

**Retention Strategies Utilized by Hotel Managers to Retain Talent in Job Positions and
Reduce Employee Turnover Within Small-and-Medium Enterprise (SME) Hotels:
A Phenomenological Study**

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Abstract

Hotel managers faced many different challenges daily. One challenge was the utilization of retention strategies. The problem addressed in this study was the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within small-and-medium enterprise hotels. The purpose of this study was to conduct qualitative phenomenological research to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences. The conceptual framework for this study was Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics developed by Martin Heidegger. The study developed around two research questions: (a) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within small-and-medium hotels and (b) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within small-and-medium hotels? The participants were hotel managers within the state of Georgia located in the United States. The participants participated in a 10-questions 1:1 semi-structured interview with the researcher. The collected data analyzed through NVivo version 12. Twenty-four themes emerged from the analysis. The study concluded with implications, recommendations for practice, and recommendations for future research. The implications comprised of main themes and subthemes of the resulted retention strategies. There were two recommendations for practice: (a) begin utilization with main themed retention strategies with a continuation to subthemes if necessary or needed and (b) find what themed retention strategies applicable and feasible for the organization. There were two recommendations for future research: (a) conduct future research with a quantitative methodology instead of a qualitative methodology and (b) conduct future research in a different state, geographical region, or outside the United States.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The hospitality industry became the largest entity of its kind in the world. The size of this industry made utilizing retention strategies to retain talent in their job positions and reducing employee turnover a challenge. The hospitality industry emerged as the largest industry on the globe in the last decade (Wangchuk & Wetprasit, 2019). The hospitality industry across the world evolved and transformed to meet the growing needs of new guests (Vij, 2019). It operates around the clock to satisfy guests' wants and desires. Indeed, the hospitality industry remains different from any other industry, it encompasses companies that function for extended hours, often 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week (O'Neill & Follmer, 2020). Many facets of life affected this industry's performance. The hospitality industry, charged by the governmental, environmental, and economic matters that led to its increase in complexity and dynamism (Darvishmotevali et al., 2020). This industry exuded its complexity and dynamism through several smaller markets. These markets were hotels, food services, tourism, and entertainment services. Individuals have enough time for traveling and using their leisure time, this now leads to a higher demand for hotels, food services, tourism, and entertainment services (Wangchuk & Wetprasit, 2019). In this study, the focus centered on the hotel market within the hospitality industry.

The quality of any hotel played a part in a guest's decision when selecting a place to stay. The quality of a hotel is set by the location, cleanliness, cost benefits, facilities, hotel property, accommodations, services, food, and comfort (Roy et al., 2019). The quality supported a hotel's core element of sleep. The core element of a hotel, whether a luxury or an economy hotel, is a place for sleeping (Hon & Fung, 2019). To ensure guest satisfaction and want to return, management must recognize an appropriate hotel environment that emulates sleep quality (Hon

& Fung, 2019). Hotel properties need guests to rent rooms, utilizing their facilities along with services to increase their performance and generate profits (Jiang et al., 2020). Once the sleep quality was present then service quality proceeded. Service quality is the outcome of a comparison that guests make between expectations concerning service and their views concerning the execution of services (Metaxas et al., 2019). Leaders are capable of enhancing the service quality in hotels (Chang et al., 2021). Hotel managers can take the concept of service quality and disseminate it to the talent found throughout the hotel staff.

Talent within a hotel staff did not come without effort. It was the responsibility of the hotel manager to recognize talent in applicants selected to become part of the hotel staff. One of the basic hospitality concerns is identifying talented staff to ensure their retention and advancement in the organization along with the industry at large (Shulga & Busser, 2019). All hotel managers are aware of the important part their colleagues have when it comes to implementing the organization's vision and delivering service to hotel guests while accentuating the importance of selecting the correct individual on the team because this individual must have the same passion when serving their guests (Ramadan & Karanikola, 2021). The hotel manager charged with this responsibility by strengthening the organization with their hotel staff selection. To maintain a talented staff a hotel manager relied on strategies. A strategy is an action that an individual does to accomplish their goal (Koseoglu et al., 2020). This goal was to build a hotel staff who can provide quality service to their guests. In a rapid-changing environment, strategy acts in a vital role (Metaxas et al., 2019). Strategies that can become a part of a hotel manager's daily decision-making process.

An organization needs to successfully incorporate the strategy that will strengthen their organization's performance which would induce the organization to possess a competitive

advantage over the current or potential organizations entering the market (Hamadamin & Atan, 2019). Formulation of a steady strategy is a demanding task for every firm, but without practical implementation, it is rare to gain the intended benefits (Koseoglu et al., 2020). The hotel manager can consider strategies to select individual applicants for hotel job positions as a human resource practice. Selection and training along with development are imperative in facilitating an individual's job fit (Mathafena & Grobler, 2020). Due to the nature of the hospitality industry, the managing of staff depicts extraordinary challenges for managers (Surucu & Sagbas, 2021). Each employee should be in the right place within an organization to get the correct job according to their capabilities, talents, aptitudes, and specializations, thus assisting the organization to achieve its predetermined goals by distributing 100% of the workforce properly (Awalluddin, 2020). Organizations need to manage human resources at an optimal level (Azis et al., 2019). The hotel manager optimized this human resource practice to affect their organization's performance.

Organizational performance determined by a hotel's successes or failures. Organizational performance provides outcomes from various practices and procedures which develops during daily operation within an organization (Musoga et al., 2021). In today's business environment, organizational performance must be a priority for every hotel manager to remain competitive. Today, general business organizations and especially hospitality organizations function in an extremely competitive and dynamic environment (Sarhan et al., 2020). Given the constant changes happening within the marketplace globally, hospitality organizations need to do everything necessary to emerge or remain competitive (Sarhan et al., 2020). A hotel manager can have a negative hotel impact if the organization's performance was not at or the above level of its competitors. Hotel impact defined as how hotel operations affect, competitiveness, hotel

employees, and guests (Metaxas et al., 2019). One major hotel impact correlated with not retaining talent within the organization.

The relevance of this research study involved expanding the body of knowledge on retention strategies, talent, and employee turnover with the gathering of data from individuals in the hotel market within the hospitality industry. Earlier scholars viewed knowledge of the hotel market as practical and necessary for generating empirical data from research surrounding this industry. Since the early 19th century, modern hotels surfaced in cities in Europe and the United States (U.S.) (Li et al., 2020). The swift development of the hotel market established a significant role in promoting urban economic advancements, steering urban industrial renewal, and tailoring internal structures for cities (Li et al., 2020). Development piqued the interest of scholars domestic and abroad to conduct relevant research involving the hotel industry (Li et al., 2020). This empirical data from the research by these earlier scholars cultivated an increase in the body of knowledge but developed gaps in the literature as the research increased. Research conducted by Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2019) and research conducted by Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo (2019) were recent studies identified within this study denoted gaps found within the literature. These gaps found within the literature warranted a need to conduct this study in the hotel market within the hospitality industry. The data gathered during this study aided in filling the gaps within the literature.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study was the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. Hotels are one of the most competitive businesses across the globe (Martin-Rios & Ciobanu, 2019). The U.S. BLS (2021) reported over 72,000 unemployed individuals at a rate of 4.7% emerged from the hotel

market in 2019. Without properly implementing employee retention strategies, an organization can face excessive employee turnover rates (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Turnovers too excessive can contain costs outweighing their benefits, thereby crippling organizational performance (An, 2019). This problem deemed further research due to gaps found within the literature. Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2019) explored talent management focusing on retention strategies for reducing employee turnover in luxury hotels. Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou suggested future researchers should publish more works on talent and retention strategies from the perception of managers, who are responsible for individual employees or teams. Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou claimed there is an insufficient number of empirical findings relating to talent management. Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou continued by proposing further research in SME hotels to impact the context of retention strategies. In a second study, Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo (2019) pointed out the academic community criticized the quality of conceptual papers pertaining to talent management in terms of definitions, the scope of the literature, consistency, rigor, and addressed the absence of empirical research concerning the matter. These studies warranted the need of to explore this topic further and contribute to filling the gaps within the literature. This introduced the purpose for this study to interpret the perception of hotel managers through lived experiences while utilizing retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The phenomenological design used to introduce a hermeneutic approach to interpret these hotel managers' daily lived

experiences. Phenomenology seeks to uncover meanings as the meanings reside in everyday life (Keshavarz, 2020). Hermeneutics relates to the theory along with the practice surrounding interpretation, the essence of interpretation, the comprehension of interpretation, and the meaning buried in everything (Keshavarz, 2020). These interpretations came from the hotel managers' perspectives. Convenience sampling came from SME hotels in multiple cities throughout the state of Georgia, located in the U.S. In this approach, the prospective participants/location/materials are the most effortlessly and accessible for the researcher to sample (Farrugia, 2019). The advantages are less expensive and less time along with effort intensive (Farrugia, 2019). The state of Georgia was a convenient location for conducting this study for the researcher. SMEs symbolize the main driver behind the development, competitiveness, innovation, and jobs within many countries (Klepić, 2021). Several studies sadly concentrate on multinational and large companies, even though SMEs act in a pivotal role within economies regardless of countries (Abalala et al., 2021). The sample population size was 15 participants. Creswell and Báez (2021) suggested the size of the group for phenomenological research may range from three to 15 participants. The data collection method was semi-structured interviews to obtain data from the participants during the study. Interviews are a form of verbal interaction (Aarsand & Aarsand, 2019). Interviews offer a relatively simple way to gather data (Bearman, 2019). NVivo was the analysis tool for this study. Bergeron and Gaboury (2020) elaborated on NVivo being a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) with features such as querying, identifying themes, and coding. This study aided in expanding the body of knowledge involving retention strategies, talent, and employee turnover for hotel managers within SME hotels.

Introduction to Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study used Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics developed by Martin Heidegger. German philosopher Martin Heidegger lived from 1889 to 1976 (Neto et al., 2020). Martin Heidegger is most notable and accredited for his fundamental ontology known as *Da-sein* (Kruger-Ross, 2019). *Da-sein* translates into “there-being” (Schnegg, 2019). Heidegger viewed his thinking as engaging in phenomenological questioning toward philosophy; Heidegger is best known for his 1927 work *Being and Time* (Kruger-Ross, 2019). *Being and Time* is one most significant works of the 20th century in philosophy and it impacted several fields beyond it (Campbell, 2019). Heidegger in *Being and Time* illuminated the universal concept of perception that delivers our experience toward the world intelligible (Campbell, 2019). Humans have an extraordinary ability to analyze the realm of their experience severely and dispassionately (Campbell, 2019). Heidegger believed that *Being* is involving the most basic aspects of our daily life (Casati, 2019). There were two aspects involved. The first involved everyone. *Being* is a basic part of our language (Casati, 2019). The second involved a condition. *Being* makes the metaphysical precondition of existence in the world (Casati, 2019). The metaphysical precondition pertained to ontology. Basic ontology serves as a revival and reformulation belonging to the traditional question of metaphysics, which is the nature of reality (Mertel, 2020). Heidegger took his concept and embedded it into the phenomenological realm.

The task of phenomenology comprises analyzing the meaningful content of the world and enunciating the meanings within the world (Ginev, 2019). Phenomenology focuses on returning to nature and character with lived experiences of a distinct phenomenon as it happened (Kruger-Ross, 2019). Phenomenological research starts and finishes with understanding experience as it

happened (Kruger-Ross, 2019). The phenomenon correlates to a segment or dimension of a human “being” lying concealed, lost to our comprehension because it left from “sight” (Smythe & Spence, 2020). Phenomenological hermeneutics engages in experiences of thinking, seeking the start to the revealing of the phenomenon in question from its concealment (Smythe & Spence, 2020). Hermeneutics is the method of interpretation (Kolkutina et al., 2020). In the 20th century, hermeneutics manifested into a philosophical movement involving interpretation and understanding as the primary features of people “being-in-the-world” (Romele et al., 2020). Hermeneutic philosophy, in essence, attempts to capture everything as a moving and alternating whole (Bourgeot, 2021). The hermeneutic act of comprehending a concept correlating to the phenomenological practice stems from analyzing the constitutional premise of cognition (Bourgeot, 2021). In this study, concepts from the Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics was the framework adapted for this study to analyze the interpretations of lived experiences from the hotel manager’s perspective toward utilizing retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within their SME hotels. Using Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics was appropriate for addressing the problem within the study, supporting the purpose surrounding the interpretation of lived experiences, and answering the two research questions.

Introduction to Research Methodology and Design (Nature of the Study)

The research methodology in this study was the qualitative research method. The qualitative method contains nonnumerical organization, interpretation of data to discover patterns, themes, schemes, qualities located within field notes, interviews, transcripts, questionnaires in an open-ended fashion, journals, and ledgers (Mathotaarachchi & Thilakarathna, 2021). The qualitative research method differed from the quantitative research

method. The quantitative research method used when testing a hypothesis is normally a null hypothesis, examining the assumption about the correlation among dependent along with independent variables by gathering a representative sample of individuals from a known population, utilizing the variables, and testing the variables using statistical analyses (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Qualitative research is a research approach usually emphasizes words instead of quantification in the gathering and analysis of data (Mathotaarachchi & Thilakarathna, 2021). Data for this study came from the participants through semi-structured interviews and data analysis conducted through a CAQDAS. The CAQDAS for this study was NVivo. The sample population size was 15 participants.

The research design in this study was the phenomenological research design. Phenomenology is a philosophical exploration of experience, subjectivity, and the lifeworld (Køster & Fernandez, 2021). The narrative, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study are other qualitative research designs but were not practical research designs for this study. Narratives appreciated as tools through which individuals interpret, understand themselves, and the social world while they temporally arrange different life experiences along with events into a story (Cinque et al., 2021). Grounded theory is not restricted to certain interview objectives but instead concentrates on the constant induction along with abstraction of pertinent data toward research problems and forms a theory by viewing the commonalities among many interview objects (Chen & Sun, 2021). Ethnography is a qualitative approach to viewing the social interaction among individuals living in a specific environment (Arnout et al., 2020). The case study conducted inside a natural setting to gather data from real-life situations and deciphers it from the view of research participants (Chowdhury et al., 2020). A phenomenological study represents the common meaning of an individual's lived experiences of their own concept or

phenomenon (Mathotaarachchi & Thilakarathna, 2021). The phenomenological research design was more conducive than the other qualitative research designs to address the problem in this study, articulate the purpose of the study, and answer the research questions of this study.

Research Questions

The focus of this study was retention strategies utilized by hotel managers to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The purpose of this study was to conduct a qualitative phenomenological study to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. There were two research questions directly aligned with the topic and purpose of this study. These two research questions used to identify the utilization of retention strategies of hotel managers through their lived experiences within SME hotels. The two research questions depicted the hotel managers' perception of the most and least utilized retention strategies to retain talent in their SME hotels. The two research questions did not depict the hotel managers' perception of overutilized or underutilized retention strategies.

RQ1

What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

RQ2

What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was the findings found during this research contributing to the field of study by expanding the body of knowledge impacting retention strategies utilized for

retaining talent in job positions and reducing employee turnover within SME hotels. It is imperative for employers to protect skilled along with capable employees from leaving their organization and consequently eliminate negative effects on employees' work environment behavior and organizational performance (Ohunakin et al., 2020). Developing and incorporating long-term retention strategies are crucial to ensuring organizations can provide access to various human capital resources (Oh, 2020). The negative consequences of not completing this study would have been missed opportunities to expand the body of knowledge on retention strategies and reduce employee turnover. Employee turnover appears as a complex phenomenon (Ju & Li, 2020). It can resemble a component of a natural along with healthy attrition with benefits to an organization or revert to being problematic and/or devastating when an organization loses critical talent (Ju & Li, 2020). The positive consequences of completing this study was findings beneficial to leaders and practitioners in the hotel market within the hospitality. The benefits of addressed the problem, the purpose, and the research questions of this study were recognizing the value of having retention strategies in place and the challenges of employee turnover toward human resource management in advance. Retention strategies should be in place for strengthening the capabilities of organizations while attracting and retaining their staff (Amushila & Bussin, 2021). Without question, employee turnover serves as one of the most detrimental human resource management challenges within the hospitality industry (Tews et al., 2019). The challenge with human resource management is recognizing the exact practice used for stimulating employee performance and improving human capacities in the organization (Sixpence et al., 2021). This challenge depicted a need and illuminated the significance of completing this study.

Definitions of Key Terms

Employee Turnover

Described as the substantial losses toward organizations due to human capital depletion along with social capital depletion and disruptions in operation (De Winne et al., 2019).

Hotel Manager

Ensures optimal hotel's daily performance in value for money, educated hotel staff, process along with resource management, quality assurance, responsibility in social settings, and continuous organizational improvement (Dedić et al., 2021).

Hotel Market

Accommodations from traditional hotels and motels along with alternatives such camping sites and bed & breakfast opportunities (Tahiri et al., 2021).

Retention Strategies

A systematic approach of an organization to establish and cultivate a working environment encourages existing employees to stay with the organization (Shrestha, 2019).

Small-and-Medium Enterprise (SME)

Defined as an organization with 10 to 250 employees and excludes organizations with less than 10 employees (Parnell & Crandall, 2021).

Talent

Talent is an innate attribute possessed by people that have the necessary know-how and skills with unceasing growth, and quality productivity which is essential for improving organizational performance (Ohunakin et al., 2020).

Summary

The challenge for hotel managers was the usage of retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The problem addressed in this study was the lack of utilized retention strategies. These retention strategies involved the lived experiences of hotel managers within SME hotels. To interpret the perception of these hotel managers through their lived experiences provided a purpose for this study. The two research questions contained inquiries about the most and least utilized retention strategies through these perceived lived experiences. The locations for the study were at SME hotels in multiple cities, throughout the state of Georgia, located in the U.S. The sample population size was 15 participants. Convenience sampling was the sampling method. The data collection tool was the semi-structured interview and data analysis performed through the CAQDAS NVivo. This qualitative research study with a phenomenological research design was the domicile for housing Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics as the conceptual framework to introduced the aspects of perception and interpretation. The six key terms used to enhance the understanding of the content to the reader. This research proved rewarding with the significance of expanding the body of knowledge in the field of study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The lack of effective retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels was the problem to be addressed in this study. The purpose of this qualitative research study was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences. This research study approach took a research design of phenomenology to enunciate perception and interpretation in this study. There were two research questions depicting inquires, through lived experiences, of the most and the least perceived effective retention strategy to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The sampling method was non-probability convenience sampling with a sample population size of 15 participants. The data collection method was semi-structured interviews to obtain data from the participants. NVivo was the CAQDAS for analyzing the data. The location for this study took place at SME hotels in multiple cities throughout the state of Georgia located in the U.S.

The foundation for this study delineated from the conceptual framework and this literature review. One objective of this literature review was to take this study and connect it to previous studies. A literature review assists with sharing results from previous studies, relates the current study to a larger dialogue for the literature, shows the importance of the study, and gives a benchmark for correlating the outcomes with other findings (Creswell & Báez, 2021). Another objective of this literature review was to validate the research question and research methodology of this study. The objective is not to furnish an exhaustive summary of a particular topic, but to furnish relevant evidence to validate the research question and methodology (Rylee & Cavanagh, 2022). In contrast, many research studies' objectives involve performing a literature review to advocate their research and comprehensively collect along with combine

research to characterize the state of knowledge about a particular topic (Rylee & Cavanagh, 2022). This literature review solidified the intent of this study.

Searches for this literature review were through several electronic databases via the Northcentral University (NCU) Library. The electronic databases included Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), EBSCOHost, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), SAGE, Springer, Taylor-Francis, and Wiley Online Library. The first step for conducting a literature review begins with identifying key terms to assist you in learning about the study (Creswell & Báez, 2021). The search terms for this literature review were *employee turnover, talent, talent management, human resource management, human resources practices, employee retention, and retention strategies*. These search terms used as the sub-headings for this literature review. The search parameters were peer-reviewed literature and year published ranging from 2019 to 2023. The type of literature categorized under business and management for the searches. This review was a cumulative detailed analysis of the literature to emphasize the addressed problem, purpose, and research questions of this study.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics developed by Martin Heidegger. Famously, Heidegger drew his phenomenological method from an etymology of different words derived from phenomenology, the words are “phenomenon” and “logos” (Smith, 2019). The word “phenomenon” comes from two Greek words ‘phainein’ translating to “bring to light” along with ‘phainesthai’ translating to “to appear” (Williams, 2021). The translation of the Greek word “logos” is between the Western consciousness prologue to the Gospel of John and the more basic translation to ‘language’ or ‘speech’ (Smith, 2019). The term "hermeneutics" derives from ‘hermeneuein’ a Greek verb that

translates “to interpret” (Guillen, 2019). Broadly speaking, hermeneutics relates to the theory along with the practice of interpretation, the connotation of interpretation, the comprehension of interpretation, and the meaning concealed in everything (Keshavarz, 2020). Phenomenology searches to uncover meaning as they dwell in everyday life (Keshavarz, 2020). Phenomenology is sensitive to issues surrounding the world of life (Guillen, 2019). The world of life equates to the reality in daily life, in which investigations are under the non-naive eye (Guillen, 2019). Based on historical evidence, phenomenology developed into hermeneutics when referred to as interpretation (Keshavarz, 2020). In phenomenology hermeneutics, presuppositions along with preconceptions, researchers consider the starting point, backgrounds, and horizons of the research (Keshavarz, 2020). Phenomenology hermeneutic is an acceptable method for analyzing human social matters because it searches to determine the meaning not averred immediately (Keshavarz, 2020). Phenomenology hermeneutics attempts to give a logical view of the subjects considered for study by depicting and interpreting differences (Keshavarz, 2020). The phenomenology hermeneutic research conducted for the empirical gathering of experiences and reflective analysis of meanings toward activities (Guillen, 2019). The data collection tool for this study to gather these experiences from participants was the semi-structured interview. The interpretation of the studied subject has of their experiences is during the interview (Guillen, 2019). The in-depth interview is for acquiring information toward the objective of study, with consideration the information is present inside the interviewee’s biography (Guillen, 2019). In a recent study, Elley-Brown and Pringle (2021) conducted a qualitative research study of 14 participants to understand the meaning of women’s ethical caring within their professional careers. Elley-Brown and Pringle (2021) used in-depth interviews as a data collection tool and Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics as a framework for their research. Elley-Brown

and Pringle (2021) identified themes from the findings signaling ethical caring impacting meaningfulness in work and career direction through the participants' lived experiences. In a second recent study, Gullick et al. (2020) conducted a qualitative research study to probe into 417 participants functioning in a nurse-patient relationship within therapeutic contexts. Gullick et al. (2020) used empirical data from 29 qualitative research reports and Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics as a framework for their research. Gullick et al. (2020) identified themes from the findings showing a nurse's state of being influences their relationship with a patient in a therapeutic context. Researchers of these recent studies established guidelines for the use of Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics for this study. The addressed problem in this study was the lack of effective retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The purpose of this study was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of effective retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The two research questions of the most and the least perceived retention strategies through lived experiences were viable for this study. Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics was in place as the conceptual framework to support with addressing the problem, articulating the purpose, and answering the research questions of this study.

Employee Turnover

The hotel market is one of the foundational industries in tourism and plays a significant role in quality along with a degree of the tourism welcoming industry in tourist destinations (Yu et al., 2020). However, several hotels struggle with high employee turnover, insufficient numbers of high-quality, and other dilemmas (Yu et al., 2020). Employee turnover is one common terminology used all over the business arena and every organization whether large multinationals

or small local firms, get the effects of this terminology often (Mumtaz et al., 2021). Employee turnover rates within the hospitality industry remain alarmingly high and carry an impact on a hospitality company's financial capabilities and its employee morale (Frye et al., 2020).

Retaining talent is a constant ongoing challenge for organizational leaders during a time of steady growth as well as in times of stagnant economic growth (Bartock, 2019). An influx in employee turnover typically decreases the performance of an organization, especially small organizations with limited resources (Ketkaew et al., 2020). The primary factors affecting employee turnover in the hotel market are wages, extended work hours, working conditions, occupational satisfaction level, unsatisfactory working environment, inadequate promotion opportunities, injustice experienced within the work environment, the existence of unethical behaviors, harassment in a sexual nature, conflict, and management style (Pekersen & Tugay, 2020). The higher a company's employee turnover rate, the more spending of dollars will be on recruiting, selecting, and training new employees (Frye et al., 2020). A high amount of employee turnover can be a sign of problems within an organization (Saragih et al., 2020). Organizations need to monitor this situation because a high amount of employee turnover will hurt the organization (Saragih et al., 2020). Reliable employees play a vital role due to the responsibility of operational activities and interaction with guests (Saragih et al., 2020). Employees with solid affective commitments view themselves with the company along with the company's goals and choose to stay within the organization to give their best efforts (Saragih et al., 2020). Employee turnover affects an organization in performance along with profitability and organization need to understand the reason employees remain or leave organizations (Houssein et al., 2020).

Employees deciding to leave an organization may be aware of their employability. Employability is an employee knowing their possibilities to obtain a new job (Alpler & Arasli, 2020). Thus, an

extreme challenge for organizations is the preservation and sustainable retention of proficient employees, who are the primary resources organizations utilize to give effective service and establish wealth within the organization (Oruh et al.,2020). It is critical to recognize and understand the possible triggers thereof, which may assist in forecasting employee turnover (Oruh et al.,2020). One early signal of troubles within organizations would be compelling withdrawal intentions belonging to organizational members making high turnover intentions (Holzwarth et al., 2021). The turnover intention, which is an ideal predictor of actual turnover, defined as the intention belonging to an employee to depart their organization within a given time (Tinwala & Biswas, 2020). Turnover intention is not actually the act of departing from an organization but one predictor of the departure (Oruh et al.,2020). It represents employees' judgment of not remaining employed, for example, their negative attitude toward the organization (Oruh et al.,2020). Turnover intentions negatively affect organizations as it could point to a loss of organizational human capital along with organizational social capital and an interruption to the workflow (Oruh et al.,2020). High degrees of turnover intention can cripple organizations (Ketkaew et al., 2020). Turnover intention seen through an intraorganizational lens, as individual demographic traits paired alongside organizational behaviors and levels of satisfaction (Ali, 2020). Normally, dedicated employees showing satisfaction and engagement have low absenteeism rates and less likely chances of turnover intentions (Živković et al., 2021). The actual turnover increases as intentions to depart the organization becomes fervid (Tinwala & Biswas, 2020). The turnover intention may manifest from several factors, some are internal and employees could have total or partial control over them (Basnyat & Lao, 2020). These turnover intentions could manifest into the actual act of the employee departing the organization. Employees can depart an organization by resigning or termination (Ketkaew et al., 2020). These

actions depicted in two main kinds of employee turnovers. The two main kinds of employee turnovers are voluntary and involuntary (Oruh et al.,2020). Voluntary turnover expressed an individual preference (Oruh et al.,2020). Individual preferences may lead to core influences. The core influences comprise the external work environment, the workplace, and individual factors (Oruh et al.,2020). Job satisfaction is a crucial factor in attracting and keeping a skilled workforce (Stamolampros et al., 2019). Organizations search to decrease voluntary employee turnover due to it leads to increased costs of selecting and training as well as loss of tacit knowledge occurring when employees depart the organization (Harris et al., 2020). Organizations increasingly concerned with the intentions of the employees quitting their jobs and seeking alternate job opportunities (Azeem, 2020). Employees are more certain to depart an organization when there are pleasing alternatives (Zhang, 2019). Involuntary turnover described as an individual's employment forcibly terminated through their employer or the individual reassigned to another area within the organization due to poor performance or unacceptable conduct (Oruh et al.,2020). When perception of substandard performance deemed to be a significant driver of involuntary turnover, other employees may perceive explanation of the event does lie stable along with negative organizational characteristics but capricious circumstances for the organization and previous behaviors controlled by the terminated individuals (Laulié & Morgeson, 2021). Mass turnover negatively influences the morale of talent deciding to remain in an organization, as normally they take on additional responsibilities (West, 2022). Turnover adversely influences operations along with continuity, it is an expensive factor with costs associated with searching, orienting, and training new staff (West, 2022). Considering employee withdrawal behavior of being at work but not engaging, employee turnover intention becomes a precursor to actual employee turnover (Haque et al., 2019). Individuals depart

organizations all the time (Laulié & Morgeson, 2021). Turnover is ubiquitous, puzzling, and costly (Laulié & Morgeson, 2021). Turnover can be a quite regular, unremarkable occurrence in an employee's life (Laulié & Morgeson, 2021). Understanding the reasons for quitting can assist an organization to decrease its staff turnover (Ketkaew et al., 2020). Employees take on important roles for organizational growth along with survival and this is the reason for the need to keep these employees for their maximum tenure (Kumar, 2022). However, it is challenging to keep talent over an extended term and to reach the required strategic advantage (Kumar, 2022). Retention of talent starts with the first step of recruitment with designing a clever recruitment process to ensure the employment of top talent and playing a role in developing the motivation to remain (Kumar, 2022). Next is employee engagement involving the performance management system acting in a significant role in developing skills and furnishing a career path for the organization (Kumar, 2022). Finding and keeping the top talent within the organization is an arduous task for management (Kumar, 2022). Management support and fostering a team assists with employee retention by establishing a positive environment (Kumar, 2022). Management deploys human resource management to combat the issues of employee turnover. Proper human resources management is a term realized through effective activities of all human resources functions (Saragih et al., 2020). The human resources department and leaders charged with the responsibility of fulfilling the requirements of the workforce within the organization (Kumar, 2022). This responsibility could comprise searching, recruiting, locating, and fulfilling workforce requirements with the newfound talent.

Talent

In times of immense competition and the thought of numerous entities within the market, we should accentuate the significance of quality and the principal work residing in the hotel

industry (Mitreva et al., 2019). The growth of international tourism is an outcome of the development toward various kinds of work that act in the process of engineering the final product and becoming one of the most impactful roles held by the hotel market (Mitreva et al., 2019). The hotel's service product shown as a chain of mutually linked services resulting from a process of meeting the needs along with requests from guests who are the prime importance and linked to a temporary stay apart from their living area (Mitreva et al., 2019). This chain of services is constant in a space defined through the technical, technological, organizational, process, and people also (Mitreva et al., 2019). These services are available at a specific time with their quality influenced by numerous topics such as various suppliers, employees, and the final user of those services, hotel guests (Mitreva et al., 2019). In this context, the hotel's service quality observed as the full process leading to a particular result (Mitreva et al., 2019). Each link in this fully operational chain influences the outcomes and the users' opinions about the services along with the degree of quality (Mitreva et al., 2019). The process of achieving quality within hotels does not have a link solely to the employees' work but also the methodology and the technology involving the production process (Mitreva et al., 2019). This production process was there to achieve a competitive advantage. In the business environment, the competitive advantage is the creation of talents, who are proficient, committed, communicative, cooperative, seasoned, technologically knowledgeable, efficient, prolific, and astute (Cizmic & Ahmic, 2021). Human capital considered the engine for successful organizations (Manolescu et al., 2020). The lack of an adequate number of highly proficient employees represents a huge difficulty for many organizations, especially those working in a specific field or industry (Cizmic & Ahmic, 2021). Internal or external talent recruitment and selection is a viable priority for organizations, desiring to maintain outstanding performance (Cizmic & Ahmic, 2021). Talented individuals, as an

organization's strategic resource, lead organizations to achieve superior performance (Cizmic & Ahmic, 2021). Recruitment along with selection measures deemed less procedural and less assorted than within the last 20 years while enlarging the number of candidates (Manolescu et al., 2020). The change caused by business development, the process of technology, and the new generational workforce (Manolescu et al., 2020). There are several authors who define talent as the results of components determined by a person to excel in a specific field, components learned, even if individuals possess innate qualities (Manolescu et al., 2020). In general, definitions involving talent concentrate on the aspect of aptitude, so defining the combination of skills within a specific field possessing a firm sustained activity, devoting a special ability to executing a creative activity within different fields (Manolescu et al., 2020). The etymology of the word was first used by ancient individuals to express units in measurement and monetary units (Manolescu et al., 2020). In different historical epochs, it began in the common language with the parable of Matthew, this parable involves talent (Manolescu et al., 2020). Most organizations view talents as a wide range of skills deriving from leadership, outcome orientation, problem-solving, autonomy, initiative, resilience, ability to influence along with persuading, teamwork, and active notion to reach the organization's goal (Manolescu et al., 2020). (Manolescu et al., 2020). Understanding the value of possessing talent and accepting strategic resources at managerial levels is the beginning step allowing the organization to nurture a culture concentrating on human capital with the organization (Manolescu et al., 2020). Organizations need to consider their employees throughout all levels as crucial factors involving the future within the organization (Manolescu et al., 2020). The most effective policies within the realm of talent selection are increasing the productivity of employees and triggering an increase in organizational performance (Manolescu et al., 2020). The primary task of top

management needs to be establishing an environment to stimulate talents to remain in the organization indefinitely (Savov et al., 2022). Talented employees remained within the organization depicted talent retention. The process and tools residing in talent retention nowadays receive significant importance in successfully managing human resources worldwide (Savov et al., 2022). However, employers should allow talents to advance in education and career development with the chance of exciting challenges providing the essence of appreciation and respect (Savov et al., 2022). This was a part of talent development. Talent development depends completely on individuality and self-responsibility allowing talents to empower themselves (Harsch & Festing, 2020). However, talent development is primarily vertical though some organizations began with methods for horizontal development like job rotation, showing change needed in other areas (Harsch & Festing, 2020). For organizations, this translates into performing many activities to keep employees with above-average development potential and abilities for key positions (Savov et al., 2022). This reduced the cost of losing a talented individual within the organization. The cost of losing extremely talented employees is greater when competition is high (Basco et al., 2021). The global economic crisis along with the prioritization of cost efficiency made it simple to transfer knowledge globally and change organizational systems (Manolescu et al., 2020). To deal with all these changes demand a satisfactory pool of leaders who develop through effective programs in talent management (Manolescu et al., 2020). When competition is high in an industry, risk-averse organizations inclined more to invest in talent management for sustainability and continuity as a form of insurance (Basco et al., 2021). This insurance deemed a vital act of an organization was leveraging their talent through talent management.

Talent Management

The lack of research on talent management studies hinders the reliability of any study and causes difficulties for practitioners and scholars to completely evaluate the findings (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). Talent management viewed as the systematic attraction, recognition, deployment, interaction, retention, and deployment of employees possessing high potential who become a value to an organization (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Talent management is an approach containing strategy elements such as recruiting, screening, choosing, retention, deployment, employment, and workforce renewal within the organization (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Talent management surfaced in the 1990's when organizations realized their employees' talent along with capabilities constituted a significant factor in attaining their organizational goals (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Within the 21st century, talent management manifested as more pertinent and received more acknowledgment from organizations searching for a grip on their organizational map of excellence (Mohammed et al., 2020). Therefore, most organizations began rethinking their procedures along with policies to reach better acquisition and keep individual talents (Mohammed et al., 2020). Furthermore, globalization, economic hardship, expanding competition, the battle for talent, and the changing characteristics of work within the 21st century deemed talent management an issue strategically (Neri & Wilkins, 2019). Determining the success of any hotel market is through the employees because employees account for delivering service to guests and ultimately ascertaining the service quality the guest receives (Bangwal & Tiwari, 2019). The hotel managers need to concentrate on employing the best talent and educating the talent to delight the guests changing the behavior to what guests may desire (Martin et al., 2020). Employees are indeed assets for organizations as employees are the ones driving the profits (Alown et al., 2020). Talented

employees are extremely advantageous within any organization (Ahmad et al., 2020). These talented employees gained through talent management. Talent management deemed one of the critical elements of organizational survival (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Thus, these strategic elements considered effective approaches when managing capital (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Markets, segments, firms, and organizations generally adopted talent management strategies along with procedures to attract, choose, develop, employ, engage, and keep talented employees who could assist organizations with meeting their objectives (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Talent management separates high-performance organizations from others (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Talent management constitutes training and re-training of individuals in their careers to achieve pressing organizational needs (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). This assists with building a competent workforce and realizing the vision along with the mission of the organization (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Retention of talented employees manifested into a major priority in the midst of organizations over the globe (Ohunakin et al., 2020). Normally, organizations want employees with loyalty, ready to stay in the organization, ready to put forth additional effort over and above expectations of them, with the organization's best interest at heart, along with capabilities of persevering (Ohunakin et al., 2020). Organizational commitment is a type of attachment formed between an employee and the organization (Ohunakin et al., 2020). Talent management presupposes a straightforward spectrum of functions with a specific emphasis on retaining talent becomes one of the significant challenges within every organization (Mihanović, 2021). Talent management based upon a strategic concept for an organization searching for a viable source of competitive advantage along with dynamic growth, due to the modern knowledge-based economy, competent individuals supported by their knowledge and experience have a guarantee

of effective implementation toward an organization's strategies (Shahi et al., 2020). Failure to satisfy the desires and demands of these employees searching for development in the organization is normally the reason for these individuals departing the organization (Shahi et al., 2020). Significant challenges within organizations are outcomes of intense conditions or competition with most of the organizational functions in a multicultural context within the era of globalization (Shahi et al., 2020). Talent management cycle consists of three primary areas, which are identifying along with attracting talents, sustaining talents, and developing talents (Shahi et al., 2020). Talent management recognizes talents and aligns them to job positions to maximize the involvement of employees with positions matching their innate strengths (Shahi et al., 2020). Talent management demonstrates an important managerial practice essential for constructing an inimitable, rare, and lasting source of competitive advantage (Kabwe & Okorie, 2019). Inimitability implies the mindset, skills, capabilities, and retention of unique social relations become difficult to duplicate by competitors (Kabwe & Okorie, 2019). Human talent as a producer of competitive advantage could be inimitable because of the uniqueness of human capital and social capital it comprises (Kabwe & Okorie, 2019). The practice of talent management enables an organization to nurture their recognizable talent internally utilizing a series of development activities (Kabwe & Okorie, 2019). Naturally, it makes economic sense for an organization to attract along with recognizing only stellar performers with high potential and in turn grant them further development opportunities (Kabwe & Okorie, 2019). This should be the final goal of talent management practices instead of chasing the egalitarian approach governing human resource management (Kabwe & Okorie, 2019). In all circumstances, individuals acknowledge talent management activities are ways in developing employees' human capital to benefit the individual and the organization (Kabwe & Okorie, 2019). Creating

competitive advantage through employees requires delicate attention to practices that are the best for leveraging these assets (Otoo, 2019). Business leaders executing the highest talent management processes prepared more than their competitors to battle within the global economy and capitalize swiftly on new opportunities (Filippus & Schultz, 2019). Operational execution includes practical policies along with standards necessary for placement and strategic execution referencing elements relating to long-term segments of talent management (Filippus & Schultz, 2019). Talent management concentrates on designated groups or jobs of talented employees within an organization (Son et al., 2020). Talented employees with top-level quality human capital basically can possess more alternative employment opportunities and eventually decide to voluntarily depart the organization (Son et al., 2020). Organizational survival within a knowledge economy relies upon the pool of talent readily available to the management (Onwugbolu & Mutambara, 2021). Organizations could be in a place allowing them to create a talent pool comprising of employees who are stellar performers (Gama & Edoun, 2020). Creating a talent pool could inevitably allow an organization to select suitable individuals from the created talent pool when the demand to have placements to satisfy existing vacant jobs arose (Gama & Edoun, 2020). The creation of a talent pool could naturally ensure talented employees placement in positions could be effective and enhance the organization, thus ensuring the accomplishment of both talent management along with career planning (Gama & Edoun, 2020). Talent management is a rapidly expanding issue for organizations within the competitive business environment (Younas & Bari, 2020). Today's organizations compete with each other with a desire to attract along with keeping talented employees to advance their operational and workplace fruitfulness (Younas & Bari, 2020). Talent management grew into a major organizational tool for yielding a competitive edge and sustainable performance in the

organization (Younas & Bari, 2020). Talent management practices incorporated to align the pool of talent to the business objectives (Younas & Bari, 2020). Human resource becomes a competitive edge in reaching success by putting in the strenuous work and striving for full efforts to snag organizational objectives (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). Organizations immensely engaged to employ, govern, and retain the peak talents to cope with business challenges in the competitive surroundings (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). The strong belief among practitioners and academicians expressed talent management within recent research works (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). Employee retention becomes mandatory for organizations to keep their best employees (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). Employee retention becomes essential for organizations to keep peak prospective employees to remain reliable to an organization and its mission (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). This should an execution by every organization correctly along with rightly, so the performance of every employee gets better and employee retention can decrease employee turnover (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). If organizations fail to complete this strategy, then employee performance will drop and unfavorably affect the output within the organization (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). One substantial advantage of talent management is its influence on the acquisition and retention of potential along with appreciated employees (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). Talent management is a discretionary tool for employees possessing high or low in the case of system fairness (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). The success of organizations relies on employee retention and assists the organization with minimizing the intent of employee turnover along with boosting production (Gohar & Qureshi, 2021). Human resource management outlines a system devising as a subsystem emphasizing the management of talent, executing recruitment, and developing mechanisms which optimize the valorization of human capital within organizations (Catalin, 2021). The effect of talent management naturally will vary based upon the organizational context

like organizational culture along with human resource management system or human resource management strategy (Son et al., 2020). Knowing innovation starts from diverse interactions between employees, the relation of talent management versus innovation expects to be contingent based on the level of investment toward human resource management with direct association to the total human capital level of the employees (Son et al., 2020). A high degree of talent management considered crucial for advancing the upward effect of talent management toward innovation for several reasons (Son et al., 2020). First, when the total quality of human capital elevates, employees are probably about to acquire and incorporate new knowledge and concepts invented by top performers (Son et al., 2020). Second, besides the best performers, employees with high-quality human capital beneath a high degree of human resource management can invest themselves to create new concepts along with knowledge by gathering and absorbing knowledge with ideas from talented employees, to result in additional resources with inputs for innovation (Son et al., 2020). Finally, while talent nurtures new concepts and knowledge, human resource management investments orchestrate innovation by advancing the total human capital levels of employees (Son et al., 2020). Organizations heavily investing in the overall workforce can consider providing positive signs for extended employment relationships and human capital buildup no matter the employees' performance level (Son et al., 2020). This investment into the overall workforce while executing talent management generated results from the application of human resource management.

Human Resource Management

Human resources are genuine the backbone of any organization and must be functional to obtain success as an organization (Mishra, Singh, & Kumar, 2021). Human resource management transformed in several ways within the past four decades (Richards & Sang, 2021).

Comprehending the effects of human resource management is a central area of interest within human resource management research (Xia et al., 2020). Researchers and practitioners converged on the significance of human resource management in advancing employees' proficiency, engagement, and performance (Osei et al., 2019). Recent research conducted to investigate the state along with the relationship between business growth along with work efficiency while reaching goals and improving employee outcomes (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). In the situation of service-based markets such as hotel and hospitality segments, there is an extensive need to entrust human resources as a pertinent business strategy (Mishra et al., 2021). Thus, there is a want for highly talented employees in this market, who must have proper management for guaranteeing a successful organizational performance (Mishra et al., 2021). During a more complex and unstable economy incapsulating from the late 20th century until the present day, evidence for the need of developing human resources (Mihanović, 2021). Organizations demanding to be effective are progressively realizing the most crucial factor contributing to obtaining goals and targets is human resources (Mekonnen & Azaj, 2020). The modern knowledge economy underscores the imperative need for having a stake in human capital (Osei et al., 2019). Hence, human resources entered the strategic component of market-oriented organizations (Mihanović, 2021). Managing human resources seems like the principal instrument for creating an organization's strategy (Mihanović, 2021). Successful management denoting an individual's knowledge along with skills starts with employee motivation inside a business firm and the level of work performance pertinent to the organization depends on motivation (Mihanović, 2021). In recent years, several organizations along with researchers considered the value belonging of human resource functions like employee selection, progression, and retention (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). This valuable resource derived from an

organization's mind along with inspiration and without it, no course of action to rely on, it could deplete all the organization's resources (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Henceforth, an organization must know how to handle the roles and behavior of its employees (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). As a result, organizations must outline the methods by which they can ensure employees will return to work tomorrow (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Hiring along with termination, compensation along with benefits, training, and administration make up aspects of human resource management impactful to employees (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Today's human resources comprise all activities embarked upon by an organization to achieve individual, group, and organizational objectives (Sreedharan et al., 2020). Human resources are one of the necessary features of business activities (Sreedharan et al., 2020). The success rate of any organization is dependent on the employees who make up part of the activities (Sreedharan et al., 2020). In such circumstances, it becomes appropriate to maintain the position of human resources accountable dwelling on a strategic level, incorporating the desire to propose the most optimal practice for ceding to the organization's objective, vision, and strategic goals (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Human resources considered primarily an administrative function, concentrating on operational tasks while existing in a minor role in the development and implementation of an organization's strategy (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Employees, operations, and individuals became frequently utilized as performance indicators of human resource management within the traditional model (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Human resource management became a systemic approach for controlling people and work culture (Awalluddin, 2020). Human resource management is a system of management workflow of an organization institution, having employment opportunities, giving training, periodically compensating employees, deploying strategies, and developing policies (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). Human resource management is necessary for

sustaining all workflow through the organization systemically (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). Human resource management becomes the beginning stage of every organization to orchestrate their employee and assist with creating policies corresponding to employees (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). Efficient human resource management enables an organization's employees to supply efficiently to the main objectives and priorities within the organization (Awalluddin, 2020). Human resource management can assist organizations to designate targets and monitor the way they reach them (Hartatik et al., 2021). Organizational goals achieved if human resource management functions according to provincial standards and values (Awalluddin, 2020). The strong relationship among individuals and an organization's goal equals human resource management's significance in assisting workers reach full personal growth, productive employment, and connecting workers to employers (Awalluddin, 2020). Human resource management continues with harmonizing employee-employee relationships along with efficient human resource examples as averse to tangible assets not impacted by values and social norms (Awalluddin, 2020). The traditional human resource management model established on the assumption of improving individual employee performance with concurrent inevitability leading to more incredible organizational success (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). As human resources venture to mesh into the operating framework, now it develops into an intangible asset adding value to its capabilities of dealing with adversity (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Human resource management described as a strategic task focusing on functions like human resource planning along with developing restoration specifications and strategies (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Human resource management was a more administrative role in the past instead of a strategic position (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). Although employee management is mainly seen as an administrative-operational function dispensing duties like employment along with a selection of employees and

acknowledging employee complaints; human resource management seen as a strategic occupation concentrating on human resource planning along with consummating compensation procedures and strategies (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Taking into consideration the entire business environment, modern talent management is perhaps the most demanding job in managing human potential (Mihanović, 2021). Maintaining adequate people in adequate positions is the aspiration of every prosperous organization and management in human resources (Mihanović, 2021). Studying the relationship among the components of hiring and retaining skilled employees in the human resources management of an organization is imperative not just in the ambiance of daily efforts to enhance and develop human capital (Bilan et al., 2020). Human capital defined as an individual employee's intelligence, skills, and expertise (Youndt & Snell, 2020). Human resource management looks at employees as active assets requiring to be effectively managed (Mohammad et al., 2021). The significance of human resource management acknowledged in terms of how to cultivate a superior workforce in an organization (Mohammad et al., 2021). The human factor possesses an expanding significance for cultivating an organization, business activity along with competitiveness, deeming it the reason for increased interest toward scientists and researchers in this particular area (Mihanović, 2021). Human resource management, as an influential business activity, establishes a specific type of management including philosophy positioning employees as the primary competitive advantage (Mihanović, 2021). The pathway of this philosophy puts man inside the central position within some elements pertaining to organizational success (Mihanović, 2021). For an extended period until now, successful organizations regarded designating their employees as an investment instead of expenses, becoming aware their employees were their major competitive advantage (Mihanović, 2021). Change is critical for any organization due to its involvement in a long-term operation with

adapting to market conditions (Zainon et al., 2020). Instead of reacting to change, it is critical for every organization to handle all employees while adapting to change (Zainon et al., 2020).

Employees play pertinent roles within the organization in achieving the organization's objective, mission, and vision (Zainon et al., 2020). Organizations need to confront changes in reaching the ideal target (Zainon et al., 2020). Organizations need to recognize solutions advancing toward a fruitful change in the organization (Zainon et al., 2020). Adapting to change depends upon an organization committing to a constant process to ensure understanding of the changes (Zainon et al., 2020). Normally, all organizations concentrate on growing their business, and being successful can only happen with knowledgeable, hardworking, and completely skilled employees (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). The main essence of human resource management is managing employees and maximizing the utilization of resources with the right employee in the right place within the organization (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). If employees satisfied with their jobs, it could increase organizational performance (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). Human resource management involves complex normative issues concerning the legitimate utilization of people in organizations (Felgate, 2020). Human resource management constitutes a strategic approach for effective management of employees in an organization for gaining along with increasing competitive advantage and successful performance (Potgieter & Mokomane, 2020). Human resource management sees employees as functioning resources longing to be effectively managed (Potgieter & Mokomane, 2020). In recent decades, research tailored to effects on human resource management systems exhibited several characteristics molding the global human resource management inquiry (Xia et al., 2020). Human resource practices leaped from the business sector and substantially changed the approach to managing people within the public sector (Xia et al., 2020). Integrating the utilization of human resource practices inside the

strategic planning process allows organizations to better reach their goals and objectives (Mekonnen & Azaj, 2020). Human resource practices used by every organization/business to analyze their performance. (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). Human resource practices considered the major tool to increase performance (Jashari & Kutllovci, 2020). The performance of an organization derives from rewarding change management to prospering and succeeding while adapting to the current environment (Zainon et al., 2020). Organizational performance refers to the results of various practices and procedures occurring during daily operations within a company (Musoga et al., 2021). Human resource practices utilized by every organization to operate their work smoothly (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). It assists in establishing a good relationship with the organization and the employees working for the organization (Dayal & Thakur, 2021). The individual nuances of getting human resource management to function between the organization and the employees were human resource practices.

Human Resource Practices

In today's competitive business arena, enterprises concentrate on effectiveness and efficiency within their business operations (Noopur & Rajib, 2021). Today's business organizations are operating in an exceptionally competitive environment (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2020). Organizations, must, therefore, have a competitive advantage to triumph over their competitors (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2020). Hence, human resources considered to be more pertinent and powerful resources for sustaining a competitive advantage than other types of resources (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2020). Human resources grew to be the last frontiers to sustaining competitive advantage within an organization (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2020). The dynamic of the new global economy changed the way organizations decide their goals (Jesiah & Pachayappan, 2020). Allocations of human resources in businesses viewed as a method to raise adequate business

practices to benchmark business functions and performance (Jesiah & Pachayappan, 2020). Human resources systems challenged reskilling human resources functions and locating methods to re-aligning along with re-engaging employees corresponding to business goals (Jesiah & Pachayappan, 2020). The human resources role is critical and at the heart of most significant decisions within any business, rapidly expanding its influence, and impacting the workplace (Jesiah & Pachayappan, 2020). The human resources system assists individuals to cope with disruption and aid organizations evolve faster (Jesiah & Pachayappan, 2020). Effective human resources create positive effects on performance in general (Matookchund & Steyn, 2019). Over the past 15 years, researchers examined the link between human resource practices and organizational performance (Youndt & Snell, 2020). Human resource practices defined as strategies and policies performed by an organization to guarantee employees work productively to achieve the organizational objectives and ambitions (Noranee et al., 2021). Human resource practices in context possess ethical, legal, and monetary implications with a large influence on the perceptions of employees about practices in an organization (Grobler et al., 2019). In recent decades, the realization of the demand for human resource practices along with supporting employees and elevating their well-being grew (Villajos et al., 2019). Early research in this simply viewed performance impacts on individual human resource practices to be manning, staffing, and compensation (Youndt & Snell, 2020). A consensus among studies is the effectiveness of human resource practices comprise recruitment of the correct employee, policies for competitive compensation along with benefit plans, large engagement of employees, adequate promotion, advancement, progression along with empowerment opportunities, involvement with human resource development practices along with cognitive, emotional, organizational policy-making involving behavioral engagement, effective conflict resolution

leading to positive results, and substantially lower quit along with dismissal rate (Basnyat & Lao, 2020). Human resource practices are those activities linking to specific practices along with formal policies targeting to develop, stimulate, attract, and keep employees who possess successful endeavors and support for the organization (Angonga & Florah, 2019). Human resource practices usually consist of sophisticated hiring procedures, developmental performance appraisals, considerable investment in training, teamwork, extensive communication, job design with the motivational process, performance related to wages/promotion, harmonization, and job security (Ho et al., 2020). Recruitment grew into one of the most significant human resource practices in organizations during the past decades (Miloshevich et al., 2020). The search for talent along with skills on one side and intense market rivals on the other additionally illuminated the significance of recruitment along with selection methods (Miloshevich et al., 2020). Organizations began developing proactive, perplexing recruitment policies along with rigorous selection methods to allure talents and construct their human capital pool (Miloshevich et al., 2020). Successful organizations developed proactive recruitment strategies allowing the searching along with employing applicants to possess skills along with the knowledge of their immediate and future demands (Miloshevich et al., 2020). Recruitment is a method, organizations use to locate, attract, select, and keep employees suited to their existing along with future needs (Miloshevich et al., 2020). Recruitment contains a set of functions designed to recognize and attract a worthwhile group of candidates for a specific position, whereas the selection process consists of specific tools utilized by organizations to select the top candidate within the pool of applicants (Miloshevich et al., 2020). Organizations are constantly searching for new ways to attract as many top-quality candidates as possible and cultivate comprehensive recruitment strategies (Miloshevich et al., 2020). This is much in demand, especially in presence of constricted labor

markets (Miloshevich et al., 2020). Human resource practices are a basic component of any organization's survival (Goyal & Patwardhan, 2021). One of the significant areas to have a meaningful impact on employee turnover is the human resource practices belonging to the hotel market (Basnyat & Lao, 2020). Despite significant economic and social contributions delivered by hotels and the roles of human resource practices act in influencing employee turnover, an exploration of this problem from hotel employees' views, drawing the results from other segments of the hospitality industry can generalize the neglect of hotels largely (Basnyat & Lao, 2020). Turnover is extremely costly for an organization in terms of alluring along with locating skilled employees with the necessary experience, training new employees, and the cost related to replacing employees if they choose to leave (Mehrez & Bakri, 2019). Understanding the reasons and factors associated with departing and staying in an organization has great importance for it gives an employer knowledge on how to formulate strategies for reducing turnover rates (Mehrez & Bakri, 2019). Employee turnover is a major issue for many organizations globally (Mehrez & Bakri, 2019). Many researchers suggest different human resource practices could affect employees' turnover decisions in various manners (Mehrez & Bakri, 2019). Many human resource practices considered motivators for employees staying or departing an organization (Mehrez & Bakri, 2019). To retain employees within an organization, one approach can be with human resource practitioners through the implementation of human resource practices (Noranee et al., 2021). Employee retention is crucial in most organizations (Noranee et al., 2021). Employees are the most important asset of any organization (Noranee et al., 2021). One of the most effective approaches to decreasing the possibility of employees departing an organization is the incorporation of human resource practices (Noranee et al., 2021). Efficient human resource practices could decrease the level of employee thoughts of departing, thus will increase the level

of retention (Noranee et al., 2021). However, it is difficult to keep an employee especially proficient ones to remain loyal to the organization, and losses of this talent give an enormous disadvantage to the organization (Noranee et al., 2021). By keeping human resource practices implemented, it would increase the organization's profitability such as enhancing productivity level spawning from satisfied employees happy to work in the organization (Noranee et al., 2021). Employee satisfaction could generate a rejuvenation toward the execution of the human resource practice of employee retention.

Employee Retention

The hospitality industry experienced quick growth over the past few decades (Chang & Busser, 2020). Apart from the substantial financial benefits gained, the growth also generated concerns about the lack of talent (Chang & Busser, 2020). Skilled and talented employees departing the hospitality industry introduce a deficit of talent and a threat to sustainable employment within the hospitality industry (Chang & Busser, 2020). Turnover of skillful employees becomes a major concern of managers within today's business realm especially because of costs incurred for replacing and missed productivity of them (Ivana, 2020). With the constant increasing competition, employee retention becomes a difficult task for employers (Yumnam & Singh, 2019). Employee retention is a method adopted by organizations to sustain an effective workforce and meet operational requirements concurrently (Yumnam & Singh, 2019). Employee retention comprises procedures making employees part of an organization for an extended period until they retired or until the completion of a project (Ivana, 2020). Employee retention describes a systematic approach of an organization to construct and nurture a working environment encouraging employees to stay (Shrestha, 2019). The most important aspect to ponder for retention of employees is selecting the right individual, empowering the employee to

perform the work, building a sense of belongingness with the organization, having employees act as part of the organization by showing faith along with trust in them, furnishing better insight along with feedback, constituting high organizational moral along with proving recognition to the doers, and finally establishing an environment allowing employees to enjoy having fun together (Yumnam & Singh, 2019). An adequate employer should be knowledgeable about attracting and keeping its employees (Yumnam & Singh, 2019). Once the right individual becomes recruited, retention practices give the tools needed to support them (Shrestha, 2019). Retention of employees, especially urbane knowledgeable employees has always been a major issue for organizations (Srivastava & Mir, 2020). In the same aspect, employers are growing increasingly philosophical regarding the dilemma of turnover, and in most circumstances, budgeting for it by trying to formalize and tailor work processes to be easily transferred to new employees (Srivastava & Mir, 2020). Overall, in the new business landscape, we find employees continuing to seek avenues where they could make real their work commitment (Srivastava & Mir, 2020). The business landscape across the globe became extremely competitive and organizations functioning in this environment have the challenge to keep talented employees (Naveed et al., 2021). To that end, new employees favor opportunities to increase their skills, a ductile work environment, avenues to newer hardware along with software, and the means to job rotation along with horizontal mobility (Srivastava & Mir, 2020). An employer should be capable of deploying employee retention as a suitable human resource practice. Employers must develop and retain high-quality employees to stay competitive and profitable (Subramaniam et al., 2019). Employers failing to retain high-quality employees become not only understaffed but staffed with under-quality employees (Subramaniam et al., 2019). With the drastic changes within the business world, organizations are confronting more diverse situations (Lai, 2021). To

face these challenges, organizations require more experienced employees because those employees possess skills and adaptability (Lai, 2021). This advantage, however, could vanish with the departure of the employees (Lai, 2021). Therefore, the way to retain employees, especially those possessing unique capabilities is a critical piece to an organization's success (Lai, 2021). It is pertinent to develop an environment not only to motivate employees to remain in the organization but to reduce the costs connected to high turnover (Naveed et al., 2021). At the same moment, the organization not only carries the cost in monetary form due to employee turnover but the weight produced by the workload perhaps will transfer to the surviving employees as overall the workload stays constant (Naveed et al., 2021). Consequently, organizations lose their long-term employees and possibly their customers as well (Naveed et al., 2021). Sometimes, organizations bestow indirect benefits to employees are less costly to the organization but are beneficial to the employees and act as a part in increasing the performance of their employees also (Naveed et al., 2021). As a basic part of the actual wealth of organizations, human capital considered the most crucial element of intellectual capital (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Because of the intense environment of competition and the scarcity of seasoned along with skilled employees, it is crucial for the modern organization to discover along with retaining those well-educated, skilled employees, which leads to establishing competitive advantages (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Therefore, recruiting, training, and keeping are powerful and reliable aspects that significantly enhance organizational performance along with resolving crises (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Successful employee retention is necessary for an organization's solidity, growth, and revenue (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). The bottom line is extended longevity of an employee's tenure becomes beneficial for the organization's total performance (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). High employee turnover

increases funds for resources, recruitment, and time when filling open positions (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Employees are especially productive and satisfied thriving within an attractive working environment (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). It is, therefore, constantly an advantage to be as intriguing as an employer as conceivable (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). In addition, the employer enlarges the number of applications collected and decreases voluntary turnover (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Retentions translate into preventing good employees from departing the organization and thereby raising the organization's profitability and productivity (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). It is widely acknowledged employee retention depends mainly on recruitment policies along with human resources practices within the organization (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). The goal of employee retention is to keep qualified employees of the organization indefinitely, due to qualified employees being invaluable intangible assets within the organization (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Employee retention is a procedure where an organization is capable to keep its potential employees remaining loyal to the organization for a lengthy period (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Retention of employees within the organization is a pertinent parameter in evaluating the success level of any organization (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). An industrial market movement toward globalization alters the behavior of employees in the organization (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Therefore, organizations should recognize their important along with effective employees, then attempt to meet their employment, family, educational, and social requirements (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Benefits of keeping important employees consist of the organization's ability to achieve its strategic business objective and gain a competitive advantage over current along with previous competitors (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Human resource practices directly affect employee retention (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Human resource

management dictates the execution of management standards to handle the workforce of an organization (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). Although management cannot always avert the voluntary turnover of their valuable employees, incorporating effective policies and standards with respect to the management of its personnel may tremendously reduce the turnover decisions (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2021). With the rising competition in business, the need for skilled employees rose causing employee retention to become a significant challenge for organizations (Chakravarti & Chakraborty, 2020). Management often obtains huge investments on developing organizational talent and the formal withdrawal of a talented employee is not crucial to the organization but creates a detrimental impact on other organizational employees as well (Chakravarti & Chakraborty, 2020). Every organization today confronts the challenge of recruiting skilled professionals and developing talent (Yumnam & Singh, 2019). (Yumnam & Singh, 2019). To manage top talent requires a consistent balance between human aspirations and strategy along with the monetary needs of the organization (Yumnam & Singh, 2019). This was talent retention. Talent retention simply describes the organization's ability to keep its skilled employees (Mey et al., 2021). A good retention policy begins from the time of selection of the employee and continues until the instance they depart the organization (Chakravarti & Chakraborty, 2020). In a globally competitive market, organizations work to obtain and retain the best, skilled talents to achieve a competitive advantage over competitors (Tripathi et al., 2020). When the talented and proficient workforce begins preferring other organizations for employment, then it hampers the growth within the organization (Tripathi et al., 2020). Losing skilled employees results in despair and insufficient productivity of other existing employees (Tripathi et al., 2020). So, it is pertinent for organizations to target the retention of current employees (Tripathi et al., 2020). Organizations are working hard to reach success by achieving

competitive advantage and a resource deemed one of most valued is the human resource an organization employs (Narayanan et al., 2019). Although conversations on productivity and effectiveness remain on course, issues with turnover, which plays a crucial role in calculating effectiveness still stay unresolved (Narayanan et al., 2019). Staff turnover can decrease organizational performance and can become costly with the need to handle replacement costs (Redondo et al., 2021). Organizations encouraged to lessen the turnover of the company's proficient employees to ensure productivity, condition of work, earnings, competitive advantage, and other related conclusions (Redondo et al., 2021). To resolve these problems, organizations began adopting various strategies to keep a talented workforce (Tripathi et al., 2020). Organizations formulate strategies to keep employees (Naveed et al., 2021). It is through effective retention strategies allows enhancing the ability of organizations to attract and keep their human capital (Shrestha, 2019). This human resource practice was an extension of an organization's capabilities to retain talent in their job positions through retention strategies.

Retention Strategies

Employee retention is extremely imperative in all organizations and therefore, possessing employee retention strategies increases the likelihood of long-term employees (Noranee et al., 2021). The retention strategies depend on the human capital the organization possesses. Human capital regarded as valuable, scarce, non-imitable, and non-sustainable in any organization (Dash & Roy, 2020). Human capital is a considerable differentiating factor and hence reaches overall organization objectives in a remarkable way (Dash & Roy, 2020). The significance of human capital appears only noticeable when they contend with competitors and gain a competitive advantage (Dash & Roy, 2020). Retention is an adequate strategy endorsed by all organizations to keep a committed and competent workforce (Dash & Roy, 2020). Retaining employees is an

issue demanding attention (Jaganjac et al., 2020). There is a particular number of employees contributing to stimulating the working atmosphere by which organizations meet increased productivity, sales, and profitability, but a decrease in employee turnover, and absenteeism (Jaganjac et al., 2020). The world of business changes at an accelerated pace (Jaganjac et al., 2020). Organizations can achieve plenty depending on their adaptation to global changes and imagining future trends within human resource management (Jaganjac et al., 2020). The organization may function locally or regionally but individual employees could be mobile, especially employees with specific knowledge (Jaganjac et al., 2020). This specific knowledge based on the talent of the employees. Because of emerging markets, the business world in 10-20 years will become challenging due to the lack of talented employees (Deeba, 2020). The most important asset in any organization within the 21st century, either business or non-business, is the talented employees (Deeba, 2020). However, the notion to attract, keep, and motivate this talent is challenging due to increased turnover costs comprising loss of corporate memory, productivity, and intellectual along with social capital (Nayak et al., 2021). The direct costs consist of a new applicant, lost time, recruiting, interviewing, orientation, and new employee onboarding (Nayak et al., 2021). Costs for the loss of an employee can tally up to 2.5 times the yearly salary paid for the work (Nayak et al., 2021). Talented employees act in a significant role in the success of an organization (Mabaso et al., 2021). Evidence suggests employees having high degrees of motivation and loyalty are likely to stay with the organization for an extended period (Mabaso et al., 2021). More competitors are coming into the market and exhausting an already insufficient talent pool (Mabaso et al., 2021). Organizations immeasurably invest in recruiting along with selecting employees and invest even more in educating along with developing them over time (Mabaso et al., 2021). Highly talented employees normally possess a

larger variety of opportunities accessible to them (Mabaso et al., 2021). Organizations must do everything they can to keep talent in their organizations (Mabaso et al., 2021). One approach was developing retention strategies. The usage of the word strategy traces back so many centuries (Akpamah et al., 2021). Strategies are concise statements outlining a plan for action (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). These action statements link an individual or group accountable and authorized to obtain specific results within a specified timeframe (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Action statements along with resolutions, and policies aid a community in reaching a vision or goals (Kittikunchotiwut, 2021). Employee retention is a method adopted by organizations to sustain an effective workforce and meet operational requirements concurrently (Yumnam & Singh, 2019). Employee retention comprises procedures making employees part of an organization for an extended period until they retired or until the completion of a project (Ivana, 2020). The combination these two concepts of strategies and employee retention deliberated into a collection of actions executed the premises of retention strategies by the leadership within an organization.

Summary

The key points discussed in the chapter were the intent of this literature review, the search parameters for locating relevant literature, the use of the Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics as the conceptual framework, and seven significant terms used as subtopics in this literature review. The seven significant terms were *employee turnover*, *talent*, *talent management*, *human resource management*, *human resources practices*, *employee retention*, and *retention strategies*. Convergence and divergence made by combining the intent of the literature review, the conceptual framework, and seven significant terms with an explanation of each term in detail. This literature review was conducive to the gaps found in the literature. One gap found

in the literature was the insufficient amount of empirical data on talent and talent management. A second gap found in the literature was the need for further research on retention strategies in SME hotels. Employee turnover, human resource management, human resources practices, and employee retention emphasized along with support the two gaps in this research study. The summary of this literature review logically led into Chapter 3 of this research study. Chapter 3 consisted of sections containing elements proposed for conducting this research study. These sections included Research Methodology and Design, Population and Sample, Materials or Instrumentation, Study Procedures, Data Analysis, Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations, and Ethical Assurances. Chapter 3 contained elements to provide a better understanding of the approach, target population, method for collecting data, and required actions for the study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The problem to be addressed in this study was the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. There were two research questions consisting of inquiries regarding the most and least utilized retention strategies: (a) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels and (b) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels? This research focused on interpreting the perception of hotel managers; ideally identifying the qualitative research methodology with phenomenological research design was the most feasible approach for this study. The appropriate methodology and design along with the viable content in this chapter were essential elements of this study.

Research Methodology and Design (Nature of the Study)

The methodology and design entailed a qualitative phenomenological research study approach. Qualitative research concentrates on probing and investigating the world by examining human behaviors (McGinley et al., 2021). Phenomenology is a philosophy developed by Edmund Husserl around the middle 20th century (Guillen, 2019). The addressed problem in this study was the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. This method allowed for probing and investigating into SME hotels within the hospitality industry. Qualitative research depends on

several factors such as philosophical stances, a process in the research, questions constructed for research, and the extent of knowledge along with available resources (Pathirana et al., 2020). Qualitative research deemed flexible and exploratory research affording participants opportunities to share their experiences with listening researchers without preconceived hypotheses (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). Qualitative research contains a plethora of theoretical paradigms, an array of methods, methodologies, and strategies for research (Lanka et al., 2020). The purpose of this study was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. This method allowed for interpreting the perception of these hotel managers within these SME hotels within the hospitality industry. Qualitative research is distinctly interpretive (Mathotaarachchi & Thilakarathna, 2021). Qualitative research is a procedure functioning as a naturalistic, interpretive domain, steered by the standards along with principles of relativist, constructive ontology, and epistemology with interpretivist (Mathotaarachchi & Thilakarathna, 2021). Qualitative research enables exploration into complex contexts through valuing dual constructed meanings and phenomena interpretations (Esmene & Kirsop-Taylor, 2021). These meanings assist research with comprehending nuanced influences surrounding development into specific cultural and social norms (Esmene & Kirsop-Taylor, 2021). Qualitative researchers identify certain participants as more likely to possess “rich” data or insight than other individuals, therefore more relevant along with useful in achieving the purpose of the research and answering research questions (Johnson et al., 2020). Researchers ponder how various constructs interest to portray the individuals’ experience of an existing phenomenon instead of relying on predetermined variables assumed by the researchers to be impactful (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). The power of the qualitative methodology is the meaning

and theories generated by individuals who lived through the experience (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). Lived experiences methods become most applicable to researchers targeting to explore a specific topic in depth deriving from the context the phenomenon exists (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). Qualitative research concentrates on having reasoning for lived, observed phenomenon within a particular context with distinctively designated individuals, instead of attempting to generalize from the sample to the population (Johnson et al., 2020).

The research design for this study was the phenomenological research design. The phenomenological approach in research surfaced as an answer to the radicalism toward what is objectifiable (Guillen, 2019). Based on life experiences regarding an occurrence from an individual's perspective (Guillen, 2019). Phenomenology is a type of qualitative research searching for a deeper understanding and noting common experiences of individuals with specific matters (Nzozzo & Du Plessis, 2020). This approach illustrated analysis of the most complex parts of human life beyond quantifiable parts (Guillen, 2019). To conduct research for this approach it is must to know the conception along with principles of phenomenology including the method of this approach field of study and mechanisms for searching for the meanings (Guillen, 2019). Knowing the experiences linked to stories along with anecdotes is fundamental to allow us to comprehend the nature of context dynamics and possibly transform it (Guillen, 2019). Phenomenology concentrates on experiences and highlights the sense surrounding everyday life, the meaning of being human, and the experiences of what we become (Guillen, 2019). In this approach, the most important aspect is to comprehend the phenomenon as a part of a pertinent whole and there is no conceivable way to analyze it without a holistic view in relation to the experience it belongs to (Guillen, 2019). Researchers can use other types of qualitative research designs suitable for conducting their studies. Grounded theory,

ethnography, case study, and narrative were other types of qualitative research designs.

Grounded theory is conducive to exploring the process, action, and interaction originating from the participants' perspective (Pathiranage et al., 2020). Ethnography design is conducive when unearthing cultural groups in natural settings (Pathiranage et al., 2020). The case study is a design of qualitative methodology allowing deep exploration into a phenomenon or sole case (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). A narrative is a specific form of discourse, an approach for comprehending one's own along with others' actions toward organizing events and linking viewed consequences of actions along with events over time (Thorsen et al., 2020).

Phenomenological was the most feasible design due to the involvement of the interpretations of the hotel managers' perception of retention strategies through their lived experiences.

The qualitative research methodology was more feasible to use for this study than the quantitative research methodology. The quantitative research study would be not an appropriate research methodology for this study. The objectives of qualitative research are normally the point of exit from traditional quantitative methods (Mathotaarachchi & Thilakarathna, 2021). Quantitative research typically aligns methods for searching objectively to measure phenomenon and tests along with verifying relationships between variables (Lanka et al., 2020). Most qualitative research utilizes a more inductive approach while a deductive approach is typically found in quantitative research (Lanka et al., 2020). While quantitative research often focuses on maximizing statistical power gathered from a practical large sample size, qualitative research often gathers a small practical number of cases to study in-depth (Farrugia, 2019). While subjects or cases of the quantitative research strip their context, the smaller number linked to qualitative research allows exploration into detail and richness belonging to the collected data (Farrugia, 2019). The value of qualitative research resides in its ability to carry a more diverse perspective

than quantitative research (Lanka et al., 2020). The qualitative methodology is often characterized by inquiries into only a small number of instances the phenomenon exists within a complex context possessing many different features (Roald et al., 2021). Therefore, several features belonging to quantitative research like random sampling, where the objective is obtaining unbiased selected participants, are barely in qualitative research (Roald et al., 2021). It was more advantageous to use a qualitative research methodology instead of a quantitative research methodology for this study.

Population and Sample

The sample population was hotel managers from SME hotels in multiple cities throughout the state of Georgia, located in the U.S. These hotel managers consisted of hotel general managers (GMs) and hotel assistant general managers (AGMs). The highest level of leadership in a hotel is the hotel general manager, they set the tone for the hotel staff (Sandstrom & Reynolds, 2020). The addressed problem of this study was the lack of utilization of retention strategies for retaining talent and reducing employee turnover within SME hotels. These hotel managers articulated answers from asked questions, by the researcher, of what they perceived as the most and the least utilized retention strategies through their lived experiences. An interpretation of their perception formulated from these hotel managers' responses to questions asked during scheduled interviews. There were three requirements for the participants: (a) were age 18 or older, (b) served within the last 5 years as GM or AGM at a hotel property, and (c) employed more than 10 but less than 250 employees while serving as GM or AGM at hotel property. The participants viewed these three requirements prior to the study in the recruitment email (see Appendix A).

Recruitment for these participants was through one mass email in a blind carbon copy (BCC) recipient format. McGee et al. (2019) conveyed the BCC recipient format protects the privacy of all the recipients in the email. McGee et al. explained in the BCC recipient the recipients will not be visible to other recipients of the email. McGee et al. expressed the BCC recipient format stops the recipients from receiving future emails within the thread because the recipients are not on the reply-all responses. Email communication either small or large scale represents a substantively imperative, easily accessed, systematic, and analytical flexible form of data for interest group communication (Albert, 2020). All prospective participants received this email for recruitment concurrently. This afforded all potential participants the same opportunity to be part of this study. The data collected from these participants was through 1:1 in-person semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews were conduits for the data expressed by participants on how they perceive retention strategies through a series of asked interview questions (see Appendix B).

The sampling method was a non-probability technique. Qualitative research uses a non-probability sampling approach because it does not yield statistical representative samples or gives statistical inference (Shahi et al., 2020). Qualitative research consisted of several sampling methods. Convenience sampling was the non-probability sampling method to obtain these hotel managers for this study. Convenience was the most feasible sampling method for this study due to the accessibility and location of the potential participants. Fisher and Bloomfield (2019) outlined convenience sampling to be a technique whereby the selected sample has the basis of being convenient with accessibility to the researcher. The geographical location of the study made the research convenient for the researcher. Opportunistic, purposive, theoretical, and conceptually driven approaches were other sampling methods researchers used in qualitative

research. Opportunistic is the sampling method involving researchers capturing favorable situations occurring while the study is in progress, grasping emerging opportunities along the way for data collection (Farrugia, 2019). Purposive is the sampling method involving researchers deliberately and purposefully choosing the sample they deemed the most fruitful to answer the research question (Farrugia, 2019). Theoretical is the sampling method where sampling decisions follow the theoretical framework underlying the study or the theory emerging from the data collection (Farrugia, 2019). Conceptually driven approaches comprise purposive and theoretical sampling (Farrugia, 2019).

The sample size allowed for the collection of the necessary amount of data to complete this study. The sample size is at the researcher's discretion, naturally may often translate to the sample size determined by the number of participants who experienced the phenomenon and are available to the researcher (Ellis, 2020). Creswell and Báez (2021) expressed the group size for phenomenological research may vary from three to 15 participants and the researcher can choose the population sample size to fit the research. The population sample size for this study was 15 participants. This maximized the researcher's effort in collecting data during the study. The researcher accepted the first 15 responses meeting the criteria to participate. In a recent study, Koseoglu et al. (2020) conducted a qualitative research study on key success factors of strategy formulation and implementation within the hotel market in Hong Kong, China. Koseoglu et al. used 15 top-level hotel managers as participants initially. Koseoglu et al. increased the population size from 15 participants to 21 participants for saturation. Saturation considered when the research recognizes no new concepts or information on the research (Alam, 2021). Saturation is normally recognized as collecting enough data to achieve the research objective (Alam, 2021). This study possessed the same saturation principles as the study conducted by Koseoglu et al.

and had six additional participants added to achieve the research objective. The population sample size for this study increased from 15 participants to 21 participants for saturation.

Instrumentation

The semi-structured interview was the instrumentation for collecting data from the participants during the study. Data captured through semi-structured interviews was from lived experiences of the target population. The interview is perhaps the most widely utilized methodological and research instrument in social science; notable for being a staple of qualitative research (Edwards & Holland 2020). It deems a central data collection resource utilized across the entire range of disciplines (Edwards & Holland 2020). For some, the interview is a method relied on excessively by qualitative researchers (Edwards & Holland 2020). There can be a thematic, topic-focused, biographical, or narrative approach with topics or beginning points for discussion handled in a fluid structure allowing unexpected issues to emerge (Edwards & Holland 2020). The semi-structured interviews for this study was 1:1 in-person. When an interview is in-person, it assists with stimulating in-depth responses from the participants (Alam, 2021). There is an interactional swapping of dialogue between more than two participants and in-person or remote context establishing a relatively informal tone (Edwards & Holland 2020). The semi-structured interviews gained depth through a series of interview questions. The key point of in-depth interviews is the depth of focus on the participant (Suer & Demirtas, 2021). The semi-structured interview questions coincided with the research questions. Interview questions based on the professional background of the participant and retention strategies.

The instrument origin evolved from the data needed to inform the reader about the participants in the study and the two research questions. The semi-structured interview questions for the instrument were in three separate sections. The first section was interview questions to

obtain professional background data of the participants in the study. The second section was interview questions relating to retention strategy deriving from the two research questions. The third section was interview questions reflecting on the questions in the first and second sections.

The semi-structured interviews rendered the opportunity to highlight validity and reliability during the collection of the data. Although the idea of validity and reliability relates closely, the idea expresses contrasting properties toward the measuring instrument (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). Normally, a measuring instrument could be reliable and not be valid, but a valid measuring instrument is most likely to be reliable (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). Validity categorizes the level at which a measurement gives an adequate answer (McDonald et al., 2019). Validity characterized by the meaningful and suitable interpretation of the data collected from the measuring instrument as an outcome during the analyses (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). Validity established for this instrument was through the eligibility requirements for the participants. The participants had to served as a hotel GM or hotel AGM within the last 5 years and employed 10 to 250 employees. This validated the participants' knowledge of the topic relating to the two research questions. Reliability categorizes the level at which a measurement generates the same answer (McDonald et al., 2019). Reliability is a gauge for the stability of measured values collected in repeated measurements with the same conditions utilizing the same measuring instrument (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). Reliability established for this instrument was through the actual semi-structured interviews having the same questions, in the same setting, in the same format, and at the same duration, but scheduled at various times for all participants in this study. This showed the reliable capabilities of the instrument for use in future research studies.

Study Procedures

Study procedures consisted of four phases. The four phases were the Recruitment Phase, Interview Phase, Transcribe Phase, and Study Closure Phase. The phases were in sequential order beginning with the Recruitment Phase and ending with the Study Closure Phase. Execution of the phases occurred after NCU Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the research study and issued a Letter of Approval (see Appendix C).

Recruitment Phase

In this phase, the researcher performed a series of tasks involving gathering participants before the Interview Phase. This phase comprised of five tasks: (a) visited SME hotels within multiple cities located in the State of Georgia to collect, available to the public, business cards of the hotel GMs and hotel AGMs from the hotel properties' front desk or front office, (b) sent one mass recruitment email to the prospective participants with the emails found on business cards, (c) provided a telephone call to each potential participant who replies to recruitment email and answer incoming telephone calls of potential participants desiring to correspond via telephone, (d) screened each potential participant to ensure they meet eligibility requirements, and (e) scheduled a date and time at a designated location with individuals meeting eligibility requirements to participate in an interview for the study. The researcher ended the Recruitment Phase once the sample size reached 21 participants.

Interview Phase

In this phase, the researcher performed a series of tasks involving interviewing the participants before the Transcribe Phase. This phase comprised of nine tasks: (a) arrived at the participant's hotel property 30 minutes prior to the interview to meet with the participant and setup the interview space, (b) ensured the interview space was in a private and quiet area, (c) set

up of personal computer and audio recorder in interview space, (d) read over consent letter (see Appendix D) with the participant, (e) reiterated to the participant they can stop the interview at any time, (f) started the interview by turning on the audio recorder after the participant acknowledges the consent letter, (g) asked the participant all prescribed interview questions, (h) stopped the interview after the participant answers all interview questions, and (i) gave participant \$50 gift card for participating. The researcher ended the Interview Phase once each participant in the study received a gift card.

Transcribe Phase

In this phase, the researcher performed a series of tasks involving transcribing the transcript of the interview before the Study Closure Phase. This phase comprised of four tasks: (a) sent the audio recording of the interview to transcribe agency, (b) sent the participant a copy of the interview transcript once completed by transcribing agency, (c) saved an electronic data file of all participants' interview transcript on a secure digital (SD) card, and (d) stored SD card in private safe for 3-5 years before destroying. The researcher ended the Transcribe Phase once each participant in the study received a copy of their interview transcript and the SD card was in a private safe.

Study Closure Phase

In this phase, the researcher will perform a series of tasks involving ending the study and ceasing all data collection. This phase comprises three tasks: (a) submitted Study Closure Form to NCU's IRB, (b) obtained confirmation from NCU's IRB on receiving Study Closure Form for the study, and (c) prepared transcripts of the participants' interviews generated by transcribing agency for data analysis utilizing CAQDAS NVivo. The researcher ended the Study Closure Phase once NCU's IRB confirmed receiving Study Closure Form.

Data Analysis

Methods for qualitative data analysis consist of an assortment of techniques, with the selected approach depending on the methodology, the collected data, and questions derived from the researcher (Fisher & Bloomfield, 2019). This research study used thematic analysis for analyzing the data. Fisher and Bloomfield (2019) expressed thematic analysis identifies themes, patterns, and similar threads from the data. Thematic analysis is an unambiguous approach for conducting hermeneutic content analysis from a group of analyses formed from non-numerical data (Roberts et al., 2019). It establishes patterns of recognition utilized in content analysis with themes or codes manifesting from the data becoming the segment for analysis (Roberts et al., 2019). The process consists of the recognition of themes relevant to a particular research concentration, research question, the context within the research, and the framework (Roberts et al., 2019). This approach enables data to have a description and interpretation for meaning (Roberts et al., 2019). After there is the identification of all themes, the researcher determines themes essentiality to understanding the meaning of the phenomenon and incidental occurrences (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). NVivo was the CAQDAS for conducting thematic analysis of the dataset. When managing extremely large data collections or complex research designs, computer software is favorable for assisting researchers in coding, arranging, and weighting data elements (Johnson et al., 2020). While such software assists in managing data analyses and interpretation but it is still the responsibility of the researcher (Johnson et al., 2020). NVivo gives a more flexible approach to categorizing rich-text data and increasing the quality of generated results (Alam, 2021). The dataset came from the answers during interviews with participants and transcribed into transcripts to upload into NVivo.

The role of the researcher came into play before, during, and after conducting the interviews for the research study. Before conducting the interviews, the researcher ensured the interview questions for the participant linked to the addressed problem in the study, the purpose of the study, and the research questions of the study. The researcher identified and labeled all participants using a sequential numbering system. The sequential numbering system was Participant-1 through Participant-21. The researcher established codes for the dataset in NVivo. Coding consists of the assignment of labels on portions of text, pictures, or various types of data (Mitchell & Schmitz, 2021). The researcher read the consent letter to the participant and ensured the participant understood the intent of the letter. The researcher tested the audio recording device before recording. The researcher ensured the participant was ready for the interview and started recording. While conducting the interview, the researcher asked interviewees interview questions in a clear and concise manner. The researcher took notes on a separate document of the interview for each participant. The researcher observed the participant's body language and facial expressions during the interview. Observations indicate the observer is looking and listening to events appropriately and the participant's observation gives a direct interpretation of the phenomenon (Alam, 2021). The researcher stopped the audio recording device after each participant answers all interview questions. After conducting the interview, the researcher had the recordings from the audio recording device transcribed into a transcript. The researcher sent the audio recordings of all participants to a transcriber to generate transcripts. Transcription used to anonymize research participants and allow extraction from the dataset used in journal articles, reports, and various forms of dissemination supporting the researchers' claims (Jenkins et al., 2021). The researcher sent a copy of the participant's interview transcript only to the participant. The researcher uploaded the transcripts to NVivo for data analysis.

Assumptions

Assumptions defined as an unsubstantiated assertion or belief concerning a system requiring establishment for the system to have manipulation in an advantageous manner to the intended circumstance (Ooi et al., 2019). An assumption distinguished as a self-evident truth, a tested belief, and a set limitation (Ooi et al., 2019). There were six assumptions anticipated for this study. The first assumption was a belief the participants were truthful, open, honest, and forthcoming with their answers during the semi-structured interviews. The researcher used this assumption to view the trustworthiness of the data. The second assumption was a belief the participants' professional experiences allowed them to give viable answers to the questions during the semi-structured interviews. The researcher used this assumption to view the credibility of the data. The third assumption was a belief the participants would not cancel the interview and be present at the scheduled time. The researcher used this assumption to ensure data collection in a timely manner. The fourth assumption was a belief the participants experienced a phenomenon through their lived experiences of retention strategies utilized to obtain talent in job positions and reduce turnover within a SME hotel. The researcher used this assumption to generate the premise of each participant has a particular experience. The fifth assumption was a belief the CAQDAS generated positive results through thematic analysis. The researcher used the results from the collected data to emphasize the addressed problem within the study. The final assumption was a belief the data collected through semi-structured interviews will answer the two research questions of this study. The researcher used this assumption to meet the main objective of the study. The rationale underlying these assumptions derived from examinations of the research methodology along with design, the sample population, instrumentation, study procedures, and data analysis of this study.

Limitations

In this study, the limitations inferred from the methodology of qualitative research. Limitations serve as weaknesses inside the study, could possibly influence the findings and results of the research (Ross & Zaidi, 2019). Identifying study limitations are realistically a pertinent segment of the scholarly process (Ross & Zaidi, 2019). No research design is flawless nor impervious to explicit and implicit biases; nonetheless, various methods can lessen the mark of study imitations (Ross & Zaidi, 2019). One limitation of this qualitative research study was the sampling method. Qualitative research methodology used non-random sampling and quantitative research methodology used random sampling. Mitigation of this limitation was by selecting a specific type of non-random sampling to perform during the study. The type of sampling for this qualitative research study was convenience sampling. A second limitation of this qualitative research study was collecting data pertaining to the professional background of the participants without the use of a questionnaire or survey. This qualitative research study used the semi-structured interview as the instrument to collect data from the participants. The quantitative research methodology may use questionnaires or surveys to collect data. Mitigation of this limitation was by adding professional background questions to the interview questions.

Delimitations

Delimitations identified by the researcher to give boundaries within this study. Delimitations should illuminate what will or will not be within the research as a conscious and rational decision to allow the proposed research to be manageable (Coker, 2022). The esoteric, mysterious, and latent nature of delimitations with iterations such as scope, boundary, and conditions dictated by the researcher cloaked in secrecy the epistemology for the intended research (Coker, 2022). One delimitation of this study was the type of strategy addressed in the

topic. The problem to be addressed in this study was the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover. The study involved retention strategies and no additional strategies. The existing literature in this study expanded retention strategies. A second delimitation of this study was the participants. The participants were hotel managers consisting only of GMs and AGMs. The purpose of this study was to conduct a qualitative phenomenological research study to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences. These managers did not include managers from various departments throughout the hotel such as the front desk, housekeeping, maintenance/engineering, sales, events, fitness facility, and food & beverage. The conceptual framework for this study was Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics to interpret the perception of these hotel managers' lived experiences. A third delimitation of this study was the size of these hotel managers' hotel properties. The two research questions contained inquiries about the one most and least utilized retention strategy through these hotel managers' lived experiences within SME hotels. This study pertained only to SME hotels and did not include micro-enterprise hotels with less than 10 employees or large enterprise hotels with more than 250 employees. These delimitations were germane to the addressed problem, purpose, conceptual framework, research questions, and existing literature within this study.

Ethical Assurances

This study received approval from NCU's IRB prior to data collection. IRB safeguards the rights belonging to human research subjects, selected to participate in research activities performed under the affiliated institution (Sampoornam & Jothilakshmi, 2021). Research requiring IRB review comprises pilot studies and research involving human subjects utilizing medical or other devices (Marzinsky & Smith-Miller, 2019). This ensured this research met

requirements governed by NCU and provides satisfactory ethical assurances for the participants. The participants were hotel managers from SME hotels throughout multiple cities within the state of Georgia located in the U.S. These hotel managers received a series of questions during a semi-structured interview concerning their professional background and retention strategies. These important protections allow fieldwork researchers to gather candid responses from the participant who can speak freely without fear of reprisals (Dougherty, 2021). When data from participants are for publications, researchers need to ensure any statements from the participants are not traceable to the participants (Dougherty, 2021). There was a less than minimal risk to these participants during the study. The participants' personal information remained confidential. Confidentiality is a normal practice in social research and the participants expect confidentiality kept (Ulatowski & Walker, 2021). Confidentiality is an addition to privacy and primarily refers to safeguarding information, especially sensitive clinical information (Issa et al., 2020). Confidentiality concentrates on limiting the disclosure of proprietary information and restricting access to unauthorized entities (Ghondaghsaz et al., 2022). Correspondence with the participants was through a secured email account or 1:1 in-person. The researcher was the only individual with access to the participants' personal information.

The role of the researcher ensured the three ethical principles outlined in the Belmont Report. The Belmont Report created by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research in 1979 (Kamp et al., 2019). The Belmont Report outlined three ethical principles researchers must abide by (Kamp et al., 2019). The first principle was respect for persons. The most common technique for achieving respect for persons is utilizing informed consent (Kamp et al., 2019). Informed consent involves the approach with individuals understanding participation in the research is voluntary and the individual can halt

their participation at any time (Kamp et al., 2019). The informed consent process starts with first contact with the possible participants (Kamp et al., 2019). The participants received a consent letter before participating in this study. The second principle was beneficence. Beneficence expressed normally by the two rules of do not harm and maximize the anticipated benefits while minimizing expected harms (Kamp et al., 2019). Normally, the risk toward human subjects is not the collection of data but what the researcher uses the data for (Kamp et al., 2019). The third principle was justice. Justice gives moral obligations concerning the selection of participants, specifically with having fair procedures in participant selection (Kamp et al., 2019). The researcher stored the collected data on a SD card in a secured safe and intend to keep the data for 3-5 years. The researcher deleted electronic data from personal computer and destroyed any paperwork containing data from the study. The systematic biases impacting data collection and research approaches are known phenomenon challenging the truth (Johnston, 2022). There was an elimination of any biases through the use of a CAQDAS for thematic analysis. There were no biases connected to personal and professional experiences with the topic, problem, and context of this study and this strategy of utilizing a CAQDAS prevented influencing the analysis or findings.

Summary

This chapter contained an approach to address the problem of the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. This chapter contained an explanation of how the qualitative research methodology and phenomenological research design is an apparatus for interpreting the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. This chapter contained additional

sections such as Population and Sample, Instrumentation, Study Procedures, Data Analysis, Assumption, Limitations, Delimitations, and Ethical Assurance to support the study. This chapter logically led into Chapter 4. Chapter 4 had a detailed in-depth depiction of the findings found during the study.

Chapter 4: Findings

The problem to be addressed in this study was the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The problem to be addressed and the purpose of the study effectuated the two research questions: (a) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels and (b) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels? This chapter comprised an explanation depicting the trustworthiness of the data, results from the study conducted, evaluation of the findings, and a summary with key points from the chapter.

Trustworthiness of the Data

Crucial to all qualitative approaches of inquiry is demonstrating trustworthiness (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). To ensure the trustworthiness of the data for this study, there was a consideration for four specific strategies: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. Prosek & Gibson (2021) suggested trustworthiness is considering identifying specific strategies to support credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability when publishing qualitative research. The data proceeds like such to be trustworthy, the research must be replicable, and to guarantee replicability, researchers must ensure transparency of their data along with methods (Pratt et al., 2020). By trustworthiness, we express the level to which the reader evaluates whether the researcher is honest with how they carried out the research and

reasonable in their conclusions (Pratt et al., 2020). Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability proved in the researcher's engagement with participants and collection of the data throughout the study.

Credibility

Credibility often symbolizes the accuracy of the research or internal consistency (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). Credibility assessed through the success of the researchers offering rich, nuanced analyses by doing justice to the experience by constructing multiple realities from the participants' understanding and illustrating their worldview (Humphreys et al., 2021). Credibility established in this research study with two different methods. The first method used in this study to establish credibility for the collected data was triangulation. In a recent study, Canavesi & Minelli (2021) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study on servant leadership and employee engagement. Canavesi & Minelli used triangulation in their study to establish credibility for the collected data. In a second recent study, Hundessa (2021) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study on the experiences of department heads in a first-generation university located in Ethiopia, Africa. Hundessa used triangulation in their study to establish credibility for the collected data. Triangulation comprises both a priori and an *ex post* for critical evaluation of multiple alternatives of all facets of the research design for a single study, starting with formulating a research problem, data collection, and analysis for interpreting the results (Nielsen et al., 2020). Triangulation in this study involved three aspects of the participants supplying the collected data. The first aspect used for triangulation in this study was the eligibility requirement for all participants to serve as hotel general manager (GM) and assistant general manager (AGM) to participate. This ensured the participants had the level of knowledge pertaining to the two research questions. The second aspect used for triangulation in this study

was the eligibility requirement for all participants to serve in a GM or an AGM position within the last 5 years to participate. This ensured the information presented by the participants is up-to-date and current. The third aspect used for triangulation in this study involved visiting each hotel's website and third-party travel websites to identify the hotel managers' knowledge of hotel operations by reviewing comments made by past hotel guests. The collected data deemed to have credibility through triangulation by using these three aspects. The second method used in this study to establish credibility for the collected data was member checks. In a recent study, Asad et al. (2022) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study on the different phases of social mood toward the financial risk tolerance of investors. Asad et al. used member checks in their study to establish credibility for the collected data. In a second recent study, Sincar et al. (2020) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study on Turkish female school administrators' views on self-development and techniques adopted during the self-development process. Sincar et al. used member checks in their study to establish credibility for the collected data. Member checks or participant feedback became so generally and constantly recommended as a validity along with trustworthiness checks, it appeared to be a precondition for rigorous qualitative research (Motulsky, 2021). Motulsky (2021) expressed two approaches for member checks. Motulsky suggested one approach was providing the participants with a transcript of the interview and a second was providing the participants with a summary of the findings. In this study, the participants received a transcript of their interview. Begin with furnishing the interview transcript or a lone case summary to the participant for reviewing, changing, deleting, modifying, or adding to, normally in writing or having an additional interview (Motulsky, 2021). Each participant in this study received a transcript of their interview to member check. The collected

data deemed to have credibility through member checks by using the transcripts of the participants' interviews.

Transferability

Transferability marked by detailed, systematic, and trustworthy findings from the research (Sriyono & Proyogi, 2021). Transferability is the level to which the outcomes are generalizable in context, with the participants, or with external validity (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). Since qualitative research usually does not contain generalized findings deriving from the sample population from which the sample is from, the researcher can divulge a vivid description of the research context, and background information involving the participants to enable the transferability of findings deriving from one context to comparable contexts or groups (Daniel, 2019). Transferability refers to the degree of applicability connecting to other settings or situations (Fossum et al., 2020). Transferability for the collection of data against this study is in three different approaches. The first approach to the transferability of the data in this study was with the participant. The data collected for this study could come from any GM and AGM serving at a small enterprise hotel or a medium enterprise hotel. The data gathered from either type of participant. The second approach to the transferability of the data against this study is with the type of hotel. Parnell and Crandall (2021) described a small enterprise to be between 10 - 50 employees and a medium enterprise to be between 51 – 250 employees. All participants employed 10 – 250 employees at their hotel property to participate in this study. The number of employees employed by each participant varied from one hotel property to another. The data gathered at either type of hotel. The third approach to the transferability of the data in this study was with the location. The data collected for this study took place at multiple SME hotel properties in numerous different cities throughout the state of Georgia, located in the U.S. The

location of the hotels did not affect the collection of the data. The collected data deemed to have transferability through the three approaches.

Dependability

Dependability is the coherency of findings or reliability (Prosek & Gibson, 2021).

Dependability is the approach used to ensure the research is replicable and ample to establish future studies (McGinley et al., 2021). Dependability like reliability depicts consistency, structure, and documenting the research findings (Makapela & Mtshelwane, 2021).

Dependability ensures using similar methods in related studies (De Alwis & Hernwall, 2021).

Dependability for this study illustrated through the study procedures and consistency in conducting interviews with the participants. The study procedures outlined in Chapter 3 provided four phases for the completion of this research. The four phases are the Recruitment Phase, Interview Phase, Transcribe Phase, and Study Closure Phase. In the Recruitment Phase, the researcher visited numerous SME hotels within multiple cities located in the State of Georgia to collect the business cards of hotels managers, sent one mass recruitment email to the prospective participants with the information found on the business cards, corresponded with the potential participant through who replies to recruitment email, answer incoming telephone calls of potential participants, screened each potential participant for eligibility, and scheduled date along with times for interviews with potential participants. In the Interview Phase, the researcher arrived at the participant's hotel property 30 minutes prior to the interview, found secluded spaces for the interviews, set up equipment for the interviews space, read over the consent letter with the participant, reiterate to the participant they can stop the interview at any time, conducted the interview, stopped interview after the participant answers all interview questions, and gave the participant a \$50 gift card for participating. In the Transcribe Phase. the researcher sent audio

recordings of the interviews to transcribe agency, sent the participants a copy of the interview transcript once completed by transcribing agency, saved an electronic data file of all participants' interview transcripts on a SD card, and stored the SD card in a private safe. In the Study Closure Phase, the researcher submitted Study Closure Form to NCU's IRB, obtained confirmation from NCU's IRB by receiving the Study Closure email for the study, and prepared transcripts for analysis utilizing computer assisted qualitative data analysis software NVivo. This degree of detail showed dependability. Researchers of future studies can replicate this study in the same fashion and execute their research study in the manner. The collected data deemed to have dependability through procedures outlined in the study.

Confirmability

Confirmability is assuring the outcomes are reflective of the participants and not the views of the researchers while having enough description fitted for replicability (Prosek & Gibson, 2021). Confirmability of the data is validating while avoiding biases during the process of data collecting (Pathiranage et al., 2020). Confirmability recognized as the objectivity of the data, reached through independent auditing of the findings and comparing along with refining the interpretations among researchers (Ramdani et al., 2022). It is the researcher's responsibility to unmask reality in a way to become objective, non-biased, unprejudiced, and impartial (Makapela & Mtshelwane, 2021). This ensures the researcher follows the quality process of assessing the data (Makapela & Mtshelwane, 2021). Furthermore, the researcher stays neutral during the study and does not alter the findings (Makapela & Mtshelwane, 2021). Within every interview iteration with participants, the same methods were in place. The interviews for the participants took place on the hotel properties of each of the participants. The interviews were in a safe, secure, and private location on the hotel properties. The researcher allowed the same allotted time for

conducting the interviews for each of the participants in the study. The data collection process was through an audio recording device to omit any transcribing errors by the researchers. The researcher asked the participants the same 10 interview questions. The use of the English language with each interview question ensured consistency and confirmation of the participant's understanding of the basis of all 10 interview questions. The audio recording device checked before the start of each interview and checked at the conclusion of each interview. The same audio recording device used for each interview. Each participant listened to their audio recording after their session to confirm the clarity and accuracy of the interview. This gave the participants an opportunity to address the content of the transcript and make any necessary changes. Each participant's audio recording of their interview transcribed by transcribe agency to omit any transcribing errors by the researcher. Participants received a copy of the transcript to review and confirm their individual transcripts of the interviews. There were no changes made to any participant's transcript. The collected data deemed to have confirmability through the actions of the researcher.

Results

The focus of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to address the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The purpose was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies. The interpretations of the hotel managers' perceptions extracted from the data collected through semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews consisted of 10 interview questions emanated from the two research questions. The semi-structured interview questions consisted of three separate sections: (a) IQ1a through IQ1e were five questions on professional background, (b) IQ2a through IQ2b were two

questions on retention strategy, and (c) IQ3a through IQ3c were three reflection questions on retention strategy. The total time for each interview varied between five to 10 minutes. There were audio recordings made of all the participants' interviews. A transcribing company transcribed audio recordings of all the participants' interviews to eliminate researcher error and bias. Objectively the results came from data provided by the participants and deemed relevant to the topic.

The data collection derived from 21 hotel managers consisted of GMs and AGMs from SME hotels in multiple cities throughout the state of Georgia, located in the U.S. There were 15 hotel managers conveniently sampled for this research study. In the Recruitment Phase, 15 participants received a recruitment email requesting their participation in the research study. Six of the 15 prospective participants referred six additional potential participants for the study. These six referrals were conducive to snowball sampling for the study. Snowball sampling initiated inadvertently. Snowball sampling is a feasible technique for recruiting study participants (Leighton et al., 2021). Participants provide the identity of peers they recommend for participating in study (Kubiciel-Lodzińska, 2021). Snowball sampling adapted for questionnaire surveys, one-on-one interviews, or ethnographic observations (Audemard, 2020). This research study reached saturation with the six additional participants increasing the sample size from 15 to 21 participants. All participants met eligibility criteria by being over the age of 18, served as GM or AGM in the last 5 years, and employed between 10 to 250 employees at their hotel property. In the Interview Phase, these 21 participants reviewed the consent letter with the researcher and participated in a recorded interview on their hotel property. In the Transcribe Phase, all participants received a copy of the transcript for their interview to review.

All participants' identifications were confidential in this study and all participants received a letter/number designation of P-1 to P-21 for the study. Sixteen participants served as GMs and five participants served as AGMs. One hotel was an independently owned property, one hotel was a corporate property, and 19 hotels were franchise properties. A hotel company owned and operated the one independently owned property. A hotel chain owned and operated the one corporate property. Several different hotel entities owned and operated the 19 franchise hotels. Majority of the participants worked at the franchise hotels, which made up 90% of the hotel properties in this study. Normally, within a franchise relationship, one individual, which is the franchisor allows another individual which is the franchisee to utilize its trademark or brand name, certain business systems along with processes, to produce and promote a good or service in a certain specific manner yielding a monetary consideration (Zolfagharian & Naderi, 2020). A franchise relationship becomes legally bound with a contract between the franchisor and the franchisee called a "franchise agreement" (Zolfagharian & Naderi, 2020). The franchisor has remuneration comprising of an affiliation fee accompanied by hotel royalties (Cristina & Loredana, 2019). One hotel property had a rating of 2-star, eight hotel properties had a rating of 3-star, two hotel properties had a rating of 3 ½-star, nine hotel properties had a rating of 4-star, and one hotel property had a rating of 4 ½-star. Hotel classification range from 1-star to 5-star (Khan et al., 2022). One-star being the lowest degree and 5-star being the highest star degree (Khan et al., 2022). Hotels discover their star rating beneficial for producing marketing strategies focused on a specific target market and allowing branding along with promotion (Odebiyi & Gontar, 2020). The number of employees ranged from 25 to 150 among the hotel properties. This constituted a small enterprise hotel property or a medium enterprise hotel property. The participants' hotel experience ranged from 10 years to 32 years with an average of 18.6 years. As

shown in Table 1, participants provided professional background information at the start of the interview with the first five questions.

Table 1

Professional Background

Participant	Position	Hotel type	Hotel rating	Number of employees	Hotel experience
P-1	AGM	Franchise	4-stars	50	20+ years
P-2	GM	Franchise	2 1/2-stars	25	18 years
P-3	GM	Franchise	3-stars	40	18 years
P-4	GM	Franchise	2 1/2-stars	35	18 years
P-5	GM	Franchise	4-stars	100	18 years
P-6	GM	Franchise	2 1/2-stars	150	18 years
P-7	GM	Franchise	3-stars	75	18 years
P-8	GM	Franchise	2 1/2-stars	50	18 years
P-9	GM	Franchise	3-stars	20	18 years
P-10	GM	Franchise	3-stars	20	18 years
P-11	GM	Franchise	2 1/2-stars	30	18 years
P-12	GM	Independently Owned	3-stars	35	18 years
P-13	AGM	Franchise	2 1/2-stars	35	18 years
P-14	GM	Franchise	2 1/2-stars	27	18 years
P-15	GM	Franchise	4-stars	44	18 years
P-16	GM	Franchise	3-stars	100	18 years
P-17	GM	Franchise	2 1/2-stars	27	18 years
P-18	GM	Franchise	3-stars	30	18 years
P-19	GM	Franchise	3-stars	25	18 years
P-20	GM	Franchise	2 1/2-stars	26	18 years
P-21	AGM	Franchise	4-stars	80	18 years

Research Question 1: What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

This research question supported by interview questions IQ2a, IQ3a, and IQ3c. Audio recordings of participants' interviews transcribed into a transcript by transcribing company and the transcript imported into NVivo by the researcher for analysis. NVivo 12 was the version used for the analysis.

The participants' answers during the interviews invoked 10 themes. Several participants gave multiple responses to various interview questions, but only the first response to those interview questions used in the analysis. Transcripts analyzed and themes identified through the usage of NVivo. Themes assigned a sequence number corresponding to the research question. As shown in Table 2, there were 10 themes generated from the interview questions and salient to the research question.

Table 2

Themes: Perceived Most Utilized Retention Strategy

Theme number	Themes	Participants responded ($n=21$)	Percentage
1.1	Communicate	5	23.8%
1.2	Utilize Pay	2	9.5%
1.3	Include into the culture	1	4.8%
1.4	Show Respect and Fairness	2	9.5%
1.5	Provide Training	5	23.8%
1.6	Invest in Employees	1	4.8%
1.7	Appreciate Employees	1	4.8%
1.8	Show Kindness and Welcoming	2	9.5%
1.9	Allow Opportunity for Growth	1	4.8%
1.10	Use Hands-on Approach	1	4.8%

Theme 1.1: Communicate. The theme of communicate was the theme five participants responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-1 stated, “Communication.” and reflected by saying, “You got to communicate to your team.” P-3 stated, “Sharing information.” and reflected by saying, “Finding the strength that, a person brings to the team and, nurturing it, building on it, developing it, as far as I can, that only makes the team stronger.” P-11 stated,

Staying organized on a daily basis by letting the employees know what their, work schedule was for that day in terms of how many rooms they had to clean, what was their arrival date, and then also letting the employees know what their expected salary was prior to them actually receiving it.

and reflected by saying, “Letting the employee know what their pay rate is and how much they're going to make at the end of the pay period.” P-12 stated, “Communication.” and reflected by saying, “Communicate with each one on an individual daily basis and a weekly basis, both.” P-18 stated,

For ours, it would be, like, the stay interviews, and that's where we'll check on, like, the associates during like their stays. So, like, like, I have a new hire, and they start today. So, we'll have an interview probably in like three weeks from now, you know, to see how everything is going, if there is anything that it or that they would change, you know, do they like it here. Uh, and so we'll do those temperature checks throughout.

and reflected by saying,

I think the stay interviews is a very good tool, because you'll know you get open, honest feedback from, from the associates real-time, versus just letting them just come in and work for you for three, four, however many months and you don't realize that they're not happy because you haven't created that kind of open door atmosphere. And with that one,

the stay interviews, it creates, I guess, a relationship to whereas they can just walk into my office and just start talking about anything, and they're very transparent.

P-1, P-3, P-11, P-12, and P-18 perceived this strategy to be utilized this theme the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 1.2: Utilize Pay. The theme of utilize pay was the theme two participants responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-2 stated, “Competitive wages.” and reflected by saying, “You know, while money is a motivating factor.” P-17 stated,

Being able to offer people what they feel they're worth, initially, is one of the most used, items for myself because you wanna be able to make sure that people feel that they're being paid, according to their talent or their skillset.

and reflected by saying, “I think that monetary gain is always a plus.” P-2 and P-17 perceived this strategy to be utilized the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 1.3: Include Into the Culture. The theme of include into the culture was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-4 stated, “Inclusion culture.” and reflected by saying, “Making employees feel wanted and appreciated, respected.” P-4 perceived this strategy to be utilized the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 1.4: Show Respect and Fairness. The theme of show respect and fairness was the theme two participants responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-5 stated, “Respect an employee and just being fair.” and reflected by saying, “Compromising with your employees, respecting, and just listening to them.” P-14 stated, “Fair treatment and the accessibility of excelling in their career.” and reflected by saying, “Providing a better work-life

balance. Also, the accessibility of outside certifications for said departments or skills.” P-5 and P-14 perceived this strategy to be utilized the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 1.5: Provide Training. The theme of provide training was the theme five participants responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-6 stated, Training and promoting. That's the strategy that works best because when you have people who are willing to grow, and you give them, good training, and you train them in different departments, that's how you keep them in the job, and you, work on their growth.

and reflected by saying, “They have a lot of programs in the company that allow people to learn different departments and to grow because it is a growing company, so they want to promote people from within.” P-9 stated, “Training, well, first, getting them in the door, we have a new-hire bonus, if they stay 90 days, and then the training.” P-9 did not give a reflection on the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-10 stated, “Training” and reflected by saying, “So we need to make sure that we are training people and paying the people correctly.” P-15 stated, “Training.” and reflected by saying, “We overextend our employees by making sure they do a multitude of jobs not just because we're paying a little bit better.” P-16 stated, “make sure everybody have good training.” and reflected by saying, “You must make sure every employee is trained right.” P-6, P-9, P-10, P-15, and P-16 perceived this strategy to be utilized the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 1.6: Invest in Employees. The theme of invest in employees was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-7 stated, “I think it's the investment you make. So, I always say, ‘You put the first coin in, and you have to invest it in

your people from day one.” and reflected by saying, “Again, with that investment piece, I think the biggest thing, when you hire someone.” P-7 perceived this strategy to be utilized the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 1.7: Appreciate Employees. The theme of appreciate employees was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-8 stated, “Giving the employees, you know that time, attention, care, dedication, you know, respect, and appreciation.” and reflected by saying,

I feel like I could, we could always do better, but I feel like what, we've done so far, it works pretty well. But we're always looking for opportunities to, you know, help our staff out and as I said, keep them engaged and, and make them feel appreciated because, you know, as we take care of our, our guests, which is our employees, they'll turn around and they'll take care of guests that pay all our paychecks.

P-8 perceived this strategy to be utilized the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 1.8: Show Kindness and Welcoming. The theme of show kindness and welcoming was the theme two participants responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-13 stated, “So the one that I use, I'll phrase it that way - is basically treating people like people. You know, treat them like family, and they don't leave you.” and reflected by saying,

The big thing is, you know, when I first started here, you could see a difference between the amount of people and how acceptable it was for people to or for the turnover. And that's, that's a very high cost that you pay. So, you know, once you start treating people like people, they don't want to leave.

P-20 stated,

Making them feel welcome from the second they walk in the door, making sure that they have a name tag, a shirt, making sure they're feeling a part of the team, doing a property tour with them, showing them the ins and outs of the hotel so they can better serve our guests, and just making sure they felt appreciated.

and reflected by saying, “Just making sure that they feel welcome from the second they walk in the door. Don't throw them to the wolves.” P-13 and P-20 perceived this strategy to be utilized the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 1.9: Allow Opportunity for Growth. The theme of allow opportunity for growth was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-19 stated, “Opportunity for growth” and reflected by saying, “Besides the potential for growth, another is, then is incentives.” P-19 did not give a reflection on the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-19 perceived this strategy to be utilized the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 1.10: Use Hands-on Approach. The theme of hands-on approach was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived most utilized retention strategy. P-21 stated, “I have used that pretty much holds everybody here, is just simply acknowledgement with employees and boots on the ground. So being very hands-on and the acknowledgement with employees” and reflected by saying,

I'll say it again, it's the acknowledgement, being hands-on, being on the ground with them is the most that I think a GM can do, to show, you know, the employees that you care and that you care about service and that's what keeps them there, because they see how hard you're working and they work just as hard as well, too.

P-21 perceived this strategy to be utilized the most to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Research Question 2: What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

This research question supported by interview questions IQ2b, IQ3b, and IQ3c. Audio recordings of participants' interviews transcribed into a transcript by transcribing company and the transcript imported into NVivo by the researcher for analysis. NVivo 12 was the version used for the analysis.

The participants' answers during the interviews invoked 14 themes. Several participants gave multiple responses to various interview questions, but only the first response to those interview questions used in the analysis. Transcripts analyzed and themes identified through the usage of NVivo. Themes assigned a sequence number corresponding to the research question. As shown in Table 3, there were 14 themes generated from the interview questions and salient to the research question.

Table 3*Themes: Perceived Least Utilized Retention Strategy*

Theme number	Themes	Participants responded (<i>n</i> =21)	Percentage
2.1	Communicate	2	9.5%
2.2	Provide Training	3	14.3%
2.3	Not Restricting Creativity	1	4.8%
2.4	Provide Insurance	1	4.8%
2.5	Utilize Pay	5	23.8%
2.6	Engage Employees	1	4.8%
2.7	Allot Work Hours	1	4.8%
2.8	Dictate	1	4.8%
2.9	Be Strict	1	4.8%
2.10	Make Employees Feel Vested	1	4.8%
2.11	Show Recognition	1	4.8%
2.12	Give Threats	1	4.8%
2.13	Hold Accountable	1	4.8%
2.14	Offer Incentives	1	4.8%

Theme 2.1: Communicate. The theme of communicate was the theme two participants responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-1 stated, “Non-communication” and reflected by saying, “I would definitely say, you have to treat your employees how they wanna be treated, give back to them.” P-11 stated, “Not using my Spanish more to interact with the Spanish-speaking-only employees.” and reflected by saying, “Not more enough more fluent in Spanish.” P-1 and P-11 perceived this strategy to be utilized this theme the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.2: Provide Training. The theme of provide training was the theme three participants responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-2 stated, “Training, no matter how much you train, if they something that's paying more, they're gone.” and reflected by saying, “We try our best to train and we spend a lot of hours training and getting new

associates up to speed.” P-9 stated, “When they're not fully trained” and reflected by saying, “All my managers to continue the trainings. Don't just because we're short-staffed, hurry up and get them into position. Continue the training throughout the entire two week that it takes for them to learn their position.” P-14 stated,

Cross-training, I think. Double coding team members, allowing them to float around and gain experience in multiple departments while still have a primary job.” and reflected by saying, “I believe that retention is now personalized, and it is based on your relationship with each individual employee and what their hopes and dreams and aspirations are in their own respective minds.

P-2, P-9, and P-14 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.3: Not Restricting Creativity. The theme of not restricting creativity was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-3 stated, “Restricting creativity, amongst employees. I'm a firm believer that everybody brings something different to the table, so I'm not going to hold one person accountable because, that may not be their strength.” and reflected by saying, “I'm not a big person on tearing people down.” P-3 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.4: Provide Insurance. The theme of provide insurance was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-4 stated, “Insurance was too expensive for most employees.” and reflected by saying, “The insurance need to be more affordable, so employees can take advantage of it.” P-4 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.5: Utilize Pay. The theme of utilize pay was the theme five participants responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-5 stated, “Money.” and reflected by saying, “Even though the money is a factor some but sometimes the money don't keep them. Keep employees.” P-6 stated, “Probably giving more money because this is something that we don't have the power to do.” and reflected by saying,

You know, is giving people more money, which sometimes, is impossible for the companies, you know, with all the challenges that we've been having, especially after the pandemic. So even though people are looking to get more money but it's very hard for the companies to utilize this kind of attraction to bring people over.

P-7 stated, “Pay.” and reflected by saying,

So my feeling is on pay-- I mean, I've done this, I think, even before COVID, is you have that one rock star, and you think, ‘Oh, they want \$5,000 more. They want a quarter more.’ Money is not always a motivator. It usually ends up backfiring, and you will actually waste money. And then you have to rehire then fill the position because you ultimately end up losing someone over money.

P-10 stated, “Pay” and reflected by saying,

Well, if you pay the people right and train them right, they'll stay. But what happens is, we, it's hard to find people to come in, and we'll just put a warm body in. Mainly, we put a warm body in there because of the simple reason; it's hard to find people that's going to take that, that pay. So, somebody come in here, they say, ‘Okay' if they are not qualified or whatever, they-they're going to say, ‘Okay. I need a job.’ And then they get qualified, and then they move on 'cause they're not making the money that they need to make 'cause

they can go over-- they can go over to the Hilton or whatever and make the money that they need to make.

P-13 stated, “So the biggest one, especially right now, is going to be pay” and reflected by saying, “It's only underly utilized strategy only because as an industry as a whole, it just don't do a very good job of paying, paying well.” P-5, P-6, P-7, P-10, and P-13 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.6: Engage Employees. The theme of engage employees was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-8 stated,

“Engagement I would say, keeping your employees engaged.” and reflected by saying,

GMs out there would take the time and opportunity to get out of their offices and, you know, work with their staff engage with them and let them see that, you know, you're not just some person that's in an office that doesn't do anything all day.

P-8 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.7: Allot Work Hours. The theme of hours worked was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-12 stated, “The amount of hours I give to each employee, making sure that they get 40 hours.” and reflected by saying, “Just promising 40 hours and plus.” P-12 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.8: Dictate. The theme of dictate was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-15 stated, “Dictating. If you dictate to an employee, instead of teaching them, they will leave.” and reflected by saying, “We're fair. Like,

we pay what's fair in the market.” P-15 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.9: Be Strict. The theme of be strict was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-16 stated, “Being strict.” and reflected by saying, “I would say, me being least strict, I would need to be more, more stricter in the policies.” P-16 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.10: Make Employees Feel Vested. The theme of make employees feel vested was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-17 stated,

You don't have an expectation of me walking around, me, as the general manager, walking around saying, ‘Hey, thank you. Good job.’ Or you know, how much we appreciate the different things that they're doing, just identifying specifics. And being able to have all the associates sharing their success of the hotel, makes people feel vested. So, if you're not doing that, then you're not retaining the associates cause they're always looking for something better.

and reflected by saying,

We make sure that we do an employee of the month every month. We, people like to see their name on a poster or a plaque, plaque, excuse me. Something to make them feel as though they were elevated in their efforts during that particular month or that particular day, so. Along with the monetary supplement that we give, we also give that recognition. P-17 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.11: Show Recognition. The theme of show recognition was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-18 stated,

I think, within the company or within my hotel itself? So, I think within our company it's just more or less, I think, like, the employee recognition, like, the programs, things of that nature, you know, so just kind of, you know, thank them for doing the job.

and reflected by saying,

I think with that one it would just help a lot, like, if people just realize, you know that, like, a lot of people like to be rewarded on a stage in front of other people, you know, things of that nature, and I think when they're receiving those type of gifts and awards or a recognition.

P-18 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.12: Give Threats. The theme of give threats was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-19 stated, “Threats and not following through.” P-19 did not give a reflection on the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-19 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.13: Hold Accountable. The theme of hold accountable was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-20 stated, “I think if you do not hold, team members accountable from the get go, it really puts a bad taste in the mouth for the good ones” and reflected by saying, “Accountability is everything.” P-20 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Theme 2.14: Offer Incentives. The theme of offer incentives was the theme one participant responded to as the perceived least utilized retention strategy. P-21 stated, “Incentives. Incentives really doesn't work anymore. It's more so about, like I said, the acknowledgement.” and reflected by saying, “I believe in incentives. I just know that they're not the top, you know, tier thing to use for retention now in this industry.” P-21 perceived this strategy to be utilized the least to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels.

Evaluation of the Findings

Evaluation of the findings coincided with the two research questions:

RQ1. What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

RQ2. What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

RQ1: What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

In Chapter 2, the conceptual framework used in this study was the Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics developed by Martin Heidegger. The concept was to interpret the phenomena of lived experiences. These interpretations are through the perceptions of the participants. The participants in these phenomena were 21 hotel managers at SME hotels in multiple cities throughout the state of Georgia located in the U.S. This concept led to the idea of these phenomena occurring on 21 different occasions through the perceptions of these hotel managers. These 21 participants participated in semi-structured interviews to convey the phenomena occurring through their lived experiences to project these findings. The literature

review contained seven search terms. The search terms for the literature review were *employee turnover*, *talent*, *talent management*, *human resource management*, *human resources practices*, *employee retention*, and *retention strategies*. Employee turnover was the outcome these hotel managers attempted to reduce. Employee turnover happens when employees depart from their position within the organization (Egbunike et al., 2020). Employees departing stifles the amount of talent present within these SME hotels. Organizational success relies on how acquisition and utilization of talent (Kumar, 2022). Executives have the role of managing the overall talent to attain optimal results (Balcerzyk, 2022). This acquisition and utilization of talent was talent management. Talent management is the process of enhancing corporate value and motivating companies along with organizations to reach their goals with strategic human capital planning (Boonbumroongsuk & Rungruang, 2022). Goals of talent management embedded inside human resource management. Talent management abides as a contemporary nomenclature residing in human resource management (Edeh et al., 2022). Talent management executed through human resource management with human resources practices. An adequate talent management strategy incorporates several human resources practices aligned to the management of significant positions and talented employees to capture peak performance from them (Kumar, 2022). Human resource practices centered on employee retention. Employee retention referred to as a process when employees become motivated and encouraged to remain within an organization for an extended period of time to sustain the organization (Patil, 2022). This process stemmed from specific planning. Retention strategies are the strategic planning utilized by these managers to keep talent in the organization. Strategic planning is a major approach organizations can have in place to ensure it keeps skilled and talented employees (Magaisa & Musundire, 2022). These terms capsulated the concept of the study and the ideas expressed by the participants during the

semi-structured interviews. Ten themes emerged from RQ1 proposed to the participants as the perceived most utilized retention strategy to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. Communicate, utilize pay, include into the culture, show respect and fairness, provide training, invest in employees, appreciate employees, show kindness and welcoming, allow opportunity for growth, and use hands-on approach were the 10 themes.

RQ2: What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

In Chapter 2, the conceptual framework utilized in this study was the Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics developed by Martin Heidegger. The idea was the interpretation of phenomena through lived experiences. These interpretations are from the perceptions of the participants. The participants in these occurrences were 21 hotel managers at SME hotels throughout multiple cities within the state of Georgia located in the U.S. This idea leads to the concept of these phenomena happening on 21 different occasions from the perceptions of these hotel managers. These 21 participants participated in semi-structured interviews to express the phenomena happening through their lived experiences to convey these findings. The literature review consisted of seven search terms. The search terms for the literature review were *employee turnover, talent, talent management, human resource management, human resources practices, employee retention, and retention strategies*. Employee turnover was the issue these managers sought to reduce. Turnover refers to an employee's undeniable behavior to depart the organization due to personal reasons (Mokoena et al., 2022). This leads to the talent these managers strived to keep within their hotels. Organizations wanting to survive and develop in the existing environment, outperform their current competition while increasing their added value by attracting and retaining quality along with talented employees (Coculova, 2020). This action

performed by the utilization of talent management. Talent management is a crucial issue confronted by organizations worldwide; recruiting and keeping talented employees became significant to achieving strategic objectives (Mokoena et al., 2022). Talent management categorized under human resource management when executed. Human resource management became a unique interpretation of the management employment process while assessing efforts of competitive advantage with strategic development of functional, capable, and engaging workforce utilizing an integrated array of approaches, personal, structural but furthermore cultural (Rusu, 2022). These hotels constituted these management techniques into human resources practices. Human resource practices expected to establish adequate working situations and a substantial environment to complete organizational goals where employees become deeply committed to the organization performing at their best (Hassan, 2022). One main practice was employee retention. Employee retention considered one of the pertinent human resource functions (Singh et al., 2022). A function performed through retention strategies. Organizations conform policies and practices applicable to human resource management to a specific strategy selected in a generic manner optimizing productivity and work performance (Rusu, 2022). These terms encompassed the concept of the study and the verbiage expressed by the participants during the semi-structured interviews. Fourteen themes emerged from RQ2 proposed to the participants as the perceived least utilized retention strategy to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. Communicate, provide training, not restricting creativity, provide insurance, utilize pay, engage employees, allot works hours, dictate, be strict, make employees feel vested, show recognition, give threats, hold accountable, and offer incentives were the 14 themes.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The research study sample size was 21 participants. These participants were from SME hotels in multiple cities throughout the state of Georgia located within the U.S. The participants participated in semi-structured interviews with the researcher. The participants' answers served as data for the research study. The collected data proved trustworthiness in credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The results supported RQ1 and RQ2 with the emergence of 24 themes. Evaluation of the findings was consistent with the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, the conceptual framework, and literature review. This chapter led into Chapter 5. Chapter 5 contained implications, recommendations for practice, recommendations for future research, and conclusions. The implications supported the research questions, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the conceptual framework, and the existing literature. The recommendations for practice showed how to apply the findings of the study to practice. The recommendations for future research contained suggestions to future researchers for conducting research within the scope of this study. The conclusions encompassed a summary of the study, the importance of the study, emphasizes on the results of the research, and reflection on previous research.

Chapter 5: Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusions

The problem to be addressed in this study was the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. This study centered on two research questions: (a) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels (b) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels? The implications, recommendations for practice, and recommendations presented in this chapter to emaciate the application of the findings. Finally, the conclusion provided in this chapter contained the premise of the entire study and the basic results of the research.

Implications

In this study, 21 hotel GMs and AGMs participated in interviews involving perceived retention strategies. Retention strategies consist of various measures to ensure an employee remains in the organization for an extended period, having them feel vested in the organization by referring to policies along practices utilized to prevent proficient employees from departing their jobs with job security, wages, rewards along with recognition, employee benefits, retirement plans, advancements, compensation, education along with development, and involvement in decision making along with designing strategies for retention (Khan & Bhagat, 2022). Furthermore, employee retention is critical due to employees playing a fundamental role in enhancing organizational efficiency while achieving the larger organizational goals and targets

(Khan & Bhagat, 2022). These retention strategies were in place to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover in SME hotels. In the hospitality industry, high rates of employee turnover are a constant problem, placing an enormous burden on managers along with employees and compromising the experience of guests (Tews & Stafford, 2020). Twenty-four themes transpired from the interview questions with these 21 hotel managers. These interview questions derived from the two research questions. Implications for retention strategies depended on the research question.

Research Question 1: What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

The hotel managers utilized these retention strategies the most to retain their talented employees and reduce turnover. Not having talent retention strategies within an organization can be catastrophic as employee turnover develops into a disruptive to the organization's bottom line (Mabaso et al., 2021). Knowing the factors causing talent to depart organizations is crucial to crafting retention strategies within an organization (Mabaso et al., 2021). Retention strategies will allow for sustainability within a business market as organizations depend heavily on talent for survival (Mabaso et al., 2021). The findings of this study coincided with the content found in Chapter 2. A positive agreement developed after the analysis of the data and an introduction of the themes. This positive agreement confirmed a correlation between the content in Chapter 2, the findings, and these themes. There were main themes and subthemes of retention strategies evoked within the implications.

Main Themes. These retention strategies suggested by multiple hotel managers. The retention strategies were communicate, provide training, and utilize pay. The implication revealed these retention strategies utilized by hotel managers would cause talented employees to stay in the organization more than often. The hotel managers perceived these retention strategies yielded the best results.

Subthemes. These retention strategies were secondary to the main themes. The retention strategies were include into the culture, show respect and fairness, invest in employees, appreciate employees, show kindness and welcoming, allow opportunity for growth, and use hands-on approach. These retention strategies suggested once by only one hotel manager. The implication revealed the hotel managers utilized these retention strategies if no significant changes occurred after implementing the most utilized main themed retention strategies.

Research Question 2: What retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels?

The hotel managers utilized these retention strategies the least to retain their talented employees and reduce turnover. Developing and implementing retention strategies can manifest into policies and practices focusing on assisting organizations with maintaining their human capital (Mabaso et al., 2021). Concurrently, industries depend on human capital to strive in a chaotic business environment (Mabaso et al., 2021). Implementing an effective strategy is crucial if organizations want to keep talent (Mabaso et al., 2021). The findings of this study coincided with the content found in Chapter 2. A positive agreement developed after the analysis of the data and an introduction of the themes. This positive agreement confirmed a correlation between

the content in Chapter 2, the findings, and these themes. There were main themes and subthemes of retention strategies evoked within the implications.

Main Themes. These retention strategies suggested by multiple hotel managers. The retention strategies were utilize pay, provide training, and communicate. The implication revealed these retention strategies utilized by hotel managers would cause talented employees to stay in the organization less than often. The hotel managers perceived these retention strategies yielded the best results.

Subthemes. These retention strategies were secondary to the main themes. The retention strategies were not restricting creativity, provide insurance, engage employees, allot work hours, dictate, be strict, make employees feel vested, show recognition, give threats, hold accountable, and offer incentives. These retention strategies suggested once by only one hotel manager. The implication revealed the hotel managers utilized these retention strategies if no significant changes occurred after implementing the least utilized main themed retention strategies.

Recommendations for Practice

The first recommendation for practice intended for hotel managers within the hotel market in the hospitality industry was the utilization of communicate, provide training, and utilize pay at the start of their practices and continuing with subthemes retention strategies if necessary or as needed. Conversely, implementing ineffective strategies may hold no value and become detrimental (Tummalapudi et al., 2021). Hotel managers must utilize the right retention strategies with the right measures. The second recommendation for practice intended for hotel managers within the hotel market in the hospitality industry was the utilization of retention strategies feasible and applicable to their organization by hotel managers. Employee retention strategies designed on the basis of the organization's mission, vision, values, and policies

(Krishna & Garg, 2022). Some retention strategies may not be suitable and practical for certain organizations. Hotel managers can apply the findings in this study to daily practices. Hotel managers can use these findings to build suitable and practical retention strategies for their organizations. Hotel managers can affect the retention of their talented employees by implementing the right retention strategies. Retaining top-performing talent is a crucial business imperative (Mey et al., 2021). Hotel managers must realize the severity of having feasible and applicable retention strategies tailored to their organization. These retention strategies outlined in this study.

Recommendations for Future Research

The first recommendation for future research was to conduct the research with a different methodology. Future researchers can conduct future research studies with a quantitative methodology instead of a qualitative methodology. The quantitative research method depends on the gathering of quantitative data, collected by approaches like quasi-experiments, experiments, surveys, and longitudinal studies with the qualitative research method depends on the gathering of qualitative data collected by approaches like narrative, phenomenological, ethnography, and case study research (Shan, 2022). The quantitative research approach uses numbers and anything measurable in a systematic means of investigation toward phenomena and their relationships (Mohajan, 2020). Quantitative research normally tests hypotheses or informs prognoses (Hollin et al., 2020). The second recommendation for future research was to conduct the research in a different location. Future researchers can conduct future research studies in a different state, geographical region, or outside the U.S.

Conclusions

The problem to be addressed in this study was the lack of utilization for retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to interpret the perception of hotel managers through their lived experiences of utilized retention strategies to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels. The conceptual framework of this study was Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutics developed by Martin Heidegger. A concept designed around interpretations of lived experiences. There were two research questions stemmed from the purpose of this study: (a) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels and (b) what retention strategy through lived experiences perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within SME hotels? Twenty-four themes emerged as results of in-person 1:1 semi-structured interviews with the hotel managers. There were six main themes with three themes as the most perceived retention strategies and three themes as the least perceived retention strategies. There were 18 subthemes with seven themes as the most perceived retention strategies and 11 themes as the least perceived retention strategies. Implications, recommendations for practice, and recommendations for future research used in this study to support the findings. The importance of the study was to contribute to the field of study by expanding the body of knowledge impacting retention strategies within SME hotels. Hotel managers in the hotel market within the hospitality industry can utilize the results of this research study to assist in decision-making and aid in the success along with the overall performance of their organization. Hotel managers in the hotel market within the

hospitality industry can utilize the results of this study to better retain talented employees in job positions and reduce employee turnover within their SME hotels.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Email

Hello!

I am a doctoral candidate at Northcentral University and conducting a research study on retention strategies utilized by hotel managers to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover within small-and-medium enterprise hotels.

You may participate in this research if you meet all of the following criteria:

1. Are age 18 or older
2. Served within the last 5 years as hotel general manager (GM) or assistant general manager (AGM) at a hotel property
3. Employed more than 10 but less than 250 employees while serving as GM or AGM at hotel property

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following activities:

1. Participate in a 1:1 in-person interview for 45-60 minutes
2. Review interview transcript via email for 10-15 minutes

During these activities, you will be asked questions about:

- Your professional background
- Your use of retention strategies

Participants will receive a \$50 gift card from me in-person after the interview.

To participate or ask questions, please contact me at M.Simmons0531@o365.ncu.edu or (843) 693-8779. Thank you!

Malachi Simmons Jr.

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Professional Background Questions

IQ1a. How long have you worked in the hotel market within the hospitality industry?

IQ1b. Within the last 5 years did you serve as a general manager or an assistant general manager?

IQ1c. What was the star rating of your hotel property while serving in your position?

IQ1d. Was your hotel property franchised, corporate, or independently owned, while serving in your position?

IQ1e. How many individuals did you employed while serving in your position?

Retention Strategy Questions

IQ2a. What retention strategy you perceived as the one most utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover?

IQ2b. What retention strategy you perceived as the one least utilized to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover?

Reflection on Retention Strategy Questions

IQ3a. Is there anything you want to add about the one most utilized strategy to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover?

IQ3b. Is there anything you want to add about the one least utilized strategy to retain talent in job positions and reduce employee turnover?

IQ3c. Are there any addition comments you would like to add?

Appendix C

Letter of Approval



9388 Lightwave Avenue
San Diego, CA 92123

Date: October 31, 2022
PI Name: Malachi Simmons
Chair Name (if applicable): Leila Sopko
Application Type: Initial Submission
Review Level: Exempt - Category 2
Study Title: Retention Strategies Utilized by Hotel Managers to Retain Talent in Job Positions and Reduce Employee Turnover within Small-and-Medium Enterprise (SME) Hotels: A Phenomenological Study

Approval Date: October 31, 2022
Expiration Date: N/A

Dear Malachi:

Congratulations! Your IRB application has been approved. Your responsibilities include the following:

1. Follow the protocol as approved. If you need to make changes with your population, recruitment, or consent, please submit a modification form.
2. If there is a consent process in your research, you must use the consent form approved with your final application. Please make sure all participants receive a copy of the consent form.
3. **If there are any injuries, problems, or complaints from participants (adverse events), you must notify the IRB at IRB@ncu.edu within 24 hours.**
4. IRB audit of procedures may occur. The IRB will notify you if your study will be audited.
5. When data are collected and de-identified, please submit a study closure form to the IRB. See the [IRBManager instructions on our website](#).
6. You must maintain current CITI certification until you have submitted a study closure form.
7. If you are a student, please be aware that you must be enrolled in an active dissertation course with NCU in order to collect data.

Best wishes as you conduct your research!

Respectfully,

Northcentral University Institutional Review Board
Email: irb@ncu.edu

Appendix D

Consent Letter

Introduction

My name is Malachi Simmons Jr, and I am a doctoral student at Northcentral University (NCU).

I am conducting a research study on retention strategies utilized by hotel managers to retain talent and reduce employee turnover. The name of this research study is “Retention Strategies Utilized by Hotel Managers to Retain Talent in Job Positions and Reduce Employee Turnover within Small-and-Medium Enterprise Hotels: A Phenomenological Study.” I am seeking your consent to participate in this study.

Please read this document to learn more about this study and determine if you would like to participate. Your participation is completely voluntary, and I will address your questions or concerns at any point before or during the study.

Eligibility

You may participate in this research if you meet all of the following criteria:

1. Are age 18 or older
2. Served within the last 5 years as hotel general manager (GM) or assistant general manager (AGM) at a hotel property
3. Employed more than 10 but less than 250 employees while serving as GM or AGM at hotel property

I hope to include 21 people in this research.

Activities

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following activities:

1. Participate in a 1:1 in-person interview for 45-60 minutes
2. Review interview transcript via email for 10-15 minutes

During these activities, you will be asked questions about:

- Your professional background
- Your use of retention strategies

All activities and questions are optional: you may skip any part of this study that you do not wish to complete and may stop at any time.

If you need to complete the activities above in a different way than I have described, please let me know, and I will attempt to make other arrangements.

Risks

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with this study. You can still skip any question you do not wish to answer, skip any activity, or stop participation at any time.

Benefits

If you participate, there are no direct benefits to you. This research may increase the body of knowledge in the subject area of this study.

Privacy and Data Protection

I will take reasonable measures to protect the security of all your personal information, but I cannot guarantee confidentiality of your research data. In addition to me, the following people and offices will have access to your data:

- My NCU dissertation committee and any appropriate NCU support or leadership staff
- The NCU Institutional Review Board

This data could be used for future research studies or distributed to other investigators for future research studies without additional informed consent from you or your legally authorized representative.

I will securely store your data for 3 years. Then, I will delete electronic data and destroy paper data.

How the Results Will Be Used

I will publish the results in my dissertation. I may also share the results in a presentation or publication. Participants will not be identified in the results.

Recording

I would like to record your responses with a voice recorder during the interview.

Compensation

After you complete the interview, you will receive a \$50 gift card from me in-person.

Contact Information

If you have questions, you can contact me at: M.Simmons0531@o365.ncu.edu and/or (843) 693-8779.

My dissertation chair's name is Dr. Leila Sopko. They work at Northcentral University and are supervising me on the research. You can contact them at: lsopko@ncu.edu and/or (720) 938-4011.

If you have questions about your rights in the research or if a problem or injury has occurred during your participation, please contact the NCU Institutional Review Board at irb@ncu.edu or 1-888-327-2877 ext 8014.

Voluntary Participation

If you decide not to participate, or if you stop participation after you start, there will be no penalty to you: you will not lose any benefit to which you are otherwise entitled.

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