshops for selected individuals or the entire organization, and research the organization's problem.

Step 6: Synthesize the Findings

During this step, a consultant will be analyzing all the data and findings from the investigations. The data and findings can be quantitative; qualitative; or mixed methodology, where both data collections are used. The best findings would include mixed methodology since it provides a quantitative analysis that gives numerical values from survey questions and a qualitative analysis that allows for data that are more descriptive in nature and can be a supplement to the quantitative values.

Regardless of what type of data is collected during an investigation, it helps the consultant and organization to obtain an answer to the problem statement. This most likely is done by utilizing a specific type of statistical analysis. The main reason a consultant may use this analysis to synthesize the findings is that it will help in determining the significance regarding which of the problems that were obtained in Step 3 (prioritizing the issues) were the root cause for the organization's challenge.

Step 7: Developing Recommendations

Once a consultant completes their investigation, the answer to the problem statement is determined, and recommendations will be made. The recommendations are given to the client based on the problem statement that was initially set by the client. The consultant's recommendations are based solely on conclusions and findings from the analysis. They will never be based on what a client wants to hear or the consultant's biases, but strictly on data and analysis of the data.

What Is a Project?

When the term project is heard, the most common thought is something that is a long-term task that has some deliverables. A better definition of a project is "a new, time-bound effort that has a definite beginning and a definite ending with several related and/or independent tasks to create a unique product or service" (Kloppenborg et al., 2019, p. 4). Many projects are conducted with constraints and help develop changes from the organization's current state and can develop potential outcomes that benefit the organization (Worsley & Worsley, 2018). Some organizations use each term, operation and project, interchangeably since many executives and managers feel their purpose for existing is a project.

After understanding the definition of a project, it is important to have an idea as to who is involved in creating the unique product or service. The most common individuals who are on a project team are stakeholders and project managers. Depending on where the project focuses, it will most likely include individuals who are part of the area focused. This could be a small number of individuals or everyone who is associated with the organization. Usually, if a project is contained in a specific area where the organization is facing the problem, the individuals who participate in the project would be concentrated in that specific area of the organization. If a project focuses on the entire organization, many of the front-line managers of each area of the organization would be included, and in some cases, all employees may be involved in the project.

Task Versus Project

The terms project and task are commonly used interchangeably, but depending on the specific action, that term may be incorrect. In other words, one may believe a specific task is a project and vice versa. It is easy to make this mistake since many tasks are seen as projects.

When an individual performs a task, it is an action that does not have a huge impact on the organization. The correct way to think of a task is that they are usually viewed as an organization’s general operations. These actions may only require an individual or a small team to obtain the expected outcome. Some examples of tasks may include filling orders, manufacturing custom goods, and providing special services for the customer or community.

On the other side, a project is a set of individual action chunks that have milestones and can have a huge impact on an organization. The ultimate goal of a project is to help improve an organization’s operation or to solve a prolonged problem.

One benefit an organization may obtain from a project is it may help the organization obtain a better public image such as rebranding, offering new goods and services, or creating a more social responsibility. Additionally, projects could allow an organization to become more innovative to obtain a competitive advantage. One last benefit an organization may obtain from a project is to help the organization review its ethical image. Many organizations may think their operations and actions are ethical but they are actually operating unethically.

Is This a Project?

Before I accepted a project charter, I had to determine if the problem the partnering organization needed to be solved was considered a project. I reviewed a series of questions regarding the problem that needed to be addressed and analyzed. The first question I had to review was to identify the specific resources I needed to help conduct the study. In my specific project, the resources included human resources identification of which specific groups were experiencing the highest turnover rates and obtaining emails of those individuals who could be potential participants in the study. The second question I needed to ask was the project's framework. In my case, I needed to decide what strategy I wanted to use in order to obtain information from the participants and how to keep their responses anonymous and confidential so they did not feel fearful of other responses to the questions that were being asked by me. The final question I needed to ask was what will be the time frame for this project. In this project, I estimated that it would take approximately 3 to 6 months with about 1-month check-ins to the organization's sponsor so they can know the progress. Approximately half of the time frame included creating a questionnaire that was generic across the board for each separate department, so the data collected from each participant had an equal chance of obtaining the same responses. The other half of the project's time frame included waiting for participant responses, which was a 3- to 4-week window, and analyzing the data to determine commonalities of each individual's responses.

Project Charter

Before I started my project, I made a project charter which provided the overall project's purpose and expected outcomes. The purpose of a project charter is to have an agreement and partnership between me and the educational institution. In my project charter, I had three individuals who were part of the charter. Those included the project host, project sponsor, and project manager. The team members on the charter included the project manager, the project sponsor, and the potential participants chosen for the study.

The other part of my project charter gave a short summary of the project. The project was to determine possible reasons why resignations are abnormally high in specific areas at the educational institution. The project focused on three specific departments which include nursing faculty, computer services, and the business office.

The potential participants included those who were part of the following departments of the organization: the business office personnel, the nursing faculty, and the information technology personnel. The reason these potential employees were chosen was because they were identified as the areas of the educational institution to examine for the reasons for the significant turnover.

The stakeholders included those the project will benefit from. The stakeholders who were identified for this project included the assistant to the president, human resources, the vice presidents of each department, and the president of the educational institution.

In order for this project to be successful, I needed some resources to allow me to conduct the project successfully. The most important resources were to obtain the emails of those identified potential participants. The second important resource I needed was a tool to create a questionnaire to collect my data.

The project deliverable I gave to the educational institution was a summary of the data to summarize how their employees felt about their current state of how they view the organization on a personal level and also on an overall organizational level.

Purpose of This Project

With my specific project, the organization may benefit from obtaining a better public image, especially since it is located in a small town compared to other organizations in the same area that are based in larger metropolitan cities.

The purpose of my research study is to focus on employee retention at an educational institution and the common reasons employees feel the need to resign from their current positions. The educational institution I partnered with has been struggling with retaining employees for many years in three specific areas of the college; however, they are not alone in struggling with employee retention. Employee retention seems to be a growing problem in all organizations and is not a recent problem with any organization.

There are three main types of turnover in any organization. Those three types are functional, dysfunctional, and avoidable turnover (Phillips & Gully, 2019). Even though employee turnover may be an indication that something is wrong with a specific organization, not all turnovers can be a problem. One example of good turnover is known as functional turnover.

With functional turnover, employees who are poor performers leave an organization or may be terminated by the employer (Phillips & Gully, 2019). Even though this turnover may seem like an organization is not trying to give their employees a chance to succeed with the organization, a term known as getting the right person on the right bus (Collins, 2001) could be a defense as to why this type of turnover is important to allow the organization to operate more efficiently; however, if an organization is experiencing more dysfunctional and avoidable turnover, that may be an indicator of an organization's poor performance, and a negative view from the community can develop with respect to that organization.

Functional Turnover

Functional turnover is when an organization can determine if it is making changes for the good of the organization, especially with a personnel problem. Most times, this type of turnover is classified when employees who perform poorly on the job are terminated. Most times, these terminations occur when there is a performance improvement plan. This type of turnover usually works in favor of the employer since they are terminating the employees who are not performing their expected duties and failing to meet their goals as an employee.

Dysfunctional Turnover

Dysfunctional turnover is when employees who are effective performers the organization would like to retain resign from an organization. This type of turnover can occur for various reasons, such as poor management, lack of recognition, low job satisfaction, and limited growth opportunities. Dysfunctional turnover can also have a negative impact on the morale and productivity of remaining employees. They may feel overworked or undervalued, which can lead to lower job satisfaction and decreased motivation. This can result in a decrease in the quality of work produced, leading to decreased efficiency and profitability.

Avoidable Turnover

Avoidable turnover is the most common resignation seen among organizations. Some reasons for avoidable turnover are low pay, job stress, and poor work-life balance (Phillips & Gully, 2019). Since most employees today are looking for better pay, lesser stress, and a better work-life balance, this has become even more of a problem than ever.

Employees are considered one of the biggest assets of any organization. The main reason for this is that they bring human capital in the form of labor that allows an organization to function. With this said, employees are considered an investment in an organization. Since employees are the backbone of an organization’s operation, high resignations of employees can be costly for all areas of an organization.

The operations of an organization are dependent on human capital. This is one of the most valuable investments the organization. If there is no human capital invested in an organization, they will not be able to exist. When an employee resigns, it can be costly due having to train new human capital to replace the employee who resigned.

Due to the fact that human capital is the largest investment an organization makes, it would be beneficial to understand why employees contemplate leaving their employers. There are many possible reasons why an employee may resign from their employers. The most common reason is due to an employee’s job satisfaction (Hassan et al., 2019; Sell & Cleal, 2011); however, other examples of employee resignations are frustration (Noranee et al., 2021) and human resource practices (Cherif, 2020; Noranee et al., 2021).

In the current job market, there are many open positions with a labor shortage to support an organization's operation and demands from its patrons. The phenomenon called “The Great Resignation” or “The Great Retirement” has been the sole explanation by many for the reason why organizations are experiencing labor shortages and increased turnover. According to Sull et al. (2022), over 40% of all employees were thinking of leaving their job and more than 24 million American employees resigned from their job between April and September 2021. With the significant number of individuals who have resigned, many employers want to understand why their employees are resigning and how to help prevent those still employed from leaving the organization.

What made me interested in tackling such a sensitive subject manifested from my previous experiences when I resigned from my previous employers. The experiences I faced when I resigned from previous employers were never easy decisions. Most times, I had to review the pros and cons of leaving one employer to work for another employer. After looking back at my previous resignations, I never was asked why I chose to leave. My belief as to why I was never asked is because it most likely was viewed as either for better pay or for growth opportunities. Since this is just my opinion based on my experience, I wanted to gain a better understanding from those who are planning or contemplating resigning from their employer.

Partnership

For my consultancy project, I worked with an educational institution that is experiencing turnover in specific areas that outside individuals would have viewed as having stability in their employee’s intention and staying long-term instead of resigning after a few years. The main goal of my research was to determine employee satisfaction and how the institution can retain its current employees so it is not another victim of the Great Resignation.

Over the past few years, the institution has seen three departments experiencing higher-than-normal turnover rates. Those departments are the information technology department, the nursing faculty, and the business office staff. Even though each of these departments may seem isolated from each other, they all are necessary to run the daily operations. With this said, it is important to help make the employees feel more valued in their contribution to the department and the institution.

Project Charter

My project is based on how an institution can retain employees during a volatile job market. The ultimate goal of the project is to gain an understanding as to why employees are resigning from these three specified sectors and determine a reason why the institution is suffering from higher-than-normal employee resignations.

The three areas of the institution that will be focused on are the nursing faculty, information technology, and the business office. The stakeholders who will benefit from this project are the president, the vice presidents, the human resources group, and everyone who has a dependency on these specific sectors of the institution. The project's purpose is to gain an understanding of the root cause of the significant turnover.

Organizational Context

Every organization has some structure, and understanding the uniqueness can be helpful when starting a consulting project. The purpose of understanding the organizational context helps give an understanding of why they exist in the first place. Additionally, understanding the mission and vision of the organization helps determine the ultimate goal of how they can benefit the local or national community.

For this specific project, I had to gain an understanding of why the educational institution exists and how it can benefit the community. Being that the educational institution is a state-supported and public entity, it has a few external impacts on the community, public businesses, and local independent businesses.

On the community level, the institution allows any individual from high school through adulthood who has the desire to further their education or take continuing education courses in order to increase their current knowledge in their specific occupation and also make them aware of new innovations they may need to know in order to further their career.

For local businesses, the institution partners with continuing education courses where they can bring an instructor to their organization or have employees be trained at one of their campuses in the area they serve. Utilizing community educational institutions has become a popular way to professionally develop individuals into skilled individuals. The main reason these educational institutions can help with professional development is that they have experts and sometimes consultants who can keep everyone up to date with the latest local and federal regulations, the latest technology that can make businesses run smoother, and new strategies that have been studied by these experts to keep everyone, both individuals and businesses, operating ethically and legally.

The college’s internal impact is its belief in hospitality for staff, students, and faculty. What this means is that the institution’s culture is to create an environment where everyone will feel welcome, no matter one’s background, culture, social status, disability, or any other characteristic that may make some feel unwelcome. The way the hospitality culture is done is that everyone from the upper management to the front-line workers is expected to be approachable and make students, staff, and faculty feel the institution is not just there to make money and serve the community, but to create a positive public image with which everyone is familiar.

This specific culture was developed by the previous president and has remained a characteristic of the college where everyone knows what it takes to fulfill its mission, vision, and purpose.

Values of the Educational Institution

The values of the educational institution include focusing on the community, valuing their employees, giving their students a high-quality education, being hospitable to everyone who is affiliated with the institution, and achieving student success.

The way the educational institution focuses is by collaborating with community partners who can help them plan, evaluate, and implement appropriate programs that reflect the needs of the local area and have their facilities accessible for public use.

The way the educational institution shows it values its employees is by encouraging them to grow in their personal and professional lives and by allowing them to attend professional development opportunities which can help them strengthen their mission.

The way the educational institution gives quality education to the students is by being committed to their high education standards, which are grounded using data analysis, assessment, and student achievements.

The way the educational institution demonstrates hospitality is by creating a positive experience for their students and employees that is exemplified by exceptional customer service, professionalism, and servant leadership.

Vision of the Educational Institution

The educational institution's vision is to be a prime educational resource for all residents of the county and surrounding area. The way it helps individuals in the community is to provide them with an education to achieve their goals and personal dreams. This vision just scratches the surface of their mission.

Mission of the Organization

The mission of the educational institution is to provide training and educational opportunities that can make a positive change in the lives of the local community. The mission statement's wording focuses on lifelong learning and preparation in the workforce. Going beyond the mission statement, the educational institution strengthens its mission through valuing its employees and encouraging their personal career, assessment, and professional development.

Organizational Analysis

In order to determine how an organization is operated, an organizational analysis is conducted. The importance of analyzing an organization is to identify and evaluate its strengths and weaknesses. Organizations have employees, operations, and specific cultures and environments which can define an organization. When I conducted the educational institution's analysis, I used the McKinsey 7S Model.

The reason for utilizing the McKinsey 7S Model to analyze an organization is it focuses on change management. One of the main reasons for utilizing this model is it is the most common tool consultants utilize when analyzing an organization's overall structure. Some studies have utilized the model (Nejad et al., 2015; Zavodny Pospisil &

Zavodna, 2022), and since the McKinsey 7S model is so broad, it can be used to evaluate every organization's structure (Zavodny Pospisil & Zavodna, 2022). The 7S's of the McKinsey Model used to determine an organization's structure include strategy, structure, system, shared values, skills, staff, and style.

Strategy

The strategy the educational institution utilizes allows individuals in the community an opportunity to expand their careers and gain knowledge of a new skill and allows high school-age students to obtain an associate's degree when they graduate with their high school diploma.

Structure

The structure of the educational institution is organized like any organization. The management starts at the top, which consists of the board of trustees. Their main duty is to see the growth of the institution. Below the board of trustees, is the president, who serves as the director of the whole institution. The next level below the president consists of various vice presidents, which represent different divisions. Some divisions include business operations, academic operations, facilities, information technology, and workforce development. Below the vice presidents of each division, there are deans of various departments. Some departments include continuing education, sciences, arts and humanities, technology, and skilled trade. Below the deans are the department heads who oversee the organization's instructors. Finally, the instructors, techs, and other employees help in the daily operations.

Systems

The institution is student-focused on giving a good quality education in order for students attending the institution to obtain a new skill they need to know in order to ultimately obtain an enjoyable career.

Shared Values

One of the shared values of the institution includes student success in gaining skills and graduating with a degree or certificate of their interest. The way this is accomplished is everyone directly involved with the academic's division tries to focus on student success through specific tools and services to give them confidence and success in their studies.

Another shared value includes having a welcoming environment for all students, faculty, and staff. The school has a motto that it shows hospitality to visitors, staff, and students. This motto was developed by one of the institution's presidents, which was believed would create a positive public image. The way hospitality is shown to anyone who comes to the institution is by immediately introducing new employees to the president, vice presidents, and deans.

Skills

Just like any organization, every staff and faculty needs a specific set of skills in order to work at the institution. The employees at this specific institution need to possess specific skills and education in each department in which they work. Some examples of skills that are needed include subject matter experts in specific educational materials such as science, math, nursing, and skilled trade.

Leadership skills is another skill that many need to have since the purpose of the institution is to give an education. One may think that leadership skills are just needed for those in a supervisory role; however, instructors can also be considered leaders since they teach their expertise of a subject.

Financial, accounting, and business administration skills are essential since it takes money to operate the institution. In this specific institution, there are multiple areas in which these skills are important. Some include grants, fundraising, accounts payable and receivable, and financial aid.

One last skill that is required is helping with everyday operations. Many of these skills may include maintenance, housekeeping, and food service personnel. Even though many of these skills may be looked upon as being less important operations, they are actually the backbone of the institution.

Staff

The staff are all professional, and everyone has a specific type of skill and specialty needed for the institution to operate successfully. Some examples of staff skills consist of technological knowledge, business and financing knowledge, and academic personnel including deans, department heads, and instructors.

Style

The institution is inclusive of all individuals, students, and staff to create a diverse workplace. The institution also believes that all departments are connected throughout the institution and are considered a team instead of separate entities from the others.

Significant Challenge

In this project, my goal was to determine some specific reasons why employees decide to leave the educational institution, especially in three separate departments that are viewed as being important for the institution to operate. Though organizations assume that employee resignation is common, it may not be the norm, especially when comparable organizations are not experiencing as high of a resignation rate. With this said, there may be an underlying cause that leaders are not aware of until they dig deeper into the problem. The only problem with digging deeper to determine a root cause is that it can make both management and employees uncomfortable.

The organization’s challenge is that it is experiencing high turnover in three specific groups at the organization. The organization was interested in determining why employee resignation was significantly higher compared to other departments. There were three departments I was asked by the educational institution to focus on for this project.

The first group that was chosen to study was the nursing faculty. The second group chosen to study was the business operations staff. The third group chosen was computer services. Even though these departments seem significantly different, they are parts of the institution that allow the college to function and to help it stand by its goal and vision for students to succeed.

The nursing department consists of nursing instructors who train students to become registered nurses. The department consists of instructors who need a minimum of a master’s degree in nursing to be allowed to teach and train future nurses at the institution. Due to the fact that nurses are currently needed at every medical facility, determining why nursing instructors are leaving the institution is important to gain an understanding of their satisfaction in their current position.

Business operations are important to the institution since they are needed for the overall operations of the organization. Business operations handle everything from accounts payable; accounts receivable; payroll; obtaining orders for all other departments, especially those in academics; and any other general administrative duties. Since business operations can be considered the central department for the entire organization, it is important to understand their concerns and how to keep those employees from leaving their duties in their department.

The computer services department can be considered the backbone of all technological activities. In every department, some type of technology is utilized. The technology used at the institution can be as simple as using basic computer programs and operating telephones and educational equipment. Since the computer services department has been experiencing high turnover, it would be beneficial to obtain an explanation regarding employees leaving the institution. Based on this information, this specific department would be the most crucial to learn how to keep their employees satisfied.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

In all research, it is important to start with assumptions to direct the study. The reason assumptions are important is that they help guide the study. The first purpose of assumptions is they are used for argumentation and to determine the type of research method that will be utilized (Nkwake, 2013). In this study, three assumptions were created to support the argument and method used.

The first assumption of the study is that every individual in each department who was chosen to participate would complete the study in its entirety. Since this study is based on voluntary participation, it may be difficult to reach this specific assumption.

The second assumption of this study is that every participant will give an honest opinion to each question without feeling fearful of being reprimanded by their manager or organization. This specific fear most likely will be the reason for the number of responses and answers of their honest opinions of the view of their leaders and the organization's current state.

The third assumption is that the utilization of both quantitative and qualitative data collection will give the best picture of the organization's problem. If this assumption was to be reached, it would be easier to develop the best recommendations on what strategies the educational institution can implement to lessen the significant employee turnover. This specific assumption is why the study's method consisted of mixed methodology.

Limitations

There were four limitations that were set to conduct the study: the size of the organization, the number of employees in the chosen groups, the willingness to complete a survey within a busy schedule, and how many participants felt comfortable taking a survey regarding a sensitive subject.

The limitation I came across in the study is the sample of individuals in each department had a small group of employees, which led to a small collection of data. This was the result that the chosen participants for the study had the opportunity to withdraw from the study before starting or completing the survey. This is what caused the reduced amount of data collected. With the low amount of data return, it may have caused a problem with coming up the with best concrete reason for the high turnover in the three different departments and may even be inconclusive.

Delimitations

The delimitations for this project are to study one organization to obtain a sample of data to compare the problem of the study and confirm if there are significant differences and similarities. The reason for the selection of the specific group members is because there seems to be a large number of employees who leave the organization and sometimes the longevity is limited.

The reason why the topic of employee retention is an interest to me is the fact that there has been a significant number of resignations over the past couple of years at all organizations worldwide. With many employees leaving their employers, it has led to a significantly lower number of employees at many organizations and has led to organizations operating less effectively.

Setting of the Institution

The location where the educational institution is located consists of the following demographics: 70% Caucasian, 15% Hispanic, and 15% Black. The educational institution is set in a community that can be classified as either a small city or a large town with a population of approximately 20,000. The community has a history of mostly blue collared workers with a large number of manufacturing employers.

Demographic Makeup of the Educational Institution

Based on observing the institution, I noticed most of the college was predominantly Caucasian. In my observation, I noticed just a handful of other staff and faculty who were of other ethnicities. The institution employs approximately 300 full-time staff and faculty members combined; the representation of minorities is extremely small.

Most of the cities where that institution is located are prominently Caucasian, which make up approximately 75% of the total population. Even though I did expect a large number of Caucasians in the educational institution, I did not expect diversity to be the root cause of the high attrition rate. The significance of this data shows that even though the educational institution practices diversity through its hospitable value, the majority of the employees tend to be of Caucasian ethnicity.

Even though ethnicity most likely may not play a large factor in employee satisfaction, it was worth being considered as a possibility. When observing the ethnical makeup at an educational institution, there could be a possibility of an indirect linkage to the significant employee turnover for the institution.

Audience

For this study, I hope I can contribute by expanding on information already known regarding why other institutions are seeing high employee turnover. This will be done by evaluating and analyzing the data obtained from this study by utilizing some of my methods to gain an understanding of why they are seeing decreased employee retention.

The individuals who may benefit from this study include but are not limited to presidents or CEOs, division or sector directors, department heads, and managers. Since many of these individuals are those who handle the personnel sector of an organization, this study may be beneficial to all these groups of individuals.

Research Questions

1. What are actions leaders and organizations can take in order to retain their current employees?
2. What are potential strategies leaders can use to keep their employees engaged in their current positions?

3. What are the common reasons for the increased employee resignation?

Hypothesis

For this study, I hypothesized that there were two significant reasons why employees leave the educational institution. My first significant reason is that employees feel there is a lack of growth in the organization. My second significant reason is employees feel that the management team does not understand the employee's contribution to the institution.

Conclusion

Based on the information in this chapter, it allowed me to understand who I am as a leader and project manager. I also learned what a consultant does and the correct steps I must take in order to determine the root cause of the problem an organization is experiencing. Being that the leadership styles I fall under are participative and servant leadership, this project is a good fit to practice and show these specific leadership styles.

This consultancy project utilized an action research strategy. This means that my research was based on a collection of data while trying to determine a root cause, draw a conclusion from the data, and link it to other studies that focused on similar organizations that are experiencing the same problem. Once a conclusion and the root causes were determined, some recommendations were suggested with a strategic plan to execute the suggestions.

After looking over other studies that conducted similar research, employee resignation is a problem that is an all-too-common problem among all organizations. Unfortunately, employee resignation is not something new. Some organizations' management teams may believe that employee resignations are part of the territory in operating their organization.

Since resignation seems to have become a larger problem recently, many organizations are taking the initiative to understand how they can obtain their current employees before they decide to resign.

Definition of Terms

Action Research

A form of practitioner research that helps solve a problem by engaging participants to help solve a practical problem (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Assumptions

Hypotheses that are made when conducting action research and are considered true until proven by the results collected.

Consulting

Providing professional or expert advice (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-a).

Continuing Education

Formal course studies for adult part-time learners (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-b).

Convergent Parallel Design

Taking both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis and comparing them or relating the two and interpreting them (Harvard Catalyst, n.d.).

Employee Turnover

The percentage of employees who leave an organization over a specified time period (i.e., annually).

Followership

The capacity or willingness to follow a leader (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-c).

Mixed Methodology

A research design that includes both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods.

Organizational Culture

Values that are shared among leaders and associates in an organization (Hitt et al., 2015).

Organizational Environment

A set of characteristics that describe the organization and distinguish it from other organizations within a given period of time that affect the employee's behavior (Satyendra, 2020).

Project Manager

An individual who understands the definition of a project and is required to complete it successfully through a set of tasks and distributes tasks to others (Kloppenborg et al., 2019).

Qualitative Research

A type of research that encompasses a variety of philosophical orientations and approaches (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Skilled Trade

A type of occupation that requires specific knowledge, skill set, or ability that is usually, but not limited to, hands-on jobs (McCann School of Business and Technology, 2023).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss my specific project and give a summary of what type of other peer-reviewed articles were researched and solved a similar problem. Specific themes and strategies were determined from the peer-reviewed articles and are summarized within the chapter. Additionally, I explain a SWOT analysis of the organization, project scheduling, resources needed, the timeline for the project, and any possible risks of the project that are ranked from high to low.

Consultancy Project

My consultancy project focused on how an educational institution can determine why turnover is occurring in the information technology team, the business office team, and the nursing faculty of an educational institution. The organization I partnered with is an educational institution. The current challenge it is experiencing is three separate departments are experiencing significantly higher resignations of personnel compared to other departments within the educational institution. This specific challenge has been an ongoing problem over the past 5 years. The significance of this challenge occurring over the last 5 years is that this problem has been occurring before all organizations encountered a national problem known as The Great Resignation.

In order to obtain more information about the educational institution's problem, I conducted the research with the following inquiry questions:

1. What are actions leaders and organizations can take in order to retain their current employees?
2. What are potential strategies leaders can use to keep their employees engaged

in their current positions?

3. What are the common reasons for the increased employee resignation?

Professional Literature Review

In order to gain a better understanding of why individuals decide to resign, I looked at a variety of different articles that conducted the same type of research presented in this project. Because employee retention is such a broad subject, my research focused on one specific employment sector that many would not think of as having high employee resignations. When I conducted my research, I focused on three common themes. The three themes I researched were culture and environment, compensation, and engagement of employees. Since this study is focused on three specific divisions in the educational institution, there is a possibility that each of these specific themes may weigh more or less behind the increased employee resignation.

Culture and Environment

Organizational culture and working environment is the first theme that was common in my literate review that explains the reason for high employee resignations. In any organization, management, leaders, and team members are the assets that keep it in operation. An organization’s culture creates the environment in which employees interact and can be a good indication of employee turnover (Hassan et al., 2019). Another reason why culture and environment are important to understand in employee turnover is it is the strongest predictor of employee turnover (Sull et al., 2022).

Some examples that culture and environment can have a negative impact on employees and cause them to resign include failure to promote diversity (Sull et al., 2022), abusive supervision (Rodwell et al., 2014), lack of talent recognition and employee appraisals (Amushila & Bussin, 2021), and unfair compensation rewards between different work environments in the same organization (Sell & Cleal, 2011).

Compensation

The second theme that was common in the literature review is the compensation employees earn in their current position and responsibilities. Even though compensation may not be the biggest explanation for excessive employee turnover, it can be a factor depending on the expertise of the employee. Even though compensation may not necessarily be the main reason for high employee turnover, it may affect how productive the employees perform. Jean et al. (2017) claimed that compensation has a direct determinant of an employee's productivity. Considering it takes employees to make an organization run, a lower compensation can have an indirect effect on how well the organization will operate.

One specific group of individuals who were studied among the literature focused on compensation of nursing instructors in higher educational institutions~~.~~ There is a shortage of nurses over the nation who are need in both clinical and educational sectors. In order to qualify to be a nursing instructor at a higher educational institution, a master's degree in nursing is required. Unfortunately, a nurse who has a master's degree is not as common compared to other nurses who may only have an associate's degree in nursing or a bachelors in nursing. This situation has made it very difficult for educational institutions to hire new nursing instructors and retain their current nursing staff.

Lane et al. (2010) conducted a study on how nurses who teach at a higher education institution were paid much lower than other professionals with the same level of education. Additionally, the amount of work nursing instructors put into being an instructor may not outweigh the other options available to them. Nursing faculty have the option to work at medical facilities where they can leave their shift at the end of the day and not bring additional work home with them, such as grading and evaluating student performance.

With all this said, it would make sense that the compensation of a nursing instructor would need to be reevaluated in order for the higher educational institutions to keep their current faculty and not lose them due solely to low compensation.

Another group that discusses compensation is information technology professionals, especially at educational institutions. It is no surprise that information technology has become the backbone of many organizations, whether they are private or public, in order to operate efficiently. However, over the years, many information technology professionals have found that the compensation of their job is not equal to the amount of work they do. The downfall to information technology professionals who work for many government-ran institutions is they may tend to get a lower compensation compared to private sectors. With this being said, it makes sense to have information technology professionals compensated for the appropriate workload they are expected to perform.

Engagement of Employees

The third theme that was found to be common within the literature was employee engagement with their job duties. Since employee satisfaction may require the need to keep them engaged, the management team needs to be aware of strategies for employee engagement. There are multiple strategies organizations can try to keep their employees feeling engaged. Crawford et al. (2010) mentioned that employees feel engaged in their job by feeling a sense of responsibility, receiving rewards and recognition, and having access to appropriate resources to conduct their job. Amushila and Bussin (2021) focused on talent management in order to keep employees engaged.

Even though engagement of employees can be a major cause for employee satisfaction, the business office would most likely be the major reason for employee satisfaction. Two of the most common examples of how business office employees may stay engaged in their department are potential career advancement and employee recognition. Since the business office has a variety of positions that are required for daily operations, it would make sense that the best way to motivate office staff is to give them a possibility but not a promise they can advance in the institution, which could lead to the staff feeling recognized for their contribution to the department.

This theme in this research is important since the world has been experiencing the phenomenon known as The Great Resignation. The problem with The Great Resignation is it has caused a shortage of employees in every organization, including ones that many have never seen before. One specific area that has been seeing a decrease in employee retention is educational institutions.

Summary

Based on my research of literature, these three themes are appropriate topics to focus on in order to address the questions I proposed for this project. My questions for my project are focused solely on employee retention; understanding how culture and environment, compensation, and employee motivation can provide a good explanation for The Great Resignation. Even though the organization I am analyzing is part of a state-supported institution, it can give an idea of how it can help retain its employees, especially if the common problem is not necessarily based solely on income.

Project Scheduling

Every project requires a schedule. The duration of each project is unique since not all projects will require the same number of activities. To understand what types of activities make up a project, it is important to consider the following characteristics: what are the beginning and ending points, what are the tangible outputs, is the scope of each activity understandable but not complex to micromanage, what is the cost to complete each activity, and can the activity be handled by one individual (Kloppenborg et al., 2019).

For this project, the following activities were required from start to finish. First, I had a kickoff meeting with the sponsor to explain the topic of interest. The next activity was to get an email list of potential participants. The third activity was to create the survey and get it approved by my advisor. The fourth activity was to send the anonymous survey link to each of the potential participants. The fifth activity was to collect and analyze the data. The sixth activity was to come up with recommendations for my sponsor and finally have a close-out meeting.

SWOT Analysis

In order for a leader to understand how well the organization is running, it is good to try some strategic planning. The main reason for strategic planning is it helps an organization develop a statement of goals and objectives (DuBrin, 2016). The best way for leaders to develop a strategic plan is to form a SWOT analysis (DuBrin, 2016). The acronym SWOT stands for (S)trengths, (W)eaknesses, (O)pportunities, and (T)hreats.

The strengths and weaknesses are internal portions of the analysis and what they can control within their organization. When looking at the organization's strengths, it helps them determine what are they doing already that is positive and how they stand out. When looking at the weaknesses, it determines what internal areas are having a negative impact on them.

The opportunities and threats are external portions of the analysis that the organization has no control over. These external portions of the SWOT analysis can be driven by other competitors that offer the same services and goods. The opportunities portion of the analysis determines many factors such as socioeconomic, political, environmental, and demographic factors (DuBrin, 2016). Opportunities allow an organization to see what areas can be changed or determine what new innovations can be obtained in order to keep a competitive edge.

The threats portion of the analysis is what negative aspects the organization is currently facing. Some of these negative impacts that need to be determined in the SWOT analysis are any specific obstacles they are facing, understanding what the other competitors are doing that makes them more attractive to clients, and any changes being made that can turn a threat into an opportunity or a strength.

For the educational institution I analyzed, I came up with the following SWOT analysis.

Strengths

- **Institution-wide**. The institution's strength is it operates in a hospitable and inclusive environment for all students and their employees. It is also the only community college in the county, which gives residents easy access to start a college career.

- **Computer services**. The strength of computer services is they are helpful to all staff and faculty. They try to get their service tickets completed as quickly as possible.
- **Nursing faculty.** The nursing faculty work well together in their department and have high standards and expectations for their students. They also just added a newly updated facility, which helps students get the best training when they go to their clinicals near the end of the program.
- **Business office.** The strengths of the business office are they are reliable at managing the general operations of the institution, and they are good at processing payroll and other employee reimbursements.

Weaknesses

- **Institution-wide.** The institution's weakness is the general student population is decreasing, which can also lead to discomfort for both employees and students. One other weakness is they are viewed by the community as being a college transfer educational institution, which means most students leave after most of their general education requirements are finished and transfer to a larger university.
- **Computer services.** The weakness of computer services is they do not always have the most up-to-date equipment to give the staff and faculty to perform their basic duties. This is due to their budget for new equipment being low.
- **Nursing facility.** Their recruitment for students is based on a point system, and in previous semesters, they would take the best-performing students. Due to enrollment and lower-performing student scores, their students may not

perform as well as expected.

- **Business office.** Does not have its own specific server, which should be a necessity for sensitive information such as employee payroll, accounts receivable, and accounts payable.

Opportunities

- **Institution-wide.** New businesses have chosen to operate in the local area, which means new potential apprentice opportunities between the institution and outside businesses. This could help increase student enrollment.
- **Computer services.** Have an opportunity to look into new technology to meet the requirements of training new students on the skills new local businesses are demanding. Even though the computer services budget is low at the current time, as more students are enrolled for new training for these new businesses, more funds will become available.
- **Nursing faculty.** One opportunity the nursing faculty has is the institution is looking at giving a monetary bonus to current nursing faculty since they have been identified as hard-to-find candidates. With this specific opportunity, the nursing faculty may be encouraged to stay at the educational institution longer due to the monetary incentive.
- **Business office.** The opportunity the business office has is they have access to potentially newer technology to conduct their daily operations such as payroll, student records, accounts receivable, and accounts payable. Additionally, these newer technologies are more secure, which gives better security for this sensitive information. Other similar educational institutions in the area near

this educational institution are utilizing these newer technologies. By utilizing these secure technologies, employees and students can put trust in the business office that their sensitive information is secure.

Threats

- **Institution-wide.** The students have multiple educational institutions to attend across the area, which can continuously decrease enrollment.
- **Computer services.** Do not have the best internet infrastructure, which may cause other businesses and students to leave to have access to the tools needed for their learning.
- **Nursing faculty.** Does not have a large student nursing passing rate; most recently, only a handful of students graduated from the program. This can lead students to go to other institutions that have better passing and completion rates
- **Business office.** Since their server is not separate from the other servers, it can cause harm for hackers obtaining sensitive information such as social security numbers, banking information, and accounts receivable.

SMART Goals

For this project, I came up with some SMART goals to guide the organization in how to successfully reach its goals. Since this project is based on employee retention and resignations, SMART goals would be an excellent strategy to draw up some of their personal goals. The acronym for SMART stands for specific, measurable, relevant, achievable, and time-bound.

- **Specific.** All SMART goals need to have a specific reason for the goal. It cannot be vague since the goal most likely will not be reached. For this project, the specific goal is to determine the underlying cause of why the separate three departments are experiencing higher-than-normal turnover.

- **Measurable.** A SMART goal needs to be measurable. For this project, the measurable part of this goal would be to measure the original turnover and survey the employees regarding the concerns they have, determine what changes need to be made, implement the changes, and measure the turnover to see if it decreased from the baseline.
- **Achievable.** A SMART goal has to be achievable, meaning it has to be realistic in order to be reached. In order to do this, it is important to make sure the appropriate resources are available to achieve the goal. For this specific project, many of the resources should already be available within their reach since most of this is only going to require a meeting with the management team and a type of survey program, which already exists since they already have given out surveys regarding other matters.
- **Relevant.** In order for a SMART goal to be relevant, it must be considered meaningful and align with the growth of the organization. When a goal is relevant, it will concentrate on what the organization wants to achieve. For this specific project, the institution needs to put its focus on retaining employees. As the institution reduces employee turnover, it will show significant growth and benefit.
- **Time-Bound.** When a goal is considered a SMART goal, it must be time-bound. This means there needs to be a deadline for when the goal should be

reached. The benefit of a goal being time-bound is it can be viewed as being urgent and will show the progression and initiative to reach the goal. For this project, the time-bound will be roughly 6 months to gain an understanding regarding what changes the organization can implement to reduce employee resignation.

Project Timeline

For my project timeline from start to finish, I followed this specific sequence of events.

1. Determine an appropriate project for the DEOL program over a 9-month period: August 2021 to April 2022.
2. Meet with the sponsor and have an introduction meeting: April 2022.
3. Create a survey and launch it to participants: June 2022.
4. Collect data and analyze the data: 12 months, July 2022 to May 2023.
5. Have a meeting with my sponsor and give them my recommendations by July 2023.

Communication Plan

During the planning phase of my consulting project, I developed a communication plan to give updates on my project's progress. Kloppenborg et al. (2019) mentioned that with any project, the team should create a communications management plan which considers stakeholder information desires and guides the project communications. The purpose of creating a project plan is that many projects may face challenges such as costs and schedule difficulties (Kloppenborg et al., 2019).

A project communication plan consists of four segments. Those segments include purpose, structure, method, and timing. The purpose segment explains the expectations of each project team member and helps make the correct decisions. Some examples of purposes can consist of authorization, direction setting, any additional information, and lessons learned. The structure segment allows for the project team to have a standard method of communicating. Kloppenborg et al. (2019) mentioned that if there is no existing organizational model for various communications, one can use a template that can make it easier than trying to create a new structure of communication. When determining the best structure for communication between project team members, it should be appropriate for the specific project. The method segment has a “push” or “pull” method to communicating. Kloppenborg et al. mentioned that project communications rely on push methods where communication is sent; however, if a pull method is utilized, it would consist of a posting either on paper or in an electronic form. Some examples of push methods include instant messaging, emails, or texting. Some examples of pull methods of communication include shared document files, blogs, or bulletin boards. One other method that can be utilized is interactive methods. Examples of interactive methods include telephone or videoconferencing and groupware. The timing segment consists of reminders of when specific communication should be done. Most timing communication would include the project’s life cycle, which would be needed at a project milestone, regularly scheduled meetings (weekly or monthly), and occasionally when a project team member is needed in an urgent situation.

For my specific project, I had a sponsor who was a faculty member at Gardner-Webb University. I also had a point of contact who was the assistant to the educational institution’s president. My role for the project was to be the project manager to make sure all tasks were being conducted in a timely manner. Based on the background information, I came up with the following communication plan for each of my stakeholders.

Communication Plan With My Project Host

Purpose. The purpose of the communication plan is to keep all stakeholders updated regarding the project's progression.

Structure. The structure of the communication plan is by email and phone calls. There will be check-in communications via phone once a month to update the sponsor on the progression of the project.

Method. The main communication method will be using email and telephone.

Timing. The first initial communication method was through a video conference call at the start of the project. Those on the call were my advisor, my sponsor, and the president of the organization. Throughout the project, I gave updates on the progress of the data collection and notified the parties if there were are any problems I encountered that may slow my progression of the data collection.

Risk Assessment

All projects tend to come with some type of risk, and each project team must understand and assume what type of risks they may face. Many individuals who want to determine the risks of a project most likely will find quite a few (Kloppenborg et al., 2019). There are three types of risks: low, medium, and high. For low risks, the impact would have minimal impact on the project. Medium risks are those that have moderate uncertainty and may have some potential impact on the progression of the project. High risks are those that can have a significant impact on the project's original plan that include but are not limited to project objectives, cost, resources, and timelines. One strategy that is recommended is to either mitigate the risk or have a contingency plan or alternative actions to keep the risks at a minimum.

Low Risk

The low risks for this project include minor technological problems with the tools being used to collect the data and a brief delay in responses from the potential participants.

Medium Risk

The medium risks include individuals who are unfamiliar with a new technology the participants are being asked to use for data collection and unclear expectations between the sponsor and me.

High Risk

The high risk that is possible for this project is a reporting of a potential cybersecurity risk since the project's data collection would be conducted on an outside program that is unfamiliar to the organization. One other risk is participants pushing back to participate due to potential fear, annoyance, or other emotions they may feel about participating in the project.

Project Resources and Budgeting

Resources Needed

In all projects, resources are required to conduct the specific tasks. The most common resources required for most projects include people, materials, tools, and equipment. For this project, it will require three important resources. The first resource I will need is people since they will be the participants in the project. The second resource is tools, which will include software and emails for all potential participants in the project. The third resource is equipment, which will be a computer device and internet connection to collect the data.

Potential Budget

Since all projects need resources, it is important to understand the cost of these resources and the cost of the participant who chooses to respond to the survey. The specific budget for this project is undetermined for a couple of reasons. The first reason is since the exact hourly pay rate for each participant is not known, this means that the cost of using some of the participant's time responding to the survey questions for the project is undetermined. The second reason it is undetermined is that all the equipment and tools that are required for the project are already at the institution, and the software is supplied by me, which means the exact cost for tools and equipment is undetermined as well.

Myself as a Researcher

My Strong Attributes as a Research

As a researcher, I approach each project with a sense of curiosity and a commitment to thorough exploration. I am driven by a passion for uncovering new insights and contributing to the body of knowledge in my field.

My approach to this research is theoretical and convergent. It gives a deep explanation of information to help understand the theoretical and practical frameworks that make up my work. In other research projects I have performed, I began by carefully defining the research question or problem, and then I designed a comprehensive methodology that enabled me to collect and analyze data in a systematic and objective strategy.

When I conduct research, I am attentive to the complex data I am collecting. This means I strive to identify patterns and connections that might lead to new insights or ideas. I am comfortable working with both quantitative and qualitative data and have a range of tools and techniques at my disposal for analyzing and interpreting data, including statistical and content analysis. Additionally, I also make connections from the content learned in my courses. This allows for supplemental support of my analysis as well as the conclusions I make.

One of my strengths as a researcher is my ability to communicate complex ideas and findings concisely. Whether I am writing a research paper, giving a presentation, or participating in a conference, I am always focused on making my work accessible and engaging for a broad audience. I believe that research is most valuable when it can be shared with others who share my interest in a specific topic. I am always looking for opportunities to collaborate with other researchers and share my work with the wider community.

I am committed to staying up to date with the latest developments and trends in my field, and I regularly attend conferences and occasionally read academic journals in my field to stay informed of new research and expanded research that has already been conducted. I have always had the belief that research is an ongoing process of discovery, like in this dissertation in practice. This is because I always want to learn from the work of others and to contribute my own ideas and perspectives to those involved in their studies.

As a researcher, I am passionate about using my skills and expertise to make a meaningful impact on the world. Whether I am working on a project that has direct practical applications or conducting research that advances our understanding of a particular phenomenon, I am always focused on the potential for my work to make a positive difference in people's lives.

The approach of my work as a researcher is with a sense of enthusiasm and purpose. I have a desire to uncover new insights and ideas, to communicate my findings clearly, and to contribute to the ongoing conversation in my field. Through my work, I hope to make a meaningful impact on the world and inspire others to pursue their own research with the same sense of curiosity and dedication.

My Weak Attributes as a Researcher

Even though I have all these positive attributes, I also see myself as being nonbiased since my background is in experimental research which can only be analyzed in a nonbiased way. I always have been an individual who seeks to obtain facts in order to draw conclusions on a specific problem without showing bias. Even though I saw myself as a nonbiased researcher as I was collecting my data, previous knowledge can still lead me to draw conclusions based more on my personal opinions. With this said, I do fall into being subjective when explaining my findings. When I am subjective in my findings, that turns me to have biased views when analyzing my data and drawing conclusions.

Even though subjectivity does not intentionally happen, it is seen in almost every type of observational research. All researchers have subjective views, which can develop opinions that differ from every other researcher. This in turn can produce false conclusions on any topic being studied.

In order to overcome my biased feelings about the data being collected, I utilized the facts and conducted appropriate analyses to draw conclusions, which prevented my subjective beliefs. Even though some of the questions I asked may have obvious responses, that is where most of the biased behavior would come from.

Myself as a Project Manager

When completing a project, a project manager is recommended to successfully complete the project. A project manager is an individual who is assigned by an organization to lead the team that is responsible for achieving the project objectives (Kloppenborg et al., 2019). The project manager has a variety of responsibilities to make sure the project results, scheduling, and budgeting are met. In order to be a successful project manager, there are five specific characteristics: leadership, planning, communication, handling the unknown, and creative thinking and problem-solving.

During my project, I played the role of a project manager to conduct an experiment, collect data, and determine if the findings support other factual reasonings that were found from similar studies. In this project, all five of the characteristics listed were required in order to be successful.

Before I began my project, I took the Characteristics of a Project assessment about myself to determine my strengths and weaknesses as a project manager and how to overcome those specific challenges. Of all five characteristics of a project manager, the assessment came up with the following strengths of a project manager:

1. Leadership and Communication. These two strengths were surprising since my mentality and personality are not fully mature. However, with the experience I have gained in my current leadership position, I do agree that I have developed some strategies for how to lead a follower. The communication characteristic score did not surprise me since communication

is a key necessity for anyone in a leadership role.

2. Planning and Creative Thinking. The weaknesses of falling short as a planner were a surprise to me since I always thought of myself and saw myself as a good planner since my personality always wanted to know each step of a task or project. Even though I think of myself as a good planner, I do agree that my planning may not always necessarily touch on handling uncertainty. The one characteristic I see about myself not planning for the unknown is I do tend to get agitated, but I try to overcome that agitation by regrouping my thoughts and obtaining ideas from others on how to handle the unknown situation that is occurring.

Once I identified my weaknesses as a project manager, I had to see where in my research I could learn how to improve on the weaknesses. My weaknesses as a researcher are not being as organized as I thought and possessing biases when drawing conclusions from the data I collected.

Theoretical Framework

In order to determine why individuals decide to resign from a position, there are specific theoretical frameworks that need to be looked at so an organization can learn how to keep their employees, especially those who are the most valuable to them.

The theoretical frameworks my research focused on were Herzberg's (1959) Two Factor Theory and Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs. The reason I chose these specific theoretical frameworks is that both focus on an individual's behavior. These two frameworks can explain why employees may feel threatened, fearful, or frustrated with the management and the organization's climate. Additionally, these frameworks explain human emotions and what they need in order to feel wanted, safe, and appreciated when performing their duties.

Herzberg's Two Factor Theory is a theory that has become "the most used, known and widely respected theories for explaining motivation and job satisfaction" (DeShields et al., 2005, p. 131). There are two sets of job satisfaction that support this theory. The first set are called satisfiers and motivators. These include intrinsic factors that are part of the job content and are largely administered by the employee. One explanation of a satisfier is being about to grow and achieve goals in their job. Another explanation is to determine the dissatisfiers of the employee and place in hygiene factors that can cause dissatisfaction when deficient (DeShields et al., 2005). Hygiene factors are the extrinsic factors that are under the control of the supervisor. A cause of the hygiene factor is the environment (DeShields et al., 2005).

Based on this knowledge, this theory is an appropriate framework for my consultancy project. Herzberg's Theory explains how retention takes both the employee and employer to have satisfaction and motivation in their job.

The reason for using Hertzberg as one of the theoretical frameworks for this project is because Hertzberg consists of two specific theories that keep employees feeling motivated. The motivators include achievements, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. The second factor is hygiene factors which include company policy, supervision, working relationships, working conditions, salary, and job security.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs "continues to be used as a means to assist in understanding human behavior" (Benson & Dundis, 2003, p. 316) and the

> model has been studied in various disciplines: in business, it is approached as a model for understanding motivation; in the social sciences including adult learning, psychology, sociology, and education, it is used as a model for understanding, the needs of individuals. (Benson & Dundis, 2003, p. 316)

This theory is linked to my project since the focus of my project is human behavior and motivation and what needs are not being met to make the employees feel like they can stay with their employer.

Overview

Figure 1

Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

Motivators	**Hygiene Factors**
Achievement	Company Policy
Recognition	Supervision
The Work Itself	Relationships
Responsibility	Work Conditions
Advancement	Salary
Growth	Security

Figure 2

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Self-Actualization (Highest Level)
Aesthetic
Cognitive
Esteem
Belonging and Love
Safety
Physiological (Lowest Level)

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research provides data that are descriptive in nature and does not include numerical values for explaining data. This type of methodology has a long history of being used in social science research, especially in management studies (Cassell et al., 2006). Since most social science research is based more on description instead of numerical data, it is an appropriate type of data in order to gain a better understanding of the research.

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research collects data that are numerical or measurable. Yoshikawa et al. (2008) explained that when quantitative research is mentioned in a study, it gives a numeric representation of the world. Even though numeric values may seem valuable, it does not explain the whole story. It possibly can help back up why a phenomenon is behaving in a specific way; it does not give a hard conclusion.

Utilization of Both Quantitative and Qualitative Research

In this project, both quantitative and qualitative research was utilized to gain an understanding of employee satisfaction. When quantitative research is used, it helps with deductive reasoning and in turn relies on experimental and survey responses. In other words, quantitative research is utilized to support hypotheses in most research projects. Since this project is more about action research, the data may not be concrete. In order to expand on the data, combining qualitative and quantitative research can give a degree of comprehensiveness which can be conducted in the form of open-ended questions or interviews.

Even though my methodology utilized both quantitative and qualitative research, the most successful information I was able to collect was the quantitative data. Since the quantitative data that were collected only required the participant to click on one of four options, it would make sense that the participants who took the survey were more comfortable choosing an answer instead of expressing their concerns about the subject of employee satisfaction. The qualitative research required participants to write something to express their satisfaction and concerns regarding their employer. With that being said, it was not surprising that the amount of data collected from the qualitative data was lower than the quantitative data.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the methodology of my study. I discuss each of the steps from approval of my topic to the final collection of my data. The steps include training to understand the legal regulations I had to follow to conduct research on human subjects, creating a consent form to document the human subjects who chose to volunteer in the project, distributing the survey, and finally how I collected and analyzed the data from the participants.

Steps to Perform Before Doing Research

CITI Training Program

Before any type of data is collected in an action research project, a researcher has to go through some training since the project uses human subjects for the study. The training program I used before collecting my data was the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). CITI is a common training tool for researchers, especially in academic research, healthcare institutions, and research organizations (CITI Program, 2023). Since this project focuses on individuals who are being asked personal questions regarding their employer, it is important to understand the most appropriate questions in order to make the subjects feel comfortable and know their responses will be anonymous and confidential.

International Review Board

Besides the CITI training, I had to go through a group of individuals who are part of the International Review Board (IRB). All organizations that receive federal funds and conduct research have their own IRB team. The main purpose of the IRB is to determine if a research project meets ethical and federal regulations (American Psychological Association, 2023). All the individuals who serve on the IRB committee have some experience in research and understand the legal and ethical aspects of research on human subjects (American Psychological Association, 2023).

Action Research

In all action research studies, a specific method needs to be utilized to find an answer to a specific problem. In this chapter, I focus on my methodology, what type of methodology I used, and why I used the specific method, and explain how I obtained the data to determine the root cause of the institution's reason for why it is seeing high resignations in the three specific groups that are struggling with employee retention.

For my methodology, I collected my data by distributing surveys to the three departments the organization asked me to focus on. The purpose of conducting surveys was to help me recruit employees who were interested in participating in the study and collect different types of data. Ponto (2015) mentioned that survey research is appropriate for either quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methodology.

For my research, I chose to do a mixed methodology study. Mixed methodology is used when a researcher tries to gain a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem by using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Additionally, mixed methodology is the best choice to use when answering a specific question to a problem that is complex and may require more than just quantitative or qualitative data. According to Ostland et al. (2011), "mixed methodology research is increasingly recognized as valuable, because it can potentially capitalize on the respective strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches" (p. 369). In other words, they can complement each other to determine if there are any significant differences or similarities between the numerical values and descriptive values in the data collected.

Study Design

For my consultancy project, I used mixed methods research in a convergent design. In a convergent design study method, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). I chose the specific study design for this project since it allowed me to get both quantitative and qualitative data collected simultaneously. Both data sets were compared with each other to see if there were similarities. Additionally, the qualitative data can be a supplemental explanation for the quantitative data.

Steps of Data Collection

1. A blast email was sent to the members of the different departments being analyzed. The email was sent using a blank carbon copy list of potential participants to ensure the confidentiality of those who were invited to complete the survey.
2. A survey consisted of open-ended and multiple-choice questions. The questions were the same in each survey, but each survey was given out to different groups to determine the number of participants who chose to answer.
3. A blast email was sent to the members of the different departments being analyzed. The email was sent using blind carbon copy to ensure confidentiality. The email included a link to a Qualtrics® survey. The link took the participants to the specific survey to which the group was assigned. The participants who completed the surveys did not have their names

attached, which provided another layer of confidentiality from the research. The confidential letter in the email explained the point of the study was to gain a better understanding of employee satisfaction in their specific department. The participants were reassured that their responses were confidential, there was no pay given to participate, and they were able to withdraw from the survey at any time without any penalty. The voluntary consent of the participant was given if they chose to click on the link that was found in the email.

4. The participants took the anonymous survey online in order to keep all responses confidential.

Quantitative Data Collection

For any quantitative data collection, statistical analysis was utilized to describe, organize, and interpret the data (Salkind, 2016). I utilized descriptive statistics to analyze my data since these types of statistics are used to organize and describe the characteristics of my data which focus on the mode and mean of data (Salkind, 2016). Since I collected data on the Likert scale, I concentrated on the mode to determine which of the four options of each question was the most commonly chosen response.

The tool I utilized for my consultancy project for quantitative data collection is a survey. Merriam and Tisdale (2016) discussed how censuses, interviews, and opinions are good examples of giving interviews and obtaining data that are based on opinion. Six types of questions are appropriate for surveys: experience and behavior questions, opinion and value questions, feeling questions, knowledge questions, sensory questions, and background and demographic questions (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). My survey covered all those types of questions to obtain a good variety of data.

Likert Scale

The Likert scale was developed by Rensis Likert in 1932 and is commonly used as a psychometric tool for measuring participant opinions and perceptions (Likert, 1932). The scale provides a specific format for those participants to express their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements or items (Carifio & Perla, 2008). The most common fields of study where the Likert scale is used are psychology, sociology, education, marketing, and healthcare.

The quantitative survey I used in this project was a 4-choice Likert scale. This scale is one of the most common measurement methods when collecting psychological data instead of performing face-to-face interviews (Jebb et al., 2021). Additionally, it proves a convenient way to measure unobservable behavior (Jebb et al., 2021). The survey was based on a 1 to 4 ranking, where 1 represents strongly disagree and 4 represents strongly agree. The neither agree nor disagree option was eliminated in the quantitative collection. Eliminating the neither agree nor disagree option required an individual to give an honest opinion regarding their satisfaction with their employer and not just voice a neutral opinion.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) mentioned that no matter “the type of research, validity, and reliability are concerns that can be approached through careful attention to a study’s conceptualization and the way in which findings are presented” (p. 238). This means that in order to determine whether or not my survey was an appropriate tool, I had to check its validity and reliability. Royse et al. (2016) mentioned that a questionnaire would be considered reliable if it consistently and dependently measures some concept when an instrument closely corresponds to the concept it was designed to measure.

The first two questions of the survey had demographic questions which accounted for gender and ranges of years the participant was at the organization. The reason for collecting this type of data is to determine if gender and years of service may play a role in the data outcome with respect to job satisfaction. Even though the possibility is minimal, there may be a possibility that years of service and specific genders may play a role in employee satisfaction. The questions in the survey to collect the demographic data were as follows:

1. What is your gender?
2. How many years have you been at your organization?

To collect the quantitative data from the survey, I asked the participants to rate the following questions from strongly disagree to strongly agree. When the survey was created, the neither agree nor disagree option was deleted from the survey questionnaire to prevent neutral responses. Since the purpose of this study was to collect the opinions of how the current employees feel about specific areas of their position, concrete answers may help develop appropriate recommendations. The following questions were asked to obtain the quantitative data:

3. My manager and I have a good working relationship.
4. I have a good working relationship with my co-workers and team members.
5. I feel I can express my concerns to my management team.
6. I look forward to coming to work.
7. I enjoy my job.
8. The management recognizes my contributions to the organization.

9. I feel challenged in my current job.
10. I have a chance to grow throughout this organization.
11. I am satisfied with the compensation and benefits at this organization.
12. I have a good work-life balance.
13. I can see myself staying with this organization until I retire.

Qualitative Data Collection

The purpose of utilizing qualitative research is it "produces copious amounts of data, most commonly in the form of textual records from interviews, focus groups, and/or fieldwork" (Weckesser & Denny, 2020, p. 1). Additionally, Royse et. al (2016) claimed that qualitative data can possibly reveal dissatisfaction, while quantitative data can reveal satisfaction. My qualitative data were collected using open-ended questions that could reveal the reasons behind employee dissatisfaction with the organization.

Zhou et al. (2017) mentioned that other studies claim that if an employee gives lower ratings in their close-ended questions, in this case, the quantitative data, employees tend to express their dissatisfaction in the open-ended questions and sometimes can give longer responses versus those who are satisfied. The open-ended questions focused on four different areas that are common for employee dissatisfaction which include employee motivation, why an employee is either satisfied or dissatisfied with their job, how their organization can improve their public image, and weaknesses of communication.

The tool I utilized to create the open-ended questions on the survey is a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis system called Qualtrics®. The program sent out the surveys in a double-blind study, which allows the participants to keep their answers anonymous and unidentifiable.

It is important for the responses to be anonymous and unidentifiable as it will ease the fears of retaliation or grudges that may manifest from the employee's management team. Additionally, the open-ended questions will allow individuals a chance to voice their opinions regarding any suggestions or problems they observe in their department.

To collect the qualitative data from the survey, I asked the participants the following open-ended questions:

14. What is one change that the educational institution could make in order for you to feel more motivated in your job?
15. Why do you enjoy working at the educational institution or why not?
16. What is one way that the educational institution could help create a better image of itself?
17. What is one way that the communication process at the educational institution could be improved?

Steps in Data Analysis

After my survey data were collected, I had to determine if there was any significance in the participants' responses. The first step I had to take was to determine the statistical mode value of each selected option. The mode is also known as the value that is repeated the most, or the most common value. Even though the mode may seem like a vague analysis, it can be beneficial to see if there was any commonality in the choices that were given by each individual who participated in the survey.

The second step I had to take for analyzing my data was to calculate the chi-square. The importance of using chi-square is to see if my data support or reject my hypothesis based on the distribution of each response to each question. Since there were multiple questions, the participants were asked to respond to, some of the questions asked could have a lesser or greater significance in determining why individuals may decide to leave their employer. The way chi-square helps support my data is based on whether the data collected has significance it occurred by chance or if there is a commonality in how each individual responds to each question.

Due to the fact that my data were collected over three different departments, the determination of significance is even more important for two specific reasons: One is to see if employee satisfaction is different among each department, and the other is to see if the satisfaction is based on an institution-wide problem.

To calculate the chi-square, I utilized Microsoft ® Excel. Once I calculated the chi-square, I used that value to determine the *p* value. The purpose of the *p* value is to determine whether or not the data collected in the quantitative research occurred statistically by chance, or if there is significance in some of the responses. This is specifically important if the responses are more common with all the participants in each department.

In order for a data set to be considered statistically significant, the *p* value has to fall under 5%, which is usually denoted as $p<0.05$. If the data set's *p* value is greater than 0.05, it means the data are not statistically significant and just occurred by chance. When the *p* value is not statistically significant, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The null hypothesis is a statement or assumption that is made in statistical hypothesis testing. It is a hypothesis that suggests there is no significant difference or relationship between variables or factors being studied. In my specific study, I am assuming three different hypotheses, one for each department.

Computer Services Null Hypothesis

My null hypothesis regarding why employees leave the computer services department is based on the literature, which is they resign due to compensation since the trend for information technology professionals has been declining. Additionally, since most information technology can be conducted remotely, their job does not end when their workday ends.

Nursing Faculty Null Hypothesis

My null hypothesis regarding why nursing faculty leave the institution is also based on the literature research, which is they resign from the institution due to the lower wages and a large workload. Most of the literature does seem to point to the satisfaction of wages earned; however, from my understanding of nursing faculty, their job does not end when they finish classes. There are also other administrative duties such as advising and evaluation of student performance which can add more than a nurse would do if they were in the medical sector.

Business Office Null Hypothesis

My null hypothesis regarding why business office employees leave was based on my literature research. The most common reason why employees in the business office leave is their management and the environment they create.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained the methods I used to correctly conduct my research in a moral and legal way. I also explained my survey questions and the type of research used, which was a convergent method where the survey consisted of both qualitative and quantitative data collected. I explained the statistical analysis to determine any common responses and if there was any significance in the data. The statistical analysis determined whether or not I would accept or reject my hypothesis.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the results and how I analyzed the data to help develop recommendations that educational institutions can implement to potentially reduce their employee turnover. The purpose of analyzing the data is to see if the responses were statistically significant, meaning the results obtained were not obtained by chance from each individual and department. If this were to occur, the reasons for resignation could be a problem with the organization as a whole. However, if the responses occur randomly, it could mean either an individual was not being truly honest when answering the question or there was a different underlying cause in each department.

Data From Survey

The amount of data I collected was limited. Even with the collection being limited, I was able to obtain at least one response from each of the departments analyzed. The three departments that were studied showed some commonalities in their responses. The data that were collected from each department are explained below.

Analysis of Computer Services Data

For computer services, I received one response to the survey. Based on the survey responses for the first two questions, the participant identified his gender as male, and he had been at the educational institution for less than 5 years. This seems to show that the individual who has been at the institution for a short amount of time has some high opinions, both positive and negative, regarding his current job position. Since the individual is new to the organization, he may also be able to see the current status of the organization better than the employees who have been at the organization longer. He could be considered a fresh pair of eyes observing the organization's current state.

For Questions 3 and 4 of the quantitative analysis, the participant's response is he agrees that he has a good working relationship with the manager and the other members of the department. These first couple of points show that the reason for the high turnover does not seem to be the institution's environment or his direct supervisor.

For Question 5, the participant's response is he disagrees that he can express his feelings to his manager. Even though this response may not be the root cause of the high turnover in this department, it is something to look into considering expressing an individual's concerns and feelings is something that employees feel comfortable doing without being reprimanded or feeling ignored. This response shows that the management in this department is viewed as more apathetic instead of empathetic, which can cause a potentially toxic culture against the manager.

For Question 6, the participant agrees that he enjoys his current role at the institution. For Question 7, the participant agrees that he feels challenged in his current role in the computer services department. None of these responses point to any reason why there is a problem with employee resignation in the department.

For Question 8, the participant's response is he disagrees that the management of the department does not recognize his contributions in his current role. With this specific response from the participant, it may show that there is a problem with the management system especially when recognizing the role the employee plays.

For Question 9, the participant's response is he strongly agrees that he is challenged in his current role. This response seems to show that he has an opportunity in growing in his position in the department.

For Question 10, the participant disagrees that he has the opportunity to grow within the institution. This response may link to the response that the management does not recognize his contributions to the department and may also have the belief that he cannot grow in his career.

For Question 11, the participant disagrees that he is satisfied with the compensation and benefits the institution offers. This response is most likely out of the organization's control since it is a government-run institution. Even though the compensation the organization offers the participant is less than ideal, many other professionals who work in information technology, are seeing a pay trend that is decreasing.

For Question 12, the participant strongly disagrees that he has a good work-life balance. This response shows that the participant must be focusing more on work-related activities and less on family and personal life activities.

For Question 13, the participant strongly disagrees that he sees himself staying at the institution until he retires. This specific response can be a link that he disagrees that he can see himself growing his career at the institution.

Questions 14-17 were the open-ended questions that allowed me to compare and contrast the quantitative data. The response from the participant gave better insight as to how he felt in his current role at the institution. The 14th question asked, "What is one change that the institution could make in order for you to feel more motivated in your job?" The response the participant gave was, "If everyone would do 50% of what is required, it would prevent 90% of the work falling on a few individuals." This specific response seems to now be pointing to the management team and that individuals at the institution are being overlooked for what they contribute to the organization. The 15th question asked, “Why or why not do you enjoy working at the institution?” The response given was,

> At this point, it’s a means to an end. I need a job. There is a void in upper management and the infighting will start with the retirement of the president. I’ve seen it before when he was ill and out for a period of time.

With this response, the participant has seen a lot of disorganization of the upper management over the short time he has been working at the institution, and it seems that the problems significantly worsened when the president was absent due to personal reasons. The 16th question asked, “What is one way that the educational institution could help create a better image of themselves?” No response was given to the question. The 17th question asked, “What is one way that the communication process at the educational institution could be improved?” No response was given to this question either.

Based on the responses to the open-ended questions and connecting them to the quantitative responses, the root cause for the high turnover in the computer services department most likely is the manager of the department but seems to also spread outside the department. This could explain why this specific department has had such a high turnover rate over the past 5 years. Based on the information provided from the previous open-ended questions, the participant either had nothing else to comment on regarding the last two questions or it could be possible that he felt uncomfortable expressing any more opinions regarding his job satisfaction. See Appendix A for a summary of the responses of the business office.

Responses to Each Question for Computer Services.

Question 1: What is your gender?

Answer: Male

Question 2: How many years of service have you been at your organization?

Answer: Less Than 5 Years

Question 3: My manager and I have a good working relationship.

Answer: Agree

Question 4: I have a good working relationship with my co-workers and team members.

Answer: Agree

Question 5: I feel I can express my concerns with my management team.

Answer: Disagree

Question 6: I look forward to coming to work.

Answer: Agree

Question 7: I enjoy my job.

Answer: Agree

Question 8: The management team recognizes my contributions to the organization.

Answer: Disagree

Question 9: I feel challenged in my current job.

Answer: Strongly Agree

Question 10: I have a chance at growing throughout this organization.

Answer: Disagree

Question 11: I am satisfied with the compensation and benefits at this organization.

Answer: Disagree

Question 12: I have a good work-life balance.

Answer: Strongly Disagree

Question 13: I can see myself staying with the organization until I retire.

Answer: Strongly Disagree

Question 14: What is one change that the educational institution could make in order for you to feel more motivated in your job?

Answer: If everyone would do 50% of what is required, it would prevent 90% of the work falling on a few individuals.

Question 15: Why do you enjoy working at the educational institution or why not?

Answer: At this point, it's a means to an end. I need a job. There is a void in upper management and the infighting will start with the retirement of the president. I've seen it before when he was ill and out for a period of time.

Question 16: What is one way that the educational institution could help create a better image of itself?

Answer: No Response

Question 17: What is one way that the communication process at the educational institution could be improved?

Answer: No Response.

Analysis of Nursing Faculty Data

For the nursing faculty, I received only one response to the survey. Question 1 asked, “What is your gender,” and the participant claimed to be female. Question 2 asked how many years she had been with the institution, and her response was less than 5 years.

For Question 3, the participant agrees that both she and her manager had a good reworking relationship. For Question 4, the participant also agrees that both she and her coworkers have a good working relationship. These two specific answers show that the organization’s work environment is not a main problem for the high turnover.

For Question 5, the participant disagrees that she can express her concerns to her management team. This response can be concerning considering the management should listen to its employees’ concerns.

For Question 6, the participant agrees that she looks forward to coming to work. For Question 7, the participant also agrees that she enjoys her job. These two responses are good to know since the underlying problem for the high turnover in the nursing faculty is not based on the work environment.

For the eighth question, the participant agrees that the manager of the department does recognize her contribution to the organization. This answer is also good to observe since most times employees leave due to not being recognized for the contributions they make to the department.

For Question 9, the participant disagrees that she feels challenged by her current job. This can be a little concerning since many employees tend to stay at an organization where they can grow and develop their current skills.

For Question 10, the participant strongly disagrees that she has a chance to grow throughout the institution. This response could be concerning since the participant feels she does not have the opportunity to grow into her employer.

For Question 11, the participant agrees she is satisfied with the compensation and benefits of the organization. This is actually a little surprising since in some of the literature I read, many nursing faculty feel they are underpaid for what they do as a nursing faculty member. However, since this is a state-run institution, the participant may be aware that the pay is based on the state's budget for instructors.

For Question 12, the participant disagrees she has a good work-life balance. This is not too surprising since many faculty tend to continue to work even when their workday is finished.

For Question 13, the participant agrees she can see herself staying with the institution until she retires. This is a good response to hear since many institutions find it difficult to keep nursing faculty at many higher education institutions due to a variety of factors.

For Questions 14-17, the participant was asked to answer some open-ended questions to allow her to express her opinions about the overall organization. For Question 14, the participant was asked, "What is one change that the educational institution could make in order for you to feel more motivated in your job?" The response received from the participants was, "The individual 'wins' be celebrated and not seen as a competition." This response is interesting since it seems that the participant sees that when an important task is accomplished by an individual or team, it is not recognized by management. However, the management team only sees the team members as being in competition with each other. This response could show that the department is being steered toward a toxic environment.

For Question 15, the participant was asked, “Why or why not do they enjoy working at this educational institution?” The response I received was, “One thing I do not like is the lack of transparency in some areas.” This response may be pointing out that the management is not being open towards its employees, especially if it concerns the individual, team, or even the overall institution. With the lack of transparency, it can lead individuals to uncertainty. This can then make employees feel insecure about the future of their current position.

For Question 16, the participant was asked, “What is one way that the educational institution can help create a better image of themselves?” The response I received was, “Changes in the marketing department would help. I think they have started to make changes.” This specific response did not give any specificities on what changes the marketing department should make, so this makes it difficult to determine if this response has anything else to do with the excessive employee turnover.

For Question 17, the participant was asked, “What is one way that the communication process at the education institution could be improved?” The response I received from the participant was, “Student complaints be brought to the attention of an instruction before ‘inquiries’ are made, regardless of substantiated or not.” This response seems to be a concern that communication is not being fully utilized between administration and faculty, specifically if a complaint is brought to them regarding a student problem. The chain of command does not seem to be followed, which can lead to some frustration from employees. See Appendix B for a summary of the responses of the nursing faculty.

Responses to Each Question for Nursing Faculty.

Question 1: What is your gender?

Answer: Female

Question 2: How many years have you been at your organization?

Answer: Less than 5 years.

Question 3: My manager and I have a good working relationship.

Answer: Agree

Question 4: I have a good working relationship with my co-workers and team members.

Answer: Agree

Question 5: I feel I can express my concerns with my management team.

Answer: Disagree

Question 6: I look forward to coming to work.

Answer: Agree

Question 7: I enjoy my job.

Answer: Agree

Question 8: The management recognizes my contribution to the organization.

Answer: Agree

Question 9: I feel challenged in my current job.

Answer: Disagree

Question 10: I have a chance at growing throughout this organization.

Answer: Strongly Disagree

Question 11: I am satisfied with the compensation and benefits at this organization.

Answer: Agree

Question 12: I have a good work-life balance.

Answer: Disagree

Question 13: I can see myself staying with this organization until I retire.

Answer: Agree

Question 14: What is one change that the educational institution could make in order for you to feel more motivated in your job?

Answer: The individual "wins" be celebrated, and not seen as a competition.

Question 15: Why do you enjoy working at the educational institution or why not?

Answer: One thing I do not like is the lack of transparency in some areas.

Question 16: What is one way that the educational institution could help create a better image of itself?

Answer: Changes in the marketing department would help. I think they have started to make changes.

Question 17: What is one way that the communication process at the educational institution could be improved?

Answer: That student complaints be brought to the attention of an instructor before "inquiries" are made, regardless of substantiated or not.

Analysis of Business Office Data

I received data from three participants invited to participate in the business office survey. Regarding the first question, two of the three participants identified as female, while one chose not to disclose their gender. For the second question, two participants had been with the institution for less than 5 years, while the remaining participant had a tenure between 15 and 20 years. It is noteworthy that the majority of participants who shared their opinions about the institution had relatively short tenures. Moving on to Questions 3 and 4, all participants agreed that they have good working relationships with their managers and coworkers. However, for the fifth question, there were only two responses, with differing opinions. One participant agreed that they can express their concerns with their manager, while the other disagreed. In response to the sixth question, two participants expressed looking forward to coming to work every day, while the remaining participant disagreed. All participants unanimously agreed that they enjoy their job, as stated in the seventh question. For the eighth question, only two of the three participants responded, with conflicting opinions. One participant agreed that their manager recognizes their contributions, while the other disagreed. In response to the ninth question, all participants agreed that they are challenged in their job. Regarding the 10^{th} question, two participants provided responses, with divergent opinions on the opportunity for growth within the institution. Moving on to the 11^{th} and 12^{th} questions, all participants agreed to being satisfied with their compensation and benefits, as well as having a good work-life balance. These responses indicate that participants feel their job does not dominate their life, allowing them to engage in leisure activities and spend time with family. Addressing the 13^{th} question, two participants agreed they could envision staying with the organization until retirement, while one strongly disagreed. Notably, this dissenter has been with the organization for less than 5 years, suggesting they may view their current job as a temporary position until finding employment elsewhere.

Questions 14-17 consisted of open-ended qualitative inquiries, allowing participants to express their opinions and explore the relationship between their responses and the quantitative data. Unfortunately, no participants provided a response to Question 14, making it impossible to connect this question to the collected quantitative data. Similarly, for Question 15, no response was given, preventing any correlation with the quantitative results. In response to Question 16, only one participant suggested that the institution could improve its image through "diversity." This response may be linked to the quantitative data, indicating a lack of commitment to remaining with the institution until retirement due to the importance of diversity in the workplace. Lastly, for Question 17, one participant suggested that the institution should improve communication by avoiding empty statements such as "I see this." This response potentially relates to several quantitative responses, including participant reluctance to express concerns to their manager, lack of enthusiasm for coming to work, or management's failure to recognize their contributions to the institution. See Appendix C for a summary of the responses of the business office.

Responses to Each Question for Business Office.

Question 1: What is your gender?

Answer: 2 Female, 1 Prefer not to say

Question 2: How many years have you been at your organization?

Answer: 2 Less than 5 years, 1 between 15 to 20 years

Question 3: My manager and I have a good working relationship.

Answer: All 3 Agree

Question 4: I have a good working relationship with my co-workers and team members.

Answer: All 3 Agree

Question 5: I feel I can express my concerns to my management team.

Answer: 1 Disagrees, 1 Agrees, 1 did not respond

Question 6: I look forward to coming to work.

Answer: 1 Disagrees, 2 Agree

Question 7: I enjoy my job.

Answer: All 3 Agree

Question 8: The management recognizes my contribution to the organization.

Answer: 1 Disagrees, 1 Agrees, 1 did not respond

Question 9: I feel challenged in my current job.

Answer: All 3 Agree

Question 10: I have a chance at growing throughout this organization.

Answer: 1 Disagrees, 1 Agrees, 1 did not respond

Question 11: I am satisfied with the compensation and benefits at this organization.

Answer: 2 Agrees, 1 did not respond

Question 12: I have a good work-life balance.

Answer: All 3 Agree

Question 13: I can see myself staying with this organization until I retire.

Answer: 1 Strongly Disagrees, 2 Agree

Question 14: What is one change that the institution could make in order for you to feel more motivated in your job?

Answer: No Response

Question 15: Why or why not do you enjoy working at the institution?

Answer: No Response

Question 16: What is one way that the educational institution could help create a better image of itself?

Answer: Diversity

Question 17: What is one way that the communication process at the educational institution could be improved?

Answer: Don’t just say “I see this”

Based on some of these responses, there are a few commonalities I noticed. The first commonality is that of the five participants who took the survey, four had only been with the organization less than 5 years. This was a little surprising because even though the answers to the questions were anonymous, I would have expected the participants who were with the organization the longest would want to voice their opinions about how they feel about their role, the management team in the department, and also across the educational institution. The rationale for this expectation would be that those who have been with the organization the longest would have seen more changes over the years and may have been able to give better insight into why employee resignations have increased.

Another commonality I noticed is three of the five participants identified as female. This was expected since many of the employees in the office operations and nursing faculty tend to be females.

The third commonality I noticed is many employees in different departments feel they cannot express their concerns to their management team. This was not necessarily a surprise to me since many individuals at almost every organization feel either fearful of expressing their concerns or maybe have the belief they are not being heard regarding their specific concerns.

The fourth commonality is the participants feel they do not see themselves staying at the organization until they retire. This response is not too surprising since the organization has excessive turnover. It makes sense that many of the employees who participated in the study are just viewing their specific job at this institution as just a stepping stone or a placeholder until they find a different job.

Statistical Analysis of Quantitative Data

Since my data collected were based on a sample from the entire population of the institution, a statistical analysis needed to be conducted to determine if the questions being investigated were answered accurately. Using statistical analysis is a method that is universally used to address the validity of a conclusion in most studies (Nahm, 2016). This is true for almost every project in peer-reviewed articles, and this project is no different.

During my analysis of my data, I utilized two tools to help define the significance of my findings. The first tool I used was a Microsoft Excel ® spreadsheet program that calculated measures of central tendency, which are the mean, median, and mode of the total responses from the participants' responses. The mean is also known as the average of all the numerical data value points. The mean is not always the middle value in a set of data since it can be adjusted up and down depending on if there are any numerical outliers. The median is the middle value in a numerical data set. The median can be a good value to see if there is a specific spread in the numerical values. The mode is the numerical value that determines what value is repeated the most. Even though this value may seem vague, it can come in handy when looking at commonality among many social science and active research, which is what this specific project is focusing on.

Of the three values, the mode was the most important to focus on for the analysis. Even though the mode is the most general but also the least precise measure of the three values, it can play an important role in understanding the characteristics of a set of values from quantitative data (Salkind, 2016). The purpose of focusing on the mode in this study was to determine if there was a commonality in responses to the survey questions. In other words, it is the value that occurs the most frequently of the other values (Salkind, 2016).

The next calculation I utilized was a chi-square calculation. There were two types of chi-square calculations that I had to choose from. One is a one-sample chi-square or goodness of fit, and the other type is a two-sample chi-square which is also known as a test of independence (Salkind, 2016). The goodness of fit or one-sample chi-square compares the actual data that were collected versus what was expected or predicted. The importance of a goodness of fit is it can show if there is significance in the data collected or if it occurred by chance.

Once I calculated the chi-square value, I looked for the matching *p* value which determines if any of the data set collected was based on chance or based on statistical significance. The *p* value threshold used in this specific analysis was $p<0.05$, which means if the *p* value is less than 0.05, the data set collected did not happen based on chance.

Statistical Analysis of Computer Services

I only obtained one participant's response to each of the questions in the survey. Since I only had one participant, the *p* value for all the questions was approximately 0.4. This means that all the data collected were not statically significant and all responses occurred by chance. With the *p* value being 0.4, it is above the 0.05 threshold. I would reject all my hypotheses regarding the cause for the high employee turnover in computer service. This means that the data and analysis are inconclusive; however, even though there is no statistical significance for the quantitative data, many of the disagree responses that were given all surrounded around management and working environment problems.

Statistical Analysis of Nursing Faculty

I only obtained one participant's response to each of the questions in the survey. Since I only had one participant respond to the questions, the *p* value for all the questions was approximately 0.4. This means that the data collected were not significant, and all responses occurred by chance. With the *p* value being 0.4, it falls above the 0.05 threshold, so I would have to reject my null hypothesis regarding the possible cause for high employee turnover with the nursing faculty This should be expected since there was only one participant; it would make sense that the data received had no statistical significance.

Statistical Analysis of Business Office

Since the business office staff had more than one participant respond to the questions, conducting a statistical analysis was appropriate to see which of the data were significant and did not occur strictly by chance.

Question 1 regarding each participant's gender had a *p* value of approximately 0.3. Since this value is above the 0.05 threshold, it means the data set was not statistically significant.

Question 2 regarding the number of years of service had a *p* value of 0.25, which means the data set collected for this question was not statistically significant. This was caused by the fact there was a mix of individuals who were either at the institution for less than 5 years or 15 to 20 years.

Question 3 regarding if they have a good working relationship with their manager had a *p* value of 0.03. This does show statistical significance since the *p* value was way below the 0.05 threshold. These data show that all the participants in the business office agree that they all have a good working relationship with their manager.

Question 4 regarding the participants having a good working relationship with their team members had a *p* value of 0.03. This shows statistical significance since everyone who took the survey agrees they have a good working relationship with each other in the department.

Question 5 regarding whether the participants can express their concerns to their management team had a *p* value was 0.6. This was not statistically significant since one participant agreed, one disagreed, and the other participant did not respond. This could be a difficult commonality to pinpoint since there are so many different opinions about the participant being able to express their concerns to their management team.

Question 6 regarding if the participants look forward to coming to work had a *p* value of 0.3. This means the responses were not statistically significant since only two of the three participants agreed they looked forward to coming to work; however, one disagreed that they look forward to coming to work.

Question 7 regarding whether or not the participant enjoys their job had a *p* value of 0.03. This response shows statistical significance since all the participants are in agreement that they all enjoyed their job.

Question 8 regarding whether or not the management team recognizes the participant's contribution to the institution had a *p* value of 0.6. This was not statically significant since one agreed, one disagreed, and the other participant did not respond to the question.

Question 9 regarding whether or not the participant feels challenged at their current job at the institution had a *p* value of 0.03. This shows significance since every participant agrees with this question.

Question 10 regarding whether or not they have a chance to grow throughout the institution had a *p* value of 0.6. This is not statically significant since only one agreed, one disagreed, and the other participant did not respond to the question.

Question 11 regarding whether or not the participant is satisfied with the compensation and benefits they receive from the institution had a *p* value of 0.1. This is not statically significant since only two answered the question and they agreed; however, the other participant did not respond to the question.

Question 12 regarding whether or not the participants feel they have a good work-life balance had a *p* value of 0.03. This shows significance since all the participants were in agreement that their job does allow them to split their time between professional and personal activities.

Question 13 regarding whether or not the participants can see themselves staying with the organization until they retire had a *p* value of 0.3. This is not statistically significant since two of the three answered agree, and the other participant answered they strongly disagreed.

For the business office department, my null hypothesis was that the management and environment was the most common reason for the high employee turnover. The first question that was statistically significant was whether all the participants agreed they have a good working relationship with the manager. The second question that was statistically significant is whether the participants all agree they have a good relationship with their coworkers. The third question that was statistically significant is whether they all agree they enjoy their job. The fourth question that was statically significant is they all agree they are challenged at this current job. The final question that was statistically significant is whether they all agree they have a good work-life balance.

All survey responses that were statistically significant were *agree*. This information sounds positive so the main cause for the high employee turnover in the business office is not the result of bad management, no work-life balance, nor the overall job since the results were all positive responses. What these data support is the good management, work environment, and engagement seem to keep employees content in their jobs.

Conclusion

The data and analysis do not give a concrete explanation regarding why the educational institution has high employee turnover. Based on my theories, literature research, and data analysis, there are mixed feelings about why one employee is unhappy in their current job; however, some of the responses do seem to point to the most common reasons which are management concerns, compensation, lack of advancement, and a good work-life balance. What is surprising is none of the qualitative questions mentioned flexibility of their job since that is becoming a new trend that is being expected with the current workforce.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The overall purpose of this project was to delve into the intricate factors that contribute to significant turnover within this organization. By examining these underlying reasons, I aim to provide valuable insights and solutions to address this pervasive issue. In order to achieve this objective, I focused my inquiry on three key questions:

1. What are the common reasons for the increased employee resignation in the specific departments being studied in the educational institution? By identifying the root causes, we can gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by the organization and tailor effective solutions accordingly.
2. What are strategies that leaders and organizations can use in order to retain their current employees? By recognizing that retaining employees is a complex task to undertake, it is important to seek the root problems and recommend practical approaches that will enable the institution to nurture an environment where employees feel motivated and connected to their roles.
3. What are some potential strategies that the leaders can use to keep their employees engaged? All organizations need employees to conduct daily operations. By keeping employees engaged in their job, it most likely can help reduce the amount of turnover the organization may face.

Employee retention stands to be a challenge for all organizations across various industries. Recognizing this, it will become crucial for organizations to explore the ways in which they can foster an environment that not only attracts future employees but also retains the current talented employees. The aim is to transform jobs into fulfilling careers that evoke a sense of pride and accomplishment among employees. By addressing employee satisfaction, organizations can create a path for long-term success, both for their employees and the organization.

Overview

Since the data collected was limited due to low responses to the survey across three departments in the organization, it is difficult to make a concrete conclusion regarding the root causes of why each individual department is seeing an increase in employee resignations.

Based on the data collected, it seems that the participants who chose to participate in answering the survey questions had mixed feelings about their specific satisfaction in their current role, the institution's environment, and their supervisors. Even though there were mixed feelings, there were some commonalities in their responses.

Most of the common responses that were positive for most of the participants show that they feel content with their working relationship, environment, and overall satisfaction in their current role. Most of the responses that were negative for most of the participants were regarding their supervisors, specifically surrounded by recognition of their personal contribution to the institution, and the communication was minimal on the dean and vice president level. Considering the amount of data collected, this could be the biases of the few participants who took the survey.

After analyzing this information, I drew up the following recommendations for the institution to implement in order to potentially retain its current staff.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

My first recommendation to help decrease employee turnover for the organization is to recognize individuals who accomplish small tasks that are significant to the department. By doing this, it could make employees feel more motivated in their job. Since employers may need individuals who possess specific skills to make an organization operate, it makes sense to celebrate small accomplishments. Additionally, if a major accomplishment has occurred over a department or team, it may be good to recognize them with a prize, which does not have to be monetary-based considering the educational institution is state-funded and there are limited funds.

Recommendation 2

For my second recommendation, I would encourage all managers to acknowledge an individual's questions and concerns. The purpose of this recommendation is to make sure the employees know they are being heard, especially if there is a specific problem they are facing. When an employee's concerns and questions are addressed, it may help increase the employee's or team's overall performance.

This recommendation could address the common response to the survey question regarding the discomfort employees feel about expressing their feelings to their manager.

Recommendation 3

The third recommendation is to hold a roundtable meeting for all employees to attend and make sure their concerns are addressed by the vice presidents and president. At each start of each semester, the educational institution holds a convocation day. During this time of the year, every employee congregates into a large auditorium regarding the expectations of all the staff and faculty for the upcoming semester. Currently there is no question or concern portion of the convocation day that is held. At the end of the convocation day, a roundtable meeting could be added to make all employees at the institution feel that they could be heard and to give them a feeling of comfort approaching the management team without fear of being reprimanded or being ignored. This specific recommendation can potentially help the management team understand any frustration their employees are feeling.

Recommendation 4

The fourth recommendation is to distribute this survey institution-wide and see if there are any common responses with the other departments. The reason why the nursing faculty, computer services, and business office were chosen for this specific project was that they were seeing the most employee turnover at this time. However, just because these three departments were chosen for this project does not necessarily mean that others in different departments are not feeling the same emotions and concerns.

The time frame I would recommend for doing this recommendation would be approximately 6 months post-study and then implement the first three recommendations and distribute the survey after another 6 months to see if there is a difference in the employees’ responses.

Conclusion

This project has been an immensely valuable experience for both me and the partnering organization. Considering the persistent challenge of employee retention and the increasing difficulty in retaining talented individuals, I strongly believe that the study design employed in this project holds significant potential for organizations grappling with high employee turnover. By comprehensively examining the underlying causes and employing strategic approaches, organizations can gain crucial insights and devise effective solutions to address this pressing issue.

The findings and methodologies employed in this study offer a replicable framework that can be adapted by any organization seeking to delve into the root causes of its own high employee turnover rates. The nature of this problem necessitates a thorough investigation, considering factors such as job satisfaction, career development, work-life balance, and organizational culture. By following a similar research design, organizations can gain a deeper understanding of their unique challenges and tailor specific strategies to foster employee loyalty and retention.

Furthermore, the knowledge gained from this project extends beyond the educational sector. These basic principles and practices identified in this project can be applied to other organizations across various sectors. By recognizing the value of motivated and committed employees, it is important for organizations to invest time and resources into understanding the dynamics of turnover and implementing proactive measures to avoid the impacts it has on the organization.

The findings of this study show the importance of creating a work environment that can lead to employee engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty. By recognizing the diverse needs and expectations of employees, organizations can address the root causes of turnover and implement interventions that can promote retention. For instance, establishing clear communication channels, offering professional development opportunities, and recognizing and rewarding employee contributions can all contribute to establishing a positive organizational environment. Investing in effective leadership development programs can empower managers to build strong relationships with their team members, enhance job satisfaction, and create a sense of purpose and belonging within the organization. By proactively addressing the underlying causes and implementing tailored retention initiatives, organizations can foster a culture of engagement, growth, and fulfillment, ultimately leading to enhanced employee satisfaction, organizational success, and sustainable growth in the long run.

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Appendix A

Computer Services Data

What is your gender?

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Male	1	0.25	0.39
Female	0	0.25	
Non-binary / third gender	0	0.25	
Prefer not to say	0	0.25	

How many years have you been at your educational institution?

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Less Than 5 Years	1	0.2	0.40
5 to 10 Years	0	0.2	
10 to 15 Years	0	0.2	
15 to 20 Years	0	0.2	
More than 20 Years	0	0.2	

My manager and I have a good working relationship.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I have a good working relationship with my co-workers and team members.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I feel that I can express my concerns to my management team.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	1	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I look forward to coming to work.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I enjoy my job.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

The management recognizes my contribution to the educational institution.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	1	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I feel challenged in my current job.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	1	0.25	

I have a chance at growing throughout this educational institution.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	1	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I am satisfied with the compensation and benefits at this educational institution.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	1	0.25	

Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I have a good work-life balance.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	1	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I can see myself staying with this educational institution until I retire.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	1	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

Appendix B

Nursing Faculty Data

What is your gender?

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Male	0	0.25	0.39
Female	1	0.25	
Non-binary / third gender	0	0.25	
Prefer not to say	0	0.25	

How many years have you been at your educational institution?

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Less Than 5 Years	1	0.2	0.41
5 to 10 Years	0	0.2	
10 to 15 Years	0	0.2	
15 to 20 Years	0	0.2	
More than 20 Years	0	0.2	

My manager and I have a good working relationship.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I have a good working relationship with my co-workers and team members.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I feel that I can express my concerns to my management team.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	1	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I look forward to coming to work.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value

Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I enjoy my job.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

The management recognizes my contribution to the educational institution.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I feel challenged in my current job.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	1	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I have a chance at growing throughout this educational institution.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	1	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I am satisfied with the compensation and benefits at this educational institution.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.391625
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I have a good work-life balance.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	1	0.25	
Agree	0	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

I can see myself staying with this organization until I retire.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.25	0.39
Disagree	0	0.25	
Agree	1	0.25	
Strongly Agree	0	0.25	

Appendix C

Business Office Data

Business Office

What is your gender?

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Male	0	0.75	0.30
Female	2	0.75	
Non-binary / third gender	0	0.75	
Prefer not to say	1	0.75	

How many years have you been at your organization?

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Less Than 5 Years	2	0.6	0.25
5 to 10 Years	0	0.6	
10 to 15 Years	0	0.6	
15 to 20 Years	1	0.6	
More than 20 Years	0	0.6	

My manager and I have a good working relationship.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.75	0.03
Disagree	0	0.75	
Agree	3	0.75	
Strongly Agree	0	0.75	

I have a good working relationship with my co-workers and team members.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.75	0.03
Disagree	0	0.75	
Agree	3	0.75	
Strongly Agree	0	0.75	

I feel that I can express my concerns to my management team.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.5	0.57
Disagree	1	0.5	
Agree	1	0.5	
Strongly Agree	0	0.5	

I look forward to coming to work.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.75	0.30
Disagree	1	0.75	
Agree	2	0.75	
Strongly Agree	0	0.75	

I enjoy my job.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.75	0.03
Disagree	0	0.75	
Agree	3	0.75	
Strongly Agree	0	0.75	

The management recognizes my contribution to the educational institution.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.5	0.57
Disagree	1	0.5	
Agree	1	0.5	
Strongly Agree	0	0.5	

I feel challenged in my current job.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.75	0.03
Disagree	0	0.75	
Agree	3	0.75	
Strongly Agree	0	0.75	

I have a chance at growing throughout this educational institution.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.5	0.57
Disagree	1	0.5	
Agree	1	0.5	
Strongly Agree	0	0.5	

I am satisfied with the compensation and benefits at this educational institution.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.5	0.11
Disagree	0	0.5	

Agree	2	0.5	
Strongly Agree	0	0.5	

I have a good work-life balance.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	0	0.75	0.03
Disagree	0	0.75	
Agree	3	0.75	
Strongly Agree	0	0.75	

I can see myself staying with this educational institution until I retire.

Answer	Actual	Expected	p-value
Strongly Disagree	1	0.75	0.30
Disagree	0	0.75	
Agree	2	0.75	
Strongly Agree	0	0.75	