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Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

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Call Center Retention: A Correlational Study of Work Attitudes and Satisfaction of Training and
Development for Customer Service Agents

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by
Jacquelyn Holmes Birocci

August 2022

Dedication

I would like to share my most sincere gratitude to my wonderful husband for the endless support, patience, and love you have shown me as I pursued my goal of earning a doctoral degree. The past four years have been challenging, but I could not have reached this milestone without your faith in me throughout this entire journey. To my parents, thank you for instilling in me that the sky is the limit and dreams can become your reality. Earning this degree would not be possible without your close guidance, support, and love you have always provided me. Lastly, to my future children, may you one day get the chance to read this manuscript and know that you can do anything that you put your mind to.

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Abstract

The focus of this study was the theoretical model of work attitudes that customer service representatives have about their jobs, the level of satisfaction they have with training and development, and the relationship of work attitudes and satisfaction with employee retention within U.S.-based software as a service inbound call centers. The purpose of this quantitative correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. A quantitative methodology was used to explore if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development impact employee retention of customer service representatives in U.S.-based software as a service inbound call centers. The survey instrument used to collect data originated from the Institute for Employment Studies. This survey is an evidence-based questionnaire used by company stakeholders who want to understand their employees' perceptions and attitudes to better design their human resource strategies and initiatives. The sample for this research study originated from software as a service inbound call center customer service representatives within a benefits administration organization. The key results from this study were that the correlation between the dependent and independent variables was low-moderate and was statistically significant. The study's conclusion was that there was a statistically significant relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes.

Keywords: employee retention, work attitudes, satisfaction of training and development, turnover, call center

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Chapter 1: Introduction

A quantitative nonexperimental correlational research study aided in investigating if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. This study included the use of a quantitative methodology to explore if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development impacted employee retention of customer service representatives in U.S.-based software as a service (SaaS) inbound call centers. The survey instrument utilized to collect data came from the Institute for Employment Studies (IES). This survey is an evidence-based questionnaire used by company stakeholders who want to understand their employees' perceptions and attitudes to better design their human resource strategies and initiatives (Fletcher et al., 2018). The population for this research study included SaaS inbound call center customer service representatives within a benefits administration organization.

A decreasing rate of employee retention is one of the crucial challenges organization stakeholders face today (Ahmad et al., 2018). The topic for this study was the theoretical model of work attitudes that customer service representatives have about their jobs, the level of satisfaction they have with training and development, and the relationship of work attitudes and satisfaction to employee retention within U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. SaaS is a software application managed externally by a third-party provider that commonly produces payroll processing programs, human resource management systems, and customer relationship management systems (Lee & Brink, 2020). Due to services that SaaS organizations offer, call centers are a key component in voice-to-voice encounters between customer service representatives and customers when needing assistance with utilizing systems (Chicu et al., 2019).

SaaS organization stakeholders use its technology to administer benefits to clients and their employees; the call center within this SaaS organization was the specific department utilized for this study. Customer service representatives in the call center answer inbound calls to assist with inquiries regarding benefits and how to navigate through the platform. Traditionally, call centers have high voluntary turnover rates among their agents, which causes issues because it imposes extensive costs on both individuals and organizations (Garrido-Lopez, 2019). How stakeholders effectively manage operational costs, retaining and hiring top talent, and continual increase in revenue determines a company's success (Posey, 2019). Specifically, employee retention is the foundation for the success of any company (Bibi et al., 2018). Within organizations, training and development has been associated with increased levels of retention, as training and development helps create the social exchange relationship between employees and their employers (Fletcher et al., 2018). Training and development is an organized approach to developing and enriching employee skillsets, abilities, and knowledge for the main reason of increasing organizational effectiveness (Fletcher et al., 2018).

The theoretical model of work attitudes originated from the job-related effect model, which points to an employee's affective experiences in their role in the workplace (Kong & Li, 2018). Russell's model of core affect is the framework and structure utilized to understand the full range of work attitudes, including neurophysiological states that are conscious and nonreflexive, that more than likely directly influence results, as there are certain evaluative functions that drive action and behavior (Fletcher et al., 2018). Based on the theoretical model of work attitudes, studying job satisfaction, employee engagement, emotional exhaustion, and change-related anxiety provided insight into their impact on training and development and employee retention. Russell's model of core affect differentiates the positive and negative forms

between two categories and results of work-related biased wellbeing: positive and negative forms and effects that can be high or low in activation (Fletcher et al., 2018). The definition of job satisfaction is an employee's commitment that results from an increased sense of meaningfulness within their role and improved accomplishments (Choi et al., 2016). Emotional exhaustion is a key component to the concept of burnout and refers to being drained and depleted of emotional energy (Fletcher et al., 2018). Employee engagement is an employee's sense of purpose and focused energy, made obvious to others through initiative, adaptability, effort, and persistence focused on organizational goals (Johnson & Pike, 2018). The definition of change-related anxiety is an employee's emotional state of feeling overwhelmed by any changes happening within their work environment (Fletcher et al., 2018). Employee retention is an essential aspect of the human resources department, as it is difficult to retain competent and brilliant employees within organizations (Sharma & Sharma, 2021). Employee retention is the human resource and leadership process within organizations where stakeholders encourage employees to stay in an organization for as long as possible (Bussin, 2018). By testing the model of job-related affect, I attempted to address how work attitudes impact training and development and employee retention of customer service representatives in the SaaS inbound call center.

For this study, I used a quantitative methodology to explore if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development impact employee retention of customer service representatives in U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. I used the IES Employee Engagement Survey for this study. This survey is an evidence-based questionnaire used by company stakeholders who would like to understand their employees' perceptions and attitudes to better design their human resource strategies and initiatives (Fletcher et al., 2018). This survey questionnaire allowed the opportunity to see to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of

training and development impact the relationship with employee retention. Over the past few decades in information technology organizations, there has been extensive innovation and rapid growth, which has caused organizations and employees to have to pivot due to opportunities to learn, grow, and master new skills (Bronkhorst et al., 2019). There are many factors that contribute to customer service representatives leaving the organization, but a slight change in retention rates can generate substantial financial rewards for organizations (Aliyu & Nyadzayo, 2018). This study allowed further insight into work attitudes, specifically job satisfaction, employee engagement, emotional exhaustion, change-related anxiety, satisfaction of training and development, and employee retention, which was beneficial in understanding why customer service representative retention continues to decrease in U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. Studying the relationship between work attitudes and employee retention, as well as satisfaction of training and development and employee retention, assisted with understanding how the relationships between these elements potentially increase employees' level of determination, commitment, and loyalty, resulting in them staying longer with their organizations and enhancing employee retention (Ahmad et al., 2018).

Background

No matter the industry, organization stakeholders understand that skilled employees are essential to achieving organizational goals, as increased attrition can considerably affect organizations directly and indirectly (Skelton et al., 2020). Organizations with the ability to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled employees prosper (Covella et al., 2017). Therefore, retaining employees is essential to organizational success because employers motivate employees to stay with the organization, and this increases profits for companies (Bibi et al., 2018). Employee turnover costs in the United States economy are an estimated 5 trillion dollars

annually; therefore, many organization stakeholders go to great lengths to minimize employee turnover (Bake, 2019). Human resources play an essential role in developing successful practices such as recruitment and training and development to encourage, motivate, and boost employees' morale to reduce employee turnover (Jyoti & Rani, 2019). The unexpected separation of employment of employees a universal issue that affects the overarching business performance regardless of industry (Covella et al., 2017). An increased retention rate assists in decreasing the expense of recruiting and training new employees (Bibi et al., 2018).

Retention assists in creating success in the workplace community and the organization as a whole. Organization stakeholders can eliminate voluntary employee turnover. Working to maintain and increase employee retention is essential to organizations. Employee retention, the issue of retaining employees' services, is one of the most prominent challenges companies face (Beynon et al., 2014; Dhanpat et al., 2018). According to the job demands-resources model, organization-based interventions such as training and development are contextual resources provided to employees to improve work performance (Bozionelos et al., 2020; Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). The job demands-resources theory indicates that higher job demands are closely related to job burnout and voluntary employee turnover (Park & Min, 2020). In general, various companies that invest in training and development positively impact retention and experience more engaged employees and lower employee turnover rates (Beynon et al., 2014). When training programs are effective, employees develop new skills and intend to apply those skills within their job (Martins et al., 2019).

Strategies such as progressing company culture and climate, setting realistic expectations for employees, training in supportive methods, and offering professional development opportunities are essential within organizations when it comes to employee retention (de

Guzman et al., 2020). Additionally, research indicates that job shock, the sudden and unanticipated events that occur in the work environment and cause employees to consider and communicate their opinions about their jobs and ultimately make the decision to resign voluntarily from the position, contributed to low employee retention among various jobs (Posey, 2019). Research on the job demands-resources model indicates that employee engagement is fundamental to an employee's intention to stay or leave the organization (Steffens et al., 2018). Employee engagement is a positive organizational-related mindset characterized by dedication and a strong focus on work (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Organizations with investment in training and development provide enhancement and improvement of employees' skills, which drives productivity and employee engagement (Girdwichai & Sriviboon, 2020). Company stakeholders who embrace a methodical approach to grooming and growing talent throughout employees' careers, including a robust on-the-job training program, a mandatory continuous educational program, and a cross-functional rotation program, have increasingly more engaged employees who are less likely to voluntarily turnover (Zaharee et al., 2018). Limited training, which often results in low productivity and leads to inadequate promotion and career advancement, sparks an employee's intention to leave (Sahir et al., 2018). Intention to leave an organization strongly correlates to employee turnover, as it is defined as an employee's subjective thought process of the possibility of leaving an organization in the near term and finding employment elsewhere (Dai et al., 2019).

Employee turnover within organizations is never ideal, but in a world where opportunities are abundant, it happens more routinely, and the retention of employees has become a challenge (Dhanpat et al., 2018). Fluctuations and inconsistencies in the economy and changes in demographics and in businesses have resulted in company stakeholders adjusting

their attention towards the retention of employees (Dhanpat et al., 2018). Being a call center representative is a popular role to have in the U.S. workforce. Inbound call centers include a large and growing part of the U.S. economy with an annual growth rate of 20%, and more than half of business transactions are conducted by phone (Li et al., 2017). Over 4 million Americans work in call centers, representing 3% of the U.S. workforce (Adsit et al., 2018). Clients' employees used the organization's call center for this study to call in to gather information regarding their benefits package with their current employer. Call centers have a high degree of autonomy and are strategically essential to their companies by being interfaces for customers (Sato, 2018). Company stakeholders also use call centers to improve products and services and new product development (Sato, 2018).

Organizations have gained significant business success by incorporating internal or external call center support to establish a platform for continuous contact with customers (Valle & Ruz, 2015). This type of success typically keeps businesses flowing with client referrals. Previous research has illustrated that call center representatives positively influence client satisfaction and retention (Echchakoui, 2016). Although an excellent customer experience is essential to driving business success, it takes a particular skill set to master being a customer service representative. Any call center's competitive advantage is mainly based on its frontline employees (Echcakoui, 2016). It takes expertise such as strong technical and communication skills and a great foundation of knowledge of the product or service type. Call centers are a stressful work environment (Posey, 2019). Due to the call center being a workforce where many organizations experience high turnover, organization stakeholders need to identify how to increase employee retention.

Retaining call center representatives is a challenge because turnover is significantly higher in call centers than in other fields of employment (Dhanpat et al., 2018). The call center turnover rate remains high at 70%; this explains how employee intention to leave can quickly occur (Echchakoui, 2016; Sato, 2018). One of the most persistent and complex barriers to effective service delivery is employee turnover (Shepherd et al., 2020). It has been detrimental to organizations in financial, technical, and sales operations (Huisi et al., 2018). Voluntary employee turnover is often expensive for organizations. Voluntary employee turnover is expensive when it occurs for long-established employees; new hires who quit shortly after being hired create substantial financial strains, given the often-expensive process of recruitment, selection, and training (Rubenstein et al., 2017). Within an organization, the call center is essential because phone agents are on the frontlines of working with client employees. Call centers are known as being the public face for any organization; there is increasing executive consideration of their crucial role in customer acquisition and retention (Aksin et al., 2007).

Maintaining and increasing employee retention in call center environments has been an ongoing issue for organizations. Organization managers give a significant amount of attention to employee turnover, and employee resignations indicate an unobserved issue with organizational culture or management concerns (Posey, 2019). Low employee retention rates have affected the studied organization's call center, a remote-based inbound call center with a 150-person staff that includes customer service representatives located across the United States. Specifically, exit interview data shows that training and development is a leading factor as to why employees want to leave the call center. Organizations that can incorporate training and development opportunities, job security, job performance, and employee commitment are factors that deflect voluntary employee turnover (Ohunakin et al., 2020). In this quantitative research study, I aimed

to discover the essential factors that drive higher employee retention rates for customer service representatives within the SaaS call center. Chapter 1 of this dissertation contains the problem statement, purpose statement, research questions, definition of key terms, and a summary.

Statement of the Problem

The average annual turnover among inbound call centers in the United States is 40% (Posey, 2019). When it comes to understanding employee retention, the specific problem examined in this study is if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development have a significant relationship with employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. In the call center environment, offering opportunities for training and growth helps employees to develop new skills and perform better in their roles (Bussin, 2018). However, according to reports for employee turnover data from the human resource information system, the studied organization's call center turnover rate was significantly higher at 47% in 2019, meaning the retention rate was only 53% (J. Birocci, personal communication, July 16, 2020).

Within the studied organization, training is required for inbound customer service agents within the call center to learn and gain a solid foundation of the role. Data analysis indicates this call center's turnover rate is 17.5% higher than other call centers as a whole; in the call center, employee intention to leave the organization increases because of inadequate training and development support provided to maintain high cognitive effort in their role (Zito et al., 2018). Inbound customer service representatives who have not been properly trained to retain knowledge and developed to grow in their skill set to be successful in their roles may be a contributing factor to the decrease in employee retention in the call center. With this research, the aim was to understand how significant the relationship between work attitudes and

satisfaction of training and development is when it comes to employee retention within inbound SaaS call centers to help leaders and human resource professionals create a longer lifecycle for employees.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. This research adds to a growing body of research in this area, and practitioners can use this study's findings to make their own decisions about retention strategies within call centers. I surveyed the inbound SaaS call center employees for a better understanding of the significance of the relationship between work attitudes and employee retention, as well as satisfaction of training and development and employee retention, to analyze the significance these factors have in regard to retaining employees. The call center department within the SaaS benefit administration company has a higher employee turnover rate than other departments such as operations, product, marketing, and sales. High employee turnover is an issue in many organizations. A major issue within organizations is the retention of employees on a long-term basis because high attrition can considerably affect organizations directly and indirectly (Skelton et al., 2020).

Human resource department stakeholders consistently study how to increase and maintain employee retention to drive organizational success. Exit interview data has provided insight that call center representatives leave the company because they are no longer engaged in their work for various reasons. Training and development is a common theme and reason as to why call center representatives are unengaged and do not want to continue growing within the organization. I conducted research to better understand how significant the relationships between

work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development are when it comes to employee retention within inbound SaaS call centers to help leaders and human resource professionals create a longer lifecycle for employees. Key participants in this research were inbound customer service representatives geographically located in remote locations across the United States.

Research Questions

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between work attitudes and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between satisfaction of training and development and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers?

Hypotheses

H₀1: There is not a statistically significant relationship between work attitudes and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers.

H_a1: There is a statistically significant relationship between work attitudes and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers.

H₀2: There is not a statistically significant relationship between satisfaction of training and development and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers.

H_a2: There is a statistically significant relationship between satisfaction of training and development and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers.

Definition of Key Terms

Causes of turnover. Causes of turnover are the specific reasons why employees make the decision to quit or stay at their jobs and what factors predict if they will stay or go (Klotz & Bolino, 2016).

Change-related anxiety. Change-related anxiety is an employee's emotional state of feeling overwhelmed by any changes happening within their workplace (Fletcher et al., 2018).

Emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion is an indicator that job burnout is nearing and refers to an employee being drained and depleted of emotional energy (Fletcher et al., 2018).

Employee engagement. Employee engagement is an employee's sense of purpose and focused energy, demonstrated to others in displaying personal initiative, adaptability, effort, and persistence directed toward company goals (Johnson & Pike, 2018).

Employee retention. Employee retention is the ability that organizations have through processes and initiatives to encourage employees to remain within the organization for as long as possible (Bussin, 2018).

Employee turnover. Employee turnover is a conscious and deliberate voluntary action that employees take to depart their organization despite there being an opportunity for the employee to be retained (Jannat et al., 2020).

Inbound call center. An inbound call center is a U.S.-based work environment where customer service agents handle countless inbound calls for inquiries from members who utilize the SaaS platform (Posey, 2019).

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is an employee's commitment that results from a higher sense of meaningfulness within the workplace and improved accomplishments within their role (Choi et al., 2016).

Software as a Service. SaaS is a software application managed externally by a third-party service provider that commonly produces payroll processing systems, human resource management systems, and customer relationship management systems (Lee & Brink, 2020).

Training and development. Training and development is the process of building role-specific material to formally plan understanding activities with the intent to provide knowledge, skills, and attitudes that assist in current and future jobs within the organization (Bozionelos et al., 2020).

Summary

A decreasing rate of employee retention is one of the crucial challenges in organizations today (Ahmad et al., 2018). Research indicates that employee retention within an organization is imperative in creating success in the workplace community and the organization as a whole. Understanding how work attitudes impact training and development and employee retention plays an essential role in the strategies and initiatives human resources professionals use to increase employee retention. The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. Reviewing the literature provided various concepts such as work attitudes and training and development that can affect employee retention within organizations. Chapter 2 includes the literature review and discussion of the research and theories correlated with employee retention and turnover within an organization.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. In this study, I used a quantitative methodology to explore if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development impact employee retention of customer service representatives in U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. The survey instrument used to collect data came from the IES. This survey is an evidence-based questionnaire used by company stakeholders who want to understand their employees' perceptions and attitudes to better design their human resource strategies and initiatives (Fletcher et al., 2018). The population for this research study included SaaS inbound call center customer service representatives within a benefits administration organization. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the previous research conducted on work attitudes, training and development, and employee retention. This chapter includes an introduction to Russell's model of core affect as a suitable framework for this study. The chapter also includes a review of the constructs of employee retention, employee turnover, job satisfaction, employee engagement, emotional exhaustion, change-related anxiety, training and development, and call centers.

To have a stronger foundation for understanding of employee retention, the 21st century has included substantial scholarly attention to employee turnover at the group, team, department, and organizational levels (Hom et al., 2017). Employee retention is the foundation for the success of any organization (Ahmad et al., 2018). A declining rate of employee retention within companies drives a considerable impact on human capital, social capital, and organizational performance (Rubenstein et al., 2017). The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of

training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. Specifically, in this research study, I examined employee retention within U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. SaaS call centers have experienced high voluntary turnover rates among their customer service representatives, which causes issues because it imposes extensive costs on both individuals and organizations (Garrido-Lopez, 2019). Studying the work attitudes, specifically job satisfaction, employee engagement, emotional exhaustion, and change-related anxiety, as well as satisfaction of training and development and employee retention, provided further insight that could be beneficial in understanding why customer service representative retention is continuing to decrease in U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers.

Understanding the key components and recommendations from the research could assist in creating organizational development initiatives within the workplace in the hope of increasing employee retention (Garrido-Lopez, 2019). Researchers have utilized the turnover intention model to understand employees' intention to leave to measure turnover behavior (Dai et al., 2019). Turnover intention to leave an organization refers to employees' awareness or thoughts about leaving the job, which is essential to understand to maintain and increase employee retention (Park & Min, 2020). Thus, the effects of employee resignation styles are far-reaching and have importance to human resources professionals and organizational leaders when it comes to maintaining and increasing employee retention (Klotz & Bolino, 2016).

Conceptual Framework Discussion

Many organizations have a goal that focuses on retaining skilled employees and keeping those employees engaged in their jobs (Dhanpat et al., 2018). This is often a common goal among human resource departments and leaders within organizations. The theoretical model of work attitudes was adapted from the job-related effect model, which refers to an employee's

affective experiences in their role in the workplace (Kong & Li, 2018). Russell's model of core affect is the framework utilized to understand the full range of work attitudes, neurophysiological states that are conscious and nonreflexive, that are more likely to directly impact results, as they have a certain evaluative function that drives action and behavior (Fletcher et al., 2018). I used the theoretical model of work attitudes, specifically job satisfaction, employee engagement, emotional exhaustion, and change-related anxiety, in addition to satisfaction of training and development, to see if there was a statistically significant relationship with employee retention.

Russell's model of core affect distinguishes the positive and negative forms between two main types and effects of work-related subjective wellbeing: pleasure, representing pleasant affect at one end and unpleasant affect at the other, and arousal forms, representing activated affect at one end and deactivated affect at the other (Fletcher et al., 2018). Job satisfaction can be demonstrated as an employee's commitment that results from a higher sense of meaningfulness within the workplace and improved accomplishments (Choi et al., 2016). Emotional exhaustion is a core aspect of burnout and refers to being drained and depleted of emotional energy (Fletcher et al., 2018). Employee engagement is an employee's sense of purpose and centered energy, evident to others in displaying personal drive, adaptability, effort, and persistence directed toward the company's mission, vision, and goals (Johnson & Pike, 2018). Change-related anxiety is an individual's emotional state that refers to a sense of being overwhelmed by any changes occurring within their work environment (Fletcher et al., 2018). Employee retention is an essential aspect of the human resources department, as it is difficult to retain competent and brilliant employees within organizations (Sharma & Sharma, 2021). Employee retention is the process where employees are encouraged to remain in a company for as long as possible (Bussin, 2018). By testing the model of job-related affect, in this study, I attempted to address if variables

such as work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a statistically significant relationship with employee retention of customer service representatives in the SaaS inbound call center.

Employee Retention

Employee retention within organizations assists in creating success in the workplace community and the workplace as a whole. Employee retention is a difficult concept that has received prominence and importance among researchers and is referred to as the action taken by companies to drive motivation and influence employees to perform at the optimum level for an extended period of time (Houssein et al., 2020). Retaining employees is a crucial factor in companies' talent management strategies to decrease turnover costs (Schapp & Olckers, 2020). As a whole, there has been a declining rate of employee retention in organizations today due to employee loyalty, efficiency, and turnover concerns (Johennesse & Chou, 2017).

Employee retention practices are those company context factors that motivate an employee's choice to continue working within an organization and to leave the organization (Schaap & Olckers, 2020). The issue of employee retention is a matter of grave concern for organizations, which is why employers use a diverse array of approaches to retain employees (Bibi et al., 2018). For human resource policies and practices to be effective, human resource departments should take into account employee retention factors (Schapp & Olckers, 2020). Research has indicated that various employee retention factors are essential in retaining employees, including training and development and leadership support (Bibi et al., 2018). Designing an effective onboarding program is a crucial part of any company's retention strategy, as the onboarding process is an employee's first impression of the organization and their role within the organization (Sharma & Stol, 2020). Employee retention brings about many

advantages for companies, such as increasing innovation, keeping a consistent and efficient service for guests, and maintaining competitiveness (Salem & Abdien, 2017). Employee retention practices are those company context factors that influence an employee's decision to continue to work for their organization (Schapp & Olckers, 2020). High turnover, reduced retention, and high vacancy rates can be expensive and have adverse effects on employees and clients (Benton, 2016). Often, the adverse effects on clients create a negative and unenjoyable experience because of the lack of consistent team member support. Because of the importance of employee retention, it is essential to take a well-rounded view of existing employee turnover trends to comprehend the issue of why employees leave their organization (Zimmerman et al., 2019).

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover is imperative to discuss because increasing attrition can considerably affect companies directly and indirectly, which often results in increased hiring, onboarding and training costs, lost production, reduced profits, and overall lower employee morale (Skelton et al., 2020). For employers, recruiting and training costs for new employees can range from 90% to 200% of a former employee's annual salary (Li et al., 2016). How employees resign from their jobs can have broad implications for people and organizations (Klotz & Bolino, 2016). Although some degree of turnover is functional and needed because it can contribute to innovation within companies, excessive turnover can make it problematic for companies to effectively provide high-quality services (Brown et al., 2019).

Employee turnover costs the U.S. economy an estimated 5 trillion annually and reduces earnings and stock prices by an average of 38% (Bake, 2019). Due to the negative effects of employee turnover on organizational functioning and performance, researchers have committed

substantial attention to determining the antecedents and correlates of employee turnover and the turnover decision-making process (Klotz & Bolino, 2016). Employee turnover is a crucial topic to organizational management because it is the successor of turnover intentions, is a prevalent issue, and initiates substantial change for employers (Rehman & Mubashar, 2017).

Once an employee decides to voluntarily turnover, it is sometimes too late for organizations to retain employees because the employee has taken action to leave their organization. Compared to other turnover antecedents, the turnover intention is the most significant predictor of actual turnover, sharing 25% of the turnover variance (Schaap & Olckers, 2020). Turnover consists of workers' rotation throughout labor markets such as firms, jobs, and between the states of employment and unemployment. The cost of employee turnover has caused employers challenges, and turnover costs around 20% of salary in recruiting, training, and lost productivity (Carter et al., 2019). Researchers of management advise that the high turnover rates are due to U.S. employee productivity keeping up with foreign competition.

Increasing turnover rates in organizations can cause productivity and quality of work to decrease. High turnover rates within organizations are a gateway to understaffing that results in higher workloads to the existing employees and continuous drain of department funding (Dhanpat et al., 2018). For human resource managers, retaining the competent employee has become a challenge, especially when an employee quits their job and the organization loses not only the employee but also the knowledge of production and the organization (Bibi et al., 2016). It is often challenging for an organization to reduce turnover because many factors affect turnover intentions. Implementing sustainable business practices, profitability, and effective employee retention strategies are ways that leaders can create success within their organization to reduce employee turnover (McManus & Mosca, 2015). As a critical component within

organizations and a complicated process for individuals, employee turnover has elicited significant research endeavors and many theoretical models (Zimmerman et al., 2019).

Organizations cannot avoid employee turnover altogether, but problematic turnovers happens when a larger population of employees leaves all at once or when highly skilled and valuable individuals suddenly leave the organization (Bake, 2019). Ways to help eliminate employee turnover have led to varied and often inconsistent findings, yet employee turnover is still a challenge for call centers (Aliyu & Nyadzayo, 2018). Employees have been less committed to their organizations because of the lack of proper human resource practices such as training and development in their roles (Bibi et al., 2018). Company stakeholders may discover that it is easier to attract talent; however, retaining people may be a challenge, as people are motivated by various factors (Dhanpat et al., 2018). Creating successful human resource practices will help organizations to have committed employees and would, in turn, contribute to retaining employees (Rose & Raja, 2016). The effects of employee intention to leave organizations have real significance to human resources professionals and organizational leaders (Klotz & Bolino, 2016). Actual turnover is the actual step of leaving the organization, while turnover intention indicates the intent of an employee to leave the job or organization voluntarily (Ganji et al., 2021).

Causes of Turnover

It is essential for company stakeholders to understand how employees make the decision to quit or stay at their jobs and what factors predict if employees will stay within their companies or leave (Klotz & Bolino, 2016). Employee intention to leave is one of the most prevalent predictors and a direct precursor of employee turnover within companies (Dai et al., 2019). Increased turnover intention often develops into actual employee turnover. Human resource

departments continuously make an effort to decrease employee turnover. Senior leaders and human resource professionals spend great amounts of time, effort, and money trying to retain their employees within the organization (Garrido-Lopez, 2019). Employee turnover adversely affects companies because it disrupts teams' functioning, signals an organization's unattractiveness, and involves a high cost (Steffens et al., 2018).

Maintaining the employee population is a critical and valuable asset to an organization. Organization stakeholders must do a better job of limiting the intention to leave the organization by employees. The process model of employee turnover focuses on a series of processes employees go through during the time period they decide to quit, such as developing feelings of dissatisfaction, thinking about quitting, searching for alternative employment, and then quitting their current jobs (Zimmerman et al., 2019). Understanding an employee's intention to quit their job is imperative to know before the actual turnover occurs (Sahir et al., 2018). Various factors contributing to employee turnover are lack of training and development opportunities, recognition, work environment, and peer relations.

Work Attitudes

Work attitudes are independent and distinct constructs that a broad range of emotions affect, including moods and feelings that stem from two dimensions, pleasant or unpleasant (Fletcher et al., 2018). Employee engagement, job satisfaction, job burnout, and change-related anxiety are examples of work attitudinal antecedents that enable greater precision of prediction and enhance a researcher's understanding of the different properties and mechanisms when it comes to understanding employee retention (Fletcher et al., 2018).

Employee Engagement

The U.S. work economy currently runs at only 30% efficiency because of the lack of employee engagement within organizations (Bake, 2019). Employee engagement is a person's sense of purpose and focused energy, evident to others in displaying personal initiative, adaptability, effort, and persistence directed toward company goals (Johnson & Pike, 2018). There is a general idea that the rewards of employee engagement range from more customer satisfaction, productivity, profitability, and earnings per share to less employee turnover, absenteeism, and service failure (Menguc et al., 2017).

Employee engagement is a crucial characteristic of employees in the 21st century. Evidence shows that employee engagement affects employees' core motivation, job performance, turnover intentions, and other work-related outcomes (Wang et al., 2020). Employees need to be engaged in their work as well. A declining amount of work engagement may contribute to decreased wellbeing and work performance (Knight et al., 2017). Employees who are engaged within their jobs are 87% less likely to leave their companies than are disengaged employees (Kang & Sung, 2019). Signs that jobs engage employees include the passion they share for their job, a high level of energy, and complete immersion in their day-to-day work activities (Bakker & van Wingerden, 2021). An employees' engagement is a crucial concept that affects company effectiveness and competitiveness (Ghlichlee & Bayat, 2021).

According to the social exchange theory, an engaged employee is prone to have a high-quality relationship with the company, leading employees to have more positive attitudes, intentions, and behaviors but being less likely to leave the organization (Ro & Lee, 2017). Engaged employees are aware of business strategies and work with leaders to improve performance (Fletcher et al., 2018).

Employee engagement connects to job engagement because employees' motivation to perform their work is an antipode of employee burnout regarding employee outcomes such as turnover intentions (Kang & Sung, 2019). Lack of strong employee engagement is another aspect of employee turnover within organizations. According to Gallup, frontline service employees are among the least engaged employees within organizations (Menguc et al., 2017). Engaged employees can help a company maximize profits and can be a source of competitive advantage (Barreiro & Treglown, 2018).

Researchers have continuously found a strong relationship between employee engagement and positive outcomes and experiences within companies (Johnson & Pike, 2018). Employee engagement includes the employee's ability to communicate information and thoughts clearly to their leadership team while increasing their intellectual capabilities to gain job autonomy and decision-making skills (Namasivayam et al., 2014). Employees who feel empowered to speak up and whose thoughts and opinions company stakeholders accept and consider are more willing to complete job-related tasks with no problems. Engaged employees will feel strongly affiliated with the company because their perspective of their work is known to be meaningful and fulfilling (Fletcher et al., 2018). Employee engagement within the workplace can be influenced by companies via three psychological conditions: meaningfulness, safety, and availability (Ro & Lee, 2017).

Organization stakeholders need to continue driving engagement to reduce turnover. Engaged employees tend to be retainable with their organization for a longer period than disengaged employees (Kang & Sung, 2019). Only 15% of employees are engaged in their work worldwide (Barreiro & Treglown, 2018). Not only does the work environment and type of work help drive engagement within organizations, but leaders play a crucial part in fostering

engagement. Engagement from team members occurs when leaders are inspiring, self-aware, transparent, and when they internalize moral standards (Barreiro & Treglown, 2018). Therefore, increasing and sustaining work engagement among employees is an essential issue of many organizations (Bakker & van Wingerden, 2021).

In call centers, typically new-hire training is three weeks, and it takes roughly 12 additional weeks for representatives to become proficient within their roles (Feyerabend et al., 2018). It is crucial for organizations to maintain engagement throughout their employees' lifecycle, but it is essential for employees within their first year of employment. Frontline employees often begin exiting the company at the point they have gained enough experience to begin competently performing their jobs (Feyerabend et al., 2018).

Job Satisfaction

Satisfaction in employees' careers is one subjective indicator of employees' career success, which reflects employees' feelings of achievement and satisfaction in their careers (Yang et al., 2018). Job satisfaction manifests in employees' feelings resulting from the subjective evaluations of job characteristics (Schaap & Olckers, 2020). Job satisfaction is tied up by two factors, productivity and individual wellbeing (Sheraz et al., 2019). Low job satisfaction commonly causes staff turnover and low quality of customer service (Chen et al., 2019). Employees who feel satisfied with their jobs demonstrate less job search behavior, and this relationship holds well for those who have high control over leaving or staying with an organization (Li et al., 2016). Employees are known to consider training opportunities an important form of company support, and training opportunities positively relate to job satisfaction (Shen & Tang, 2018). Job satisfaction can be increased as employee commitment

that results from an increased sense of meaningfulness within the work environment and improved accomplishments (Choi et al., 2016).

Job satisfaction is pivotal to employees having success within their roles because they are more likely to have increased productivity and performance but are not likely to exhibit withdrawal behaviors and other disengagement activities (Cavazotte et al., 2020). An essential variable related to turnover intentions and voluntary turnover is job satisfaction (Autrey et al., 2019). Job satisfaction is an emotional state of pleasure produced by evaluating an employee's work to achieve or promote its value (Wang et al., 2020). Lack of job satisfaction significantly predicts turnover intention and actual voluntary turnover (Posey, 2019).

Within organizations, job satisfaction can influence an employee's intention to change their job, the degree of absenteeism, and turnover (Zito et al., 2018). Employees with increased levels of job satisfaction will feel they contribute positive value and outcomes to the organization (Choi et al., 2016). According to the social exchange theory, employees provided with training opportunities experience increased levels of job satisfaction by transferring training on the job to perform better and contribute more effectively to the organization (Shen & Tang, 2018).

Investigating frontline employees illustrated that job satisfaction, job-hopping, job security, training opportunity, work environment, and promotion opportunity significantly correlate with intention to leave (Dai et al., 2019). Job satisfaction associates negatively with employee turnover. Low job satisfaction and turnover among call center agents lead to a continuously eroding knowledge base; that is, employees exit the company while in possession of valuable call center experience (Feyerabend et al., 2018). Job satisfaction refers to the feeling of happiness towards a particular job environment, or it is the job liking and disliking of that job by an individual (Khan & Baloch, 2017). Researchers found that job insecurity, one of the job

stress elements, increases workplace risk behaviors and turnover intention, and job satisfaction mediates this relationship (Chung et al., 2017). An employee's work environment can determine their perceived desirability of movement (Zimmerman et al., 2019). Satisfaction with coworkers, leaders, and the work itself are all components of an employee's working environment. Job satisfaction provides additional energy and assists an employee to put extra effort with more significant dedication to achieve the organizational objectives and overall success (Khan & Baloch, 2017).

At the organization level, organization stakeholders must understand the possible determinants of job satisfaction. The characteristics of the work itself, the working environment, the work organization, the management practices, and staff development are critical to an employee's job satisfaction level (Zito et al., 2018). Job satisfaction is a valuable indicator that leaders can use to assess overall employee development within an organization (Choi et al., 2016). To achieve organizational objectives and achieve success, an employee's intention to leave the organization must be low.

In a call center, employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs are more likely to resign than those who are satisfied (Zito et al., 2018). Managers should concentrate on job enrichment to improve job satisfaction and loyalty towards the organization (Hashmi et al., 2020). Job satisfaction is a key motivational variable determining an employee's turnover intention behavior (Wang et al., 2020). Job satisfaction connects to employees' willingness to develop work skills and personalities because organization stakeholders can sense whether employees are concerned about their wellbeing (Choi et al., 2016). Additionally, job satisfaction significantly predicts turnover intention (Chen et al., 2019). Job satisfaction is the most significant factor responsible for an employee's intention to quit (Aliyu & Nyadzayo, 2018).

Emotional Exhaustion

Academics consider emotional exhaustion as an important concern because of its negative effect on organizations and employees (Noreen et al., 2021). Emotional exhaustion, a subcategory of job burnout, refers to the fatigue caused by a rapid depletion of emotional resources, lack of personal fulfillment with work, and depersonalization from the work employees are associated with, which leads to disengagement (Lee & Cho, 2020; Schaack et al., 2020). Job burnout starts with chronic feelings of stress resulting from an imbalance between company demands and physical and mental capabilities (Knani et al., 2018). Employees with a high overall level of emotional exhaustion tend to be mentally exhausted and physically tired, and continuous experience of emotional exhaustion can result in negative outcomes such as reductions in self-efficacy, self-esteem, and job performance (Lee & Cho, 2020).

As the central manifestation of burnout, emotional exhaustion's most common results can be classified into attitudinal consequences, including reduced job satisfaction, reduced organizational commitment, and intentions to leave (Edmondson et al., 2019). Emotional exhaustion results from an employee feeling overstrained either mentally or physically from work itself, while depersonalization is detaching from work itself (Guthier et al., 2020). Emotional exhaustion is often the first warning sign that employees are feeling overextended by work demands, drained and used up, and without any source of replenishment and recovery (Petitta & Jiang, 2019). Employees contend that feeling exhausted by work and being cynical regarding the value of the work and their ability to be effective prompt employees to distance themselves from their jobs to conserve their limited energy (Schaack et al., 2020).

Change-Related Anxiety

Stress is a nonspecific response of the body to any demands made upon it and may result in fatigue, which can then lead to anxiety (George & Zakkairya, 2015). Change-related anxiety is an emotional state of feeling overwhelmed by changes occurring within the workplace and may result in similar psychological responses as work intensity (Fletcher et al., 2018). Persistent, excessive, and irrational anxiety that interferes with everyday functioning often signals that anxiety is present (Pulagam & Satyanarayana, 2021). New initiatives can be additive to an employee's workload; most changes are not time neutral but require employees to expend an allotment of their time from their day to complete (Ead, 2015). In SaaS call centers, innovation continuously happens, and at times the customer service role can be highly demanding, restructuring of teams and leadership can be frequent, and new initiatives and services offered change regularly (Fletcher et al., 2018). Change-related anxiety can be seen as a form of job anxiety because employees feel uncertainty about the nature and impact of impending changes. Fletcher et al., 2018). Because of the consistent change in call centers, researchers have found that in organizations that undergo consistent change, employees who do not cope well with the changes are more likely to leave the organization, which impacts employee retention (George & Zakkairya, 2015).

Training

In today's society, organization stakeholders need to retain talented employees and contribute to innovation. Training and development opportunities are crucial to increase thriving and decrease their intentions to leave the organization (Mahomed & Rothmann, 2019). Training is an essential factor in retaining talent within the organization. Training in the workplace creates an opportunity for employees to learn, allowing employees to thrive within their roles.

Companies investing in employees with training and development and providing employees with a competent, competitive edge is one way to retain employees and mitigate turnover (Lazzara et al., 2021). At times organization stakeholders hesitate to provide training because of concerns that employees might leave after training. Still, research indicates that the happier employees are, the likelier they are to stay (Zaharee et al., 2018).

The primary purpose of incorporating training within organizations is to assist in improving job performance. Training refers to formally planned learning activities and courses aiming to provide employees with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are essential in their current jobs (Bozionelos et al., 2020). Initial onboarding training is essential to helping new employees gain a solid foundation for the organization and their role. Competency-based training allows employees to have a clear introduction to their role, an idea of a professional trajectory, and assistance in decreasing role ambiguity (Bury & Macon, 2019). To truly see the return on investment of training, organization stakeholders must commit to securing the acquired competencies and training sustainment to ameliorate decay (Lazzara et al., 2021).

A key component to human resources is training and development, which assists in employees growing in their skillsets to perform successfully in their roles. In addition to the costs of turnover, researchers also negatively linked turnover with morale, sales growth, firm profitability, and market value (Lazzara et al., 2021). A strategy that can assist in decreasing employee turnover decisions is training and development. Training and development refers to the activities designed by organizations to enable individuals to acquire the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes to perform current or future jobs (Mahomed & Rothmann, 2019). Competency for new employees is an area where job training, skills, and knowledge are important (Bury & Macon, 2019). Organizations need to have a strong foundation to equip

employees with the required competencies in competitiveness and performance (Mahomed & Rothmann, 2019).

An essential component of training is the trainer. A trainer is an employee who helps other employees to gain new skills, knowledge, or behaviors; acquire proficiency and awareness of products, processes, or methods; and achieve a clear and defined, or perhaps higher, performance standard (Glerum et al., 2021). Training is an essential component to onboarding customer service representatives in the call center. Customer service representatives usually receive short-term on-the-job training typically lasting two to four weeks (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). Employees whose organizations give them opportunities to learn and grow will continue to work for their organizations and be less inclined to leave (Schaap & Olckers, 2020). Organization stakeholders who invest in training and development for their employees demonstrate to their employees they value them and that the organization is willing to invest in a long-term relationship with them (Mahomed & Rothmann, 2019). Training and development is a human resource management practice that assists companies in gaining a competitive edge within their industries (Bibi et al., 2018).

Transfer of Training

Well-trained employees are less likely to resign from their jobs than those who receive little to no training (Lazzara et al., 2021). Training would be of little use to organizations if employees did not transfer the knowledge and skills learned to job performance (Shen & Tang, 2018). The main instrument of human resources development is appropriate and impactful training, including a systematic development of the knowledge, skills, and expertise required by an employee to effectively perform a given task or job (Piwowar-Sulej, 2021). Finding ways to enhance training transfer and, consequently, making those investments pay off are important

challenges to address (Creon & Schermuly, 2019). Human resource stakeholders who invest in workplace training are a major advantage for organizational performance, competitiveness, and innovation.

Workplace training provides an opportunity for employees to increase skills, career development, and employability (Mansour et al., 2017). To truly see the return of investment of training, organization stakeholders must commit to securing the acquired competencies and training sustainment to ameliorate decay (Lazzara et al., 2021). Training content encompasses the facts, concepts, procedures, rules, and principles unique to a training course (Glerum et al., 2021). In learning and development, transfer of training refers to the extent to which trainees apply the newly acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes from training to their jobs (Yang et al., 2020). Training transfer has a significant importance when it comes to the evaluation of a training program. Over the past century, training and development not only enhances individual capabilities but is also a valued lever for improving team and organizational effectiveness (Sahoo & Mishra, 2019). Training transfer has three dimensions, including the application of practice, individual results, and global organizational results. The application of practice refers to what extent the learnings of employees apply to the work context. The individual results refer to what extent the learnings during training increase individual work results. The global organizational results refer to the learnings during training that increase the entire organization's results (Creon & Schermuly, 2019).

Trainers are essential to the transferring of training successfully to employees within organizations. Because effective training requires careful consideration, many instructional designers rely on instructional design models such as the analysis, design, development,

implementation, and evaluation model (Lazzara et al., 2021). This model focuses on instructional design, which is essential to gaining knowledge, skills, and attitudes successfully within a role.

Training and Employee Turnover

Training is one of the main mandates of any human resource department (Mansour et al., 2017). The ready availability of training and career development opportunities also increases job satisfaction (Schaap & Olckers, 2020). Training includes formally planned learning activities and courses aiming to provide employees with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are helpful in their current jobs (Bozionelos et al., 2020). Training plays an essential role in equipping employees to do their jobs and is a potential source of competitive advantage (Glerum et al., 2021). Training and development is a systematic approach to creating, developing, and enhancing employee skills, abilities, and knowledge to increase company effectiveness (Fletcher et al., 2018). A significant factor in employee retention is training because it helps reduce the organization's turnover rates (Girdwichai & Sriviboon, 2020).

Role-specific training and skill-based training are imperative to an organization's productivity. The purpose of training and development is to progress upon employees' existing skills, capabilities, and competencies to improve employees' productivity and help decrease job dissatisfaction (Khan & Baloch, 2017). It is imperative to understand what could limit intention to leave an organization. Crucial resources in the call center, such as developmental opportunities, can enhance employee identification and involvement (Zito et al., 2018).

A key strategy for retaining employees includes leaders who offer developmental training opportunities for their team members. Employee training enhances performance through improved profitability, productivity, organizational performance, and business growth (Beynon et al., 2014). When leaders provide employees proper training, they are more inclined to remain

in their role for more extended periods. Training and development interventions keep employees more satisfied and efficient in their work, thereby enabling them to perform professionally (Khan & Baloch, 2017). Field-based training changed the focus of preservice training from classroom-based training to training in the field in real-life scenarios, and second, it created a competency-based approach that highlights mastery of skills rather than simply knowledge recitation (Osborne et al., 2019).

When it comes to employee retention, a crucial factor is an investment in training the employee (Girdwichai & Sriviboon, 2020). Researchers have found that creating and designing an effective training development plan increases top performers' retention and promotes employees' organizational commitment (Kamalzaman et al., 2015). Employees who receive sufficient training will be more likely to apply the learned knowledge and skills on the job, which leads to increased work performance, including better customer service (Shen & Tang, 2018). Business stakeholders who can provide training opportunities often benefit, as employees become prosocially inspired and are prepared to spend effort on behalf of the organization (Beynon et al., 2014).

Organizations incorporate training for various roles because it helps employees' productivity and performance in their current jobs. Training is a contextual resource given to employees to progress their job performance, which from a maintainable career viewpoint is a personal resource that is unstable, meaning it is subject to development and change (Bozionelos et al., 2020). Training and development opportunities allow employees to perceive themselves as being valued and essential to the company: Training might signal an employer's willingness to invest in employees and the confidence that the employee will remain with the company in the future (Kampkotter & Marggraf, 2015).

To decrease turnover and increase employee retention, an essential factor is investment in training employees. Organizations where stakeholders do not invest in training for their employees will cause employees to start searching for other job opportunities and ultimately quit their jobs (Girdwichai & Sriviboon, 2020). Training is essential for retaining customer service representative quality because appropriate training for agents will reduce employee turnover compared to call centers that offer minimal training. Well-trained employees have many more developmental opportunities and feel more satisfied regarding their jobs (Khan & Baloch, 2017). Training and development has the ability to increase employee retention because it prompts substantial obligations within the employee to repay and respect the organization for investing in their personal and career development (Fletcher et al., 2018).

Development

Training and development is a human resource management practice that assists companies in gaining a competitive edge within their industry (Ahmad et al., 2018). Development is an essential component to keeping employees engaged, growing, and developing within their roles. Employee development refers to the company support given to each employee for their continuous professional growth inside the company (Tubay, 2020). Employee development may also be a risk for organizations because it could stimulate turnover and lead to replacement costs (Nelissen et al., 2017). Development is also a key component to career advancement. Career development for employees is a lifelong process where employees get ready to choose, choose, and continue to make choices from among several jobs that are available during their lifetime (Houssein et al., 2020). It is imperative for organization stakeholders to be aware of employees' retention and job satisfaction in respect to their career development (Sheraz et al., 2019).

Leadership is an essential component to helping employees develop in their careers. Leadership support for career development is the degree of career-related assistance received from leaders that allows subordinates to control their own work by influencing their performance goals, giving constructive feedback, helping employees develop career plans, and providing training opportunities (Yang et al., 2018). For frontline employees, the lack of career development and advancement in many call center environments is yet another company factor contributing to agent attrition (Feyerabend et al., 2018). Understanding whether and how employee development opportunities affect employee turnover is essential for company stakeholders, as the fear of employee turnover may discourage investment in employee development (Nelissen et al., 2017). Maintaining and increasing an employee's ability to learn within their role is essential to their engagement. Employee learning is the continuous process occurring for employees during their work on required tasks and responsibilities in the employee job descriptions and beyond (Yoopetch et al., 2021).

Call Centers

The growth in the use of call centers by companies around the world is a function and sign of the growth in the service sectors of the worldwide economy (Feyerabend et al., 2018). In service organizations, employees are brand builders or so-called brand ambassadors who deliver the brand promise to customers (Auh et al., 2016). These brand builders are essential to communicating effectively to frontline customers to represent their employer to standards they have set forth. Although sales, marketing, capacity planning, queuing, and forecasting are important concerns for call center operations, an area of great challenge for call center managers pertains to human resource retention (Feyerabend et al., 2018). Customer service representatives held about 3 million jobs (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). In customer service such as a call

center, the work environment can be stressful. Also known as contact centers, call centers refer to customer relationships and support operations such as telephone, email, and chat support. Call center environments handle both inbound and outbound communications for different purposes, including customer care and follow up and marketing and quality control (Brunello et al., 2018). Throughout the various tasks customer service representatives do on the job, their main task is to provide service by assisting customers with any questions or issues that need a solution.

Due to its close relationship with customers, call centers play an essential role in enterprise customer loyalty strategies (Andrade et al., 2020). Call centers offer a broad range of products and services that enable organizations to practice many applications to communicate with their customers (Isik & Hamurcu, 2017). Call center employees play an essential role in effective customer relationship management implementation to establish and maintain strong customer relationships that result in competitive advantage (Aliyu & Nyadzayo, 2018). It is important for organizations to have well-structured communication channels so that customers can communicate effectively, get information accurately, solve problems in real time, and provide feedback (Andrade et al., 2020). The service center environment has highlighted the importance of having happy employees as a precursor to happy external customers (Yu et al., 2019).

Working in a call center can be complicated because of the continuous connection with customers who ask for information, support, and help with the expression of anger, exposing the customer service representative to considerable negative emotions and stressful experiences (Zito et al., 2018). Employees who work in call centers are known as customer service representatives. Customer service representatives work with customers over the phone to resolve customer complaints, process orders, and provide information about an organization's products and

services (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). A great challenge for call centers pertains to human resource retention (Feyerabend et al., 2018).

Turnover in Call Centers

Organizations with low employee retention rates are not new and have always been a challenge for employers (Bibi et al., 2018). An employee's intention to quit the organization is recognized as the most popular direct precursor of actual turnover behavior (Ro & Lee, 2017). Intention to leave an organization is defined as employees' extraction from their job or company and actively searching for other jobs or career alternatives (Haque et al., 2019). Employee turnover refers to the rate at which employees leave an organization due to an organization's inability to retain. Turnover has significant adverse effects on organizations in cost and performance (Aliyu & Nyadzayo, 2018). Service employees are among the most disengaged workforce members (Auh et al., 2016). From a holistic approach, organization stakeholders should strategize their retention strategies around training and development, compensation, and quality of work life (Houssein et al., 2020).

The call center industry is the world's fastest-growing industry since the beginning of the 21st century (Dhanpat et al., 2018). Call centers are typically run as computer-based and telephone-based jobs that require effective and efficient distribution of inbound calls. Call center representatives need to complete their jobs effectively and efficiently, but they also deliver quality service to customers. Because this type of job requires continuous contact with customers, communication skills, and repetitive tasks, employee performance is often controlled, limiting their autonomy and leading to pressure on the daily job (Zito et al., 2018).

Many call centers' core issue is high employee turnover, with an estimated annual turnover rate being 40% (Posey, 2019). Repeated human resources efforts to fill front-of-house

service positions strain and create pressure for resources as replacement costs escalate, productivity is reduced, and customer satisfaction is compromised (Ellingson et al., 2016). Call center work can often be stressful and can produce absenteeism and turnover intentions (Zito et al., 2018). The skill level of customer service representatives ranges from unskilled to highly skilled. Employee turnover generates from employees' intentions to leave the organization. Intention to leave the organization is an employee's decision to leave the current job and look onwards to find another job shortly (Dhanpat et al., 2018).

Often in the service industry, work is repetitive and prone to overload due to insufficient employee staffing coupled with unpredictable business demands within the company (Ellingson et al., 2016). Often in call centers, customer service representatives' intention to leave the organization is due to the lack of advancement opportunities. Additionally, job satisfaction, job security, training opportunity, and promotion opportunity are significantly correlated with intention to leave for frontline employees (Dai et al., 2019). High turnover rates among call center agents lead to other undesirable consequences, including the decline of organizational learning and knowledge management concerns (Feyerabend et al., 2018).

Summary

Unfortunately, employee retention is a common problem for organizations, and there are a variety of reasons and instances of how and why employees separate from their work or companies (Tubay, 2020). Key findings from the literature review indicated that maintaining and increasing employee retention is an issue that many organization stakeholders are working through. Understanding how to increase employee retention is a challenge for human resource professionals and leaders within organizations. For companies, it is imperative to sustain employees' wellbeing and limit the turnover rate (Margherita et al., 2018). Many factors

contribute to voluntary turnover, but the literature indicates that work attitudes such as job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, employee engagement, and change-related anxiety, as well as satisfaction with training and development, are crucial to understanding the impact on employee retention, specifically in call centers. The literature review findings are tied into the purpose because of the explanation of some of the factors attributed to organizational decrease in employee retention and the factors such as employee turnover, training and development, and work attitudes that are essential to increasing employee retention to stay within call centers.

Employee voluntary turnover is crucial to address because increased attrition can considerably affect organizations directly and indirectly, which results in increased hiring and training costs, lost production, reduced profits, and overall lower employee morale (Skelton et al., 2020). Survey research data from SaaS inbound call center representatives provided insight into how the relationship of work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development impacted employee retention to reduce employee voluntary turnover. Chapter 3 includes a description of the research design and methodology used to study and analyze the problem of employee retention within SaaS call centers. The following chapter includes specific steps taken to enact the design and how the design accomplishes the case study goals.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. In this study, I used a quantitative methodology to explore if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development impact employee retention of customer service representatives in U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. The survey instrument utilized to collect data came from the IES. This survey is an evidence-based questionnaire used by company stakeholders who want to understand their employees' perceptions and attitudes to better design their human resource strategies and initiatives (Fletcher et al., 2018). The population for this research study included SaaS inbound call center customer service representatives within a benefits administration organization.

The average annual turnover among inbound call centers in the United States is 40% (Posey, 2019). When it comes to understanding employee retention, the specific problem examined in this study was if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development have a significant relationship with employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. In the call center environment, offering opportunities for training and growth helps employees to develop new skills and perform better in their roles (Bussin, 2018). With this research, I aimed to understand if and to what extent work attitudes, specifically job satisfaction, employee engagement, employee exhaustion, change-related anxiety, and satisfaction of training and development, had a relationship with employee retention within inbound SaaS call centers. This research can help leaders and human resource professionals create a longer lifecycle for employees.

This study helped address some of the challenges of maintaining and increasing employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers through an investigation of the theoretical model of work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development to determine if those variables have a significant relationship with employee retention of customer service representatives. A decreasing rate of employee retention is one of the crucial challenges in organizations today (Ahmad et al., 2018). Organizations' human resource stakeholders have shifted their attention towards employee retention of their staff because employees carry the skill sets and knowledge required for organizations to remain economically competitive (Dhanpat et al., 2018).

In regard to U.S.-based SaaS inbound call center retention, unfortunately, employee turnover is substantially high, with the average annual turnover among call centers in the United States at 40% (Posey, 2019). The specific problem regarding employee retention examined in this study was if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development have a significant relationship with employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. Human resource professionals and leaders can use further understanding of the relationship of work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development with employee retention to help increase employee retention within the SaaS inbound call center environment.

Research Design and Method

This study had a quantitative methodology. Quantitative research is a form of research wherein the researcher describes, predicts, explains, and evaluates data (Locke et al., 2010). For this research study, quantitative research was the best approach to collect data because of the need to measure specific and measurable variables. Using the quantitative methodology, I

studied challenges of maintaining and increasing employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers by investigating the theoretical model of work attitudes, specifically job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, employee engagement, change-related anxiety, and satisfaction of training and development, and their relationship with employee retention of customer service representatives. I used a quantitative methodology to suitably test the hypotheses. The research design was a nonexperimental correlational cross-sectional study. Research design is the process utilized for building a structure in research study projects. One of the significant implications of research design is the nature of the conclusions drawn from the data (Scherbaum & Shockley, 2015). Quantitative research design has an aim to prove, disprove, or lend credence to existing theories (Leavy, 2017). The three types of quantitative research designs are experimental, quasi-experimental, and nonexperimental.

The quantitative research design used in this study was nonexperimental. The goal of nonexperimental studies is to understand if variables are related or associated; cause and effect cannot be inferred, and this method of study typically includes survey research (Muijs, 2011; Scherbaum & Shockley, 2015). In this study, I researched if the theoretical model of job-related affect impacts the variables of work attitudes, satisfaction of training and development, and employee retention to determine the strength of the relationship between the variables to increase customer service representative retention. Nonexperimental studies may reveal a positive relationship or association or a negative relationship or association (Scherbaum & Shockley, 2015).

The most appropriate research design to use for this research study was a correlational design. Utilizing a correlational design approach was relevant because I examined the association between two or more variables, also known as bivariate analysis (Trochim, 2020). In

this study, I used the correlational design approach to investigate the relationship between independent variables, including work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development, and the dependent variable, which was employee retention for inbound customer service representatives. Correlational research is a type of nonexperimental research that facilitates prediction and explanation of the relationship among sets of numerical data (Seeram, 2019). Researchers often test hypotheses from nonexperimental designs with analyses that capture relationships such as correlations (Scherbaum & Shockley, 2015). In this study, I used correlational research to describe the relationships among two or more variables, to predict a criterion variable, and to test a model of the interrelationships to investigate the extent to which the variables are related (Locke et al., 2010; Seeram, 2019). With this research, I explored how work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development impacted employee retention within the SaaS call center environment.

I used a cross-sectional survey research design to answer the research questions. A cross-sectional survey is a major methodological design of survey where the researcher seeks information from a sample at one point in time to describe a population of interest (Allen, 2017; Leavy, 2017). Survey research is a widely used quantitative design method for collecting data because it allows researchers the opportunity to collect large samples of data and generalize the data to the larger population from which the sample is drawn (Leavy, 2017). Surveys are pretty flexible and characterized by collecting data through using standard questionnaire forms administered by phone, face to face, postal pencil-and-paper questionnaires, and web-based or email forms (Muijs, 2011). Cross-sectional survey designs are commonly used to identify patterns and prevalence of an outcome within a population (Allen, 2017). I used a self-administered online survey questionnaire to gather data from inbound customer service

representatives. A major benefit to utilizing a cross-sectional survey is that it is relatively inexpensive (Ruel, 2019). In quantitative online surveys, most questions are closed ended, meaning that the respondent is restricted to a range of answering options and has to choose one (Toepoel, 2016). The study was a self-administered online survey via email, and the target population was determined according to the call center employee directory for the studied organization. Utilizing this option of administering the survey was essential so that inbound call center representatives were guaranteed anonymity and felt comfortable answering questions honestly. I used a quantitative-based cross-sectional design to collect and use data to make statistical inferences about the inbound customer service representatives (Allen, 2017). The dependent variable for this research study was employee retention. The independent variables for this study were work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development. Quantitative research was a viable research choice because it can impact future training and development opportunities and employee retention initiatives within the inbound call center.

Population

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. The call center used for this research study was a benefits administration organization that utilized its SaaS platform to assist clients and their members. According to Trochim (2020), the population is the group researchers are interested in generalizing findings to. The population in this study was the entire group utilized to draw conclusions about. In this research study, the population was the SaaS inbound call center customer service representatives within the organization. I chose this population because most recently the call center had gone remote, and customer service

representatives may have had a different perspective and attitude towards their work now that they are no longer working onsite. Additionally, I chose this benefits administration call center for this research study because of the convenience and low cost of administering the survey. Due to being a now fully remote-based organization, recruitment of customer service representative talent has been expanded across the United States. This allowed a more diverse approach to the study, as survey data did not come from onsite-only inbound customer service representatives. Instead, survey data came from customer service representatives with all different levels of experience, skill sets, education, location, gender, and ages.

The SaaS organization gave permission to complete the study within the inbound call center that specializes in assisting members with inquiries regarding the platform for benefits administration. The inbound customer service representatives specialize in assisting members with benefit questions. All customer service representatives were trained on how to use the software technology, interactive phone system, and the ability to speak to benefit-related inquiries. Additionally, these customer service representatives have the ability to process annual enrollment, life event, new hire, dependent verification, consumer account, and cobra transactions. Members who call into the call center often think of the representative they are speaking with as a benefits expert. During this quantitative research study, I made every effort to maintain an unbiased sample of people to survey, specifically inbound customer service representatives, especially since a large portion of the customer service representatives who completed the survey had been hired since transitioning to a remote-based organization. The participants utilized for this cross-sectional survey were approximately the 150 customer service agents working in the inbound call center. All customer service representatives taking part in the survey were active employees and had active email addresses to provide them the link to

complete the survey. Weekly reminders were sent to customer service representatives in an effort to collect as much data as possible. If I found that customer service representatives were not answering the survey questionnaire, I then engaged call center leaders and asked them to encourage their team members to complete the survey.

Study Sample

In this research study, the intent was to sample the entire inbound customer service representative population, which is known as the census (Muijs, 2011). To ensure that the sample was unbiased, I used probability sampling in this study. Researchers use probability sampling when a sample is drawn in such a manner that each participant in a population has a predetermined probability of selection (Bansal, 2017). Specifically, I used simple random sampling. Simple random sampling is a popular probability sampling method because it is easy to implement and easy to analyze (Bansal, 2017). Simple random sampling allowed every member of the call center population to have an equal chance of being selected to participate in the survey. Simple random sampling was essential to this study because I sent the study to every inbound call center representative within the department; each participant had an internal email address that the survey was sent to, and there was sufficient time and resources used to collect the data from the participants. Simple random sampling occurs when everyone in the population has exactly the same chance of being included in the sample (Muijs, 2011).

Because I used simple random sampling, the population included in the study included all 150 inbound call center representatives in the call center. I used simple random sampling by using a random number generator to select 108 participants so that every participant had an equal chance of being selected. According to Gill's "Sample Size Based on Desired Accuracy" chart, having a population size of 150 with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5 would

result in needing a sample size of 108 (Tahoerdost, 2016). Within the 14 days of administering the study questionnaire, 113 surveys were submitted. The sample size for this research study was 113 inbound customer service representatives.

Materials and Instruments

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. According to Muijs (2011), quantitative research helps researchers explain phenomena by collecting numerical data analyzed using mathematically based methods. While trying to find the appropriate survey instrument for this study, I reviewed peer-reviewed journal articles and survey instruments that were included in dissertations (see Appendix E). While completing the search of a survey instrument, there was one instrument that captured the independent variables, work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development, and the dependent variable, employee retention (see Appendix F). After reviewing the literature, I found an appropriate study that addressed my research questions. I used the IES Employee Engagement Survey for this study. This survey is an evidence-based questionnaire used by company stakeholders who want to understand their employee's perceptions and attitudes to better design their human resource strategies and initiatives (Fletcher et al., 2018).

The survey questionnaire allowed an opportunity to see to what extent the relationships between work attitudes and employee retention, as well as satisfaction of training and development, impact employee retention within the inbound call center. The survey questionnaire consists of a combination of 24 closed-ended questions regarding work attitudes, training and development, and employee retention. Customer service representatives indicated

how they felt about their work situation and behavioral intention by using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The Likert scale has a symmetrical format with disagreement options on one side, agreement options on the other side, and a neutral option in the middle (Chyung et al., 2018). Using this discrete rating scale was essential to the survey instrument because the participants have options from which to choose; participants may find the statements easier to answer, which could increase the completion rate of surveys. This approach helped ensure that the data collected in this research can answer the research questions. The IES Employee Engagement Survey was transferred into a Microsoft Forms survey questionnaire to create the most convenience for distributing and collecting survey data.

This quantitative research approach is a method that human resource professionals can use to explore strategies and initiatives to retain inbound customer service representatives. The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. When reviewing survey data, there should be a correlation between certain work attitudes, satisfaction of training and development, and employee retention. This study included a combination of already tested reliable questions to ensure a consistent method for measuring data and validated questions to ensure that the instrument is accurate (Leavy, 2017). I used the survey instrument to quantify how many people were in a sample of inbound customer service representatives and how they report certain perceptions of work attitudes, satisfaction of training and development, and employee retention to gauge how leaders should design better strategies and initiatives for employee retention.

For this study, I used the Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure the internal consistency of the questions of the instrument. The IES Employee Engagement Survey questionnaire was

assessed for validity and reliability by the collection of additional data to compare the psychometric properties of the IES scales to alternative published scales (Fletcher et al., 2018). For the variable training and development, I used the IES Engagement Scale to measure customer service representatives' perception of satisfaction of training and development and found that the closed-ended questions had a Cronbach's alpha value of .82, which exceeds the traditional rule of thumb of a value at .7. For the variable job satisfaction, I used the IES Engagement Scale to measure customer service representatives' satisfaction of their job and found that the closed-ended questions had a Cronbach's alpha value of .91. For the variable emotional exhaustion, the IES Engagement Scale was used to measure customer service representatives' emotion exhaustion in their job, and the results were that the closed-ended questions had a Cronbach's alpha value of .91. For the variable employee engagement, I used the IES Engagement Scale to measure customer service representatives' employee engagement and found that the closed-ended questions had a Cronbach's alpha value of .85. For the variable change-related anxiety, the IES Engagement Scale used to measure customer service representatives' change-related anxiety from their job showed that the closed-ended questions had a Cronbach's alpha value of .88. For the variable employee retention, I used the IES Engagement Scale to measure customer service representatives' intention to stay in their job. For the variable employee retention, because this was a single item measured, no Cronbach's Alpha value was provided, as single-item scales have been found to have good face validity and reliability (Fletcher et al., 2018).

Online survey questionnaires have an advantage over pencil-and-paper questionnaires because answers can be directly stored in a database, which allows simple analyses to take place (Muijs, 2011). Since the questionnaire was emailed to each inbound customer service

representative internally through the organization's database, collecting data was convenient for the sample population. Representatives completed the questionnaire independently, with no feeling of being rushed or feeling pressured to not answer honestly because people are watching. The survey questionnaire did consist of closed-ended questions for convenience due to the daily work demands of an inbound call center representative. Closed-ended questions were more appropriate, as open-ended questions are more time consuming for respondents, who may be less inclined to answer the survey in its entirety (Muijs, 2011). Also, sending an electronic survey assisted in receiving the data back from respondents upon completion.

In preparation for analyzing the data collected, it was important to have understanding of all the representatives' responses. The research method utilized for analyzing data was statistical analysis. To keep track of the information logged, I used the International Business Machines Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) v. 28 to run simple descriptive analyses to get reports on data status, specifically distribution of data, measures of central tendency, and variability (Trochim, 2020). The statistical analysis method used to formally test the hypothesis was inferential statistics, specifically the ordinal regression model. Researchers use the ordinal regression model to predict an ordinal dependent variable with one or more independent variables (Laerd Statistics, 2018). Researchers use ordinal regression to consider the probability of that event and all events that are ordered before it (Muijs, 2011). The variable used for prediction in this study was employee retention, the dependent variable. I used the independent variables in this study, work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development, to predict the dependent variable's value. The ordinal regression method is therefore based on probabilities of reaching thresholds of the dependent variable depending on the response to the independent variable (Laerd Statistics, 2018). I used SPSS v. 28 to enter and analyze the data. There were

four assumptions required for ordinal regression to provide a valid result. The first assumption in ordinal regression is the assumption that the dependent variable was measured at the ordinal level. The second assumption utilized for ordinal regression is to ensure that both independent variables were continuous. The third assumption utilized for ordinal regression is that there was no multicollinearity. Multicollinearity happens when there are two or more independent variables that are highly correlated with one another (Laerd Statistics, 2018). The final and fourth assumption utilized for ordinal regression is to test the proportional odds model, which demonstrates that the regression slopes on the dependent variable are consistent across levels of the categories on the dependent variable.

An email of the Microsoft Forms survey was sent to each individual by selecting their names in the organization's internal email directory. In order to collect all appropriate agent email addresses, I reached out to the human resources team for this specific data. The human resources team was able to run a call center census report to obtain all email addresses of the inbound call center agents. Survey studies are efficient in terms of being able to gather large numbers of data. The email directory was the sampling frame because I used it to draw the sample of call center representatives.

Although contact was made to all customer service representatives, some participants may decide not to participate or may drop out throughout the study (Trochim, 2020). Confidentiality and anonymity were essential to maintain in the study. I provided confidentiality to participants by ensuring that all data collected was protected and not disclosed with other parties. To lower the chances of breaching participants' confidentiality, all participants were blind carbon copied on the initial email sharing the link to the survey. When the participant received the survey email, they were not able to view who else specifically received the survey

email. One distribution group was created in Outlook to ensure all customer service representatives received the survey. Creation of an email distribution group ensured that only one email was sent out and that confidentiality was maintained.

During the data collection process, the participants were not asked to share any personal identity information. Anonymity can help to protect privacy so that participants can reveal information that cannot be identified to them (Lavrakas, 2008). Specifically, I did not collect names nor email addresses when completing the survey. This ensured that their identities remained anonymous so they felt comfortable being open and transparent while answering questions. I created a Microsoft Forms account and did not share it with others to keep data secure. All data was saved down to a personal computer so once the study was complete, all data could be permanently deleted personally after data analysis.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

For this quantitative nonexperimental study, I conducted correlational research. In correlational research, researchers use two variables to examine the nature of the relationship between variables without any manipulation of an independent variable (Locke et al., 2010). The two continuous variables will correlate the bivariate relationship (O'Leary, 2003). Specifically, the independent variables were work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development because the aim of the study was to see if these variables have a significant effect on the relationship with employee retention to stay within the call center. The dependent variable was employee retention because it represented the influence of the independent variables and outcome of the study. The data collection began in the winter of 2022 and lasted approximately 30 days. I gained permission from senior leadership in the human resources department and

Head of the Call Center to send the Microsoft Forms survey questionnaire to prospective customer service representatives.

The demographic information collected from the data included gender, age, education level, employment tenure, and geographic information. I used this demographic information because these characteristics might influence opinion and are correlated with behaviors and experiences (Lavrakas, 2008). I sent the survey to customer service representatives via their work email addresses. In the email communication to customer service representatives, I introduced myself and explained the purpose of the study (see Appendix A). Also, in the email communication, I explained the significance of the survey and how the data collected would benefit the inbound call center and future initiatives to increase employee retention within the department.

The data collected helped determine how the job-related affect model impacts the relationship between work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention. To keep track of the information logged, I used SPSS to run simple descriptive analyses to get reports on data status (Trochim, 2020). I used bivariate descriptive statistical analysis for this study because I explored the relationship between more than one variable. In this study, I measured the central tendency, including the mean to identify the average response of customer service representatives and the mode to determine the most frequently occurring response. Also, I used range and standard deviation as measures of variability to determine the outlier answers and how far answers were from the mean. Ordinal regression was the statistical test utilized to analyze the data in SPSS v.28. The dependent variable was employee retention, and I used the independent variables, which included work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development, to predict the value of the dependent variable.

Ethical Considerations

Before collecting data from participants, the Institutional Review Board of Abilene Christian University approved the study (see Appendix C). The study included the use of human subjects to collect data. The design of the questionnaire helped with maintaining confidentiality and anonymity during the survey process. An ethical issue that could have appeared was the data collected could be viewed by another human resources professional. To ensure that the call agents' data remained confidential, I created a survey account that no one else had access to in order to maintain privacy. The participants received the questionnaire directly through email, but the responses were purely anonymous. The demographic information collected for each participant included gender, age, education level, employment tenure, and geographic information. I used these data points to better understand this study. I did not know who exactly completed the survey, but the number of participants was met according to answers. The demographic data points chosen did not make participants identifiable because this information could not be used to easily pinpoint a particular individual. All demographic data points were general enough but could provide essential specifics for data analysis to have a better understanding of work attitudes and training and development and their correlation to employee retention. Like with any other survey distributed to this population, I submitted a communication to this group of people explaining the importance of understanding how they feel and their perception of their current role and training and development within the department. This team knew that my role was to ensure they had the resources needed to succeed in their positions and as professionals. Although call center stakeholders encouraged completion of the survey, it was entirely up to the participants if they wanted to participate in the study. I obtained site approval

from the Head of Human Resources to ensure they were aligned to the study's goal and the reason behind it. After all participants completed the survey, I shredded all the data.

Assumptions

The assumption that was encompassed in this study was that each inbound customer service representative would receive the same administered survey questionnaire. All responses were anonymous, not shared with others, and the survey was voluntary for all customer service representatives. Also, because all inbound customer service representatives worked remotely, there was a more diverse collection of data from customer service representatives who had worked at one of the onsite locations and customer service representatives who had never worked onsite with the organization. In regard to how the study was conducted, the assumption was that there was a positive correlation between the relationship of satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes, specifically job satisfaction and employee engagement, and employee retention. Another assumption was that there was a negative correlation between the relationship of work attitudes, specifically emotional exhaustion and change-related anxiety, and employee retention. I thought I would find that the data from inbound customer service representatives who found satisfaction in their job, were engaged, and were satisfied with training and development would have a higher probability of wanting to be retained within the call center.

Limitations

Due to the size of the call center population within the organization, there was a possible limitation in the number of surveys collected. The data collected would more than likely not be received from the census of participants the survey was sent to. Since the organization was entirely a remote work environment, a limitation of the study was that participants might not

make taking the survey a priority. If the study took place onsite, I would communicate face-to-face the importance of completing and answering any questions on the spot. Now I had to route all communication through email. Also, working in a remote environment, there was a limitation in the participants' view of engagement. Some participants did not enjoy working remotely and felt entirely disengaged from the organization. This attitude coming into the survey would skew data around the relationship of new hire training and employee work engagement for participants. The survey was delivered moving into the organization's most busy season of the year, annual enrollment. Participants would potentially not be inclined to take the time or would forget to take the survey because of the volume of work. Lastly, because an employee on the human resources team administered the survey, there could have been participant bias when answering the survey questions.

Delimitations

The scope of the study was delimited to only the inbound call center agents within the call center department of the organization. Because the organization was completely remote at this time, the participants were located across the United States. These specific boundaries were set because of the high turnover percentages within this particular population. Ensuring that all data was from this population helped stakeholders better understand mitigation processes to retain talent.

Summary

Employee retention, the issue of retaining employees' services, is unfortunately one of the most prominent challenges within organizations (Beynon et al., 2014; Dhanpat et al., 2018). Employee retention within organizations assists in creating success in the workplace community and the workplace as a whole. In some organizations where stakeholders invest in training and

development, this investment positively impacts retention and leads to more engaged employees and lower employee turnover rates (Beynon et al., 2014). When it comes to understanding employee retention, the specific problem examined in this study was if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a significant relationship with employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. Presently known information was that the turnover rate within the studied organization's call center was higher than other call centers as a whole. With this research, I aimed to understand if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within SaaS inbound call centers to help leaders create a longer employee lifecycle for employees.

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. The human resource department stakeholders were making efforts to study how to improve and strengthen retention. With this quantitative research study, I examined the nature of employee intention to stay with an organization. From a call center environment perspective, this study helped provide insights into whether feelings and perceptions of work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development significantly affected the relationship with employee retention. This quantitative nonexperimental research consisted of survey research precisely because it was flexible regarding time constraints for participants to complete and deliver electronically various questions. Furthermore, this study created the opportunity for additional investigation regarding if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within the call center.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent customer service representative work attitudes and training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. In this study, I used a quantitative methodology to explore if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development impacted employee retention of customer service representatives in U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. The unexpected loss of employees is a global issue that affects overall company performance regardless of industry (Covella et al., 2017). Due to call center employees being a workforce where many organizations experience high turnover, organization stakeholders need to identify how to increase employee retention. The survey instrument utilized to collect data came from the IES. This survey is an evidence-based questionnaire utilized by company stakeholders who want to understand their employees' perceptions and attitudes to better design their human resource strategies and initiatives (Fletcher et al., 2018). The population for this research study included the SaaS inbound call center customer service representatives within a benefits administration organization.

The data collection happened within the first quarter of 2022 and lasted for approximately 14 days. The survey questionnaire was sent to customer service representatives via their work email addresses. To keep track of the information collected, I used SPSS v.28 to run simple descriptive analyses to get reports on data status (Trochim, 2020). I then used bivariate descriptive statistical analysis to explore the relationship between more than one variable. In the study, I measured the central tendency, including the mean to identify the average response of customer service representatives and the mode to determine the most frequently occurring response. Also, I used range and standard deviation as measures of

variability to determine the outlier answers and how far answers were from the mean. I used the statistical test of ordinal regression to analyze the data in SPSS v.28. The dependent variable was employee retention, and I used the independent variables, work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development, to predict the value of the dependent variable.

The population for the study included all 150 inbound call center representatives in the call center. I applied simple random sampling by using a random number generator to select 108 participants so that every participant would have an equal chance of being selected. The sample size of 108 participants was used according to Gill's "Sample Size Based on Desired Accuracy" chart (Tahoerdost, 2016). According to the chart, with a population size of 150, confidence level of 95%, and a margin of error of 5, I needed a sample size of 108 (Tahoerdost, 2016). The participants who were eligible for this research study were active customer service representatives within the service center who had been in service for a minimum of 6 months. I conducted research by reviewing literature to find the appropriate survey instrument. I found a survey instrument that captured the independent variables, work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development, and the dependent variable, employee retention. The IES Employee Engagement Survey was utilized for this study (see Appendix D). The IES Employee Engagement survey is an evidence-based employee attitudes survey used by company stakeholders who want to understand the perceptions and attitudes of their employees to better organize and design their human resource strategies and initiatives (Fletcher et al., 2018).

The survey questionnaire allowed the opportunity to see to what extent work attitudes impact training and development and employee retention. The survey questionnaire consisted of a combination of 24 closed-ended questions regarding work attitudes, training and development, and employee retention. Customer service representatives indicated how they felt about their

work situation and behavioral intention by using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The Likert scale had a symmetrical format with disagreement options on one side, agreement options on the other side, and a neutral option in the middle (Chyung et al., 2018).

For this study, I used a combination of already tested reliable questions to ensure a consistent method for measuring data and validated questions to ensure that the instrument was accurate (Leavy, 2017). I received permission from senior leadership in human resources and the call center to send the Microsoft Forms survey questionnaire to prospective customer service representatives. Once I received permission, I emailed 150 survey questionnaires to the population of customer service representatives. Seven days after initially sending the survey questionnaire email to the customer service population, 41 of the 150 surveys sent out were completed. Roughly 27% of survey questionnaires were completed after the first week of administration. I sent a follow-up email as a reminder for customer service representatives to complete the survey on the eighth day. On day 10 of administration of the study, 71 of the 150 surveys sent out were completed. Roughly 47% of survey questionnaires were completed within the first 10 days of administration. On day 11 of the study, I sent another follow-up email to remind the customer service representatives to complete the survey questionnaire. By day 14, 113 of 150 survey questionnaires were completed. Roughly 75% of the survey questionnaires were completed. Since 113 surveys were collected, I used all 113 survey questionnaires for analyzing the study's data. All survey responses were purely anonymous.

The demographic information collected from the data included gender, age, education level, and employment tenure. I used this demographic information because the characteristics could influence opinion and correlated with behaviors and experiences (Lavrakas, 2008). I sent

the survey to customer service representatives via their work email addresses. In the email communication to customer service representatives, I introduced myself and explained the purpose of the study. Each participant received a copy of the university's consent form with a link to the survey instrument attached (see Appendix B). Also, in the email communication I explained the significance of the survey and how the data collected would benefit the inbound call center and future initiatives to increase employee retention within the department.

Participant Demographic Data

There were 113 participants who completed this research study. Of the 113 participants, 16.8% were male, 79.6% were female, 1.8% were nonbinary, and 1.8% preferred not to share their gender. The age of the customer service representatives ranged from 18 to 65 years old ($M = 36.81$, $SD = 12.783$). The mode for age was 23 years old. The skewness of age was trending positive with a 0.315 ($SE = 0.227$), and kurtosis was trending negatively at -0.584. Of the 113 participants who completed the research study, 42.5% had a maximum level of high school education, 23.9% had a maximum level of 2-year degree education, 24.8% had a maximum level of 4-year degree education, and 8.8% had a maximum of a graduate level of education. The number of years of service varied from 6 months to 13 years. The average years of service for customer service representatives was 1.57 years ($SD = 1.69$). As shown in Table 1, the participant demographic characteristics collected included age, tenure, gender, and level of education.

Table 1*Participant Demographic Data*

Demographic characteristics	<i>M</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	Mode	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Gender ^a	1.88	2	2	0.496	0.647	5.475
Age	36.65	35	23	13.127	0.315	-0.586
Level of education	2	2	1	1.018	0.517	-1.01
Tenure	1.57	1	0.5	1.69	3.635	19.392

Note. *N* = 113. Mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, and sum for participant demographic characteristics such as age, tenure, gender, and level of education.

^a Male = 19, female = 90, nonbinary = 2, prefer not to say = 2.

Results

Once the data collection was complete, I entered data from 113 anonymous customer service representatives into SPSS v. 28 for data analysis. The data collected in the survey all stemmed from the study's initial research questions, which were the following:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between work attitudes and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between satisfaction of training and development and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers?

Next, I ran some simple analyses to calculate correlations in SPSS v28. I used Spearman's rank-order correlation to determine and calculate a correlation coefficient on rankings rather than regarding actual data between the study's variables, which included employee retention, satisfaction of training and development, and work attitudes. I completed the

Spearman's rank-order correlation in SPSS v. 28 to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development for 113 customer service agents. I chose Spearman's rank-order correlation because the variables measured are paired ordinal observations that have a monotonic relationship. As shown in Table 2, Spearman's rank-order correlation represented the relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development, and the result was $r_s(111) = .316, p < .001$. Because $r_s(111) = .316, p < .001$, I determined that the correlation was moving in a positive direction but that the correlation was low-moderate correlation. The result included a strong significance level, as any result less than .05 is statistically significant. Spearman's rank-order correlation represented the relationship between employee retention and work attitudes, and the result was $r_s(111) = .323, p < .001$. Because $r_s(111) = .323, p < .001$, I determined that the correlation was moving in a positive direction but the correlation was low-moderate correlation. The correlation between employee retention and work attitudes was stronger than employee retention and satisfaction of training and development because the correlation of these predictor variables was at a higher value. The result was a strong significance level, as any result less than .05 is statistically significant.

Table 2*Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation of Predictor Variables*

Variables	<i>N</i>	1	2	3
Employee retention	113	1	.316*	.323*
Satisfaction of training and development ^a	113	.316*	1	.465*
Work attitudes ^b	113	.323*	.465*	1

^a Satisfaction of training and development. $r_s(111) = .316, p < .001$. ^b Work attitudes. $r_s(111) = .323, p < .001$.

As illustrated in Table 3, the charts show the frequency of customer service representative responses to survey questions regarding satisfaction of training and development, work attitudes, and employee retention. I used a 5-point Likert scale that included 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*neutral*), 4 (*agree*), and 5 (*strongly agree*). The assumption that all variables are continuous was met because I could order the categories, the distance between each scale point was the same, and they were all measured on a continuous scale of 1 to 5.

Table 3*Frequency Tables of Variables*

Variables	<i>f</i>	%
Employee retention		
Plan to leave ASAP	5	4.4
Likely to leave within 1 year	21	18.6
Likely to stay for at least 1 year	29	25.7
Plan to stay for the foreseeable future	58	51.3
Total	113	100
Satisfaction of training and development		
Strongly disagree	2	1.8
Disagree	12	10.6
Neutral	29	25.7
Agree	43	38.1
Strongly agree	27	23.9
Total	113	100
Work attitudes		
Strongly disagree	3	2.7
Disagree	3	2.7
Neutral	36	31.9
Agree	69	61.1
Strongly agree	2	1.8
Total	113	100

Note. Frequency of employee retention is measured on a 4-point Likert scale that includes 1 (*plan to leave ASAP*), 2 (*likely to leave within 1 year*), 3 (*likely to stay for at least another year*), and 4 (*plan to stay for the foreseeable future*). Work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development are measured on a 5-point Likert scale that includes 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*neutral*), 4 (*agree*), and 5 (*strongly agree*).

I used inferential statistics as the statistical analysis method to formally test the hypothesis, specifically the ordinal regression model. Researchers use the ordinal regression model to predict an ordinal dependent variable with one or more independent variables (Laerd Statistics, 2018). Ordinal regression allows a researcher to consider the probability of that event

and all events that are ordered before it (Muijs, 2011). The variable that I predicted in the study was employee retention, the dependent variable. I used the independent variables work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development in this study to predict the dependent variable's value. The ordinal regression method is therefore based on probabilities of reaching thresholds of the dependent variable depending on the response to the independent variable (Laerd Statistics, 2018). I used SPSS v. 28 to enter and analyze the data. The first assumption for utilizing ordinal regression, which was to ensure that the dependent variable was measured at the ordinal level, was met. The dependent variable was measured on a 5-point Likert scale that included 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*neutral*), 4 (*agree*), and 5 (*strongly agree*). The second assumption for utilizing ordinal regression was to ensure that both independent variables were continuous. The assumption was met because I could order the categories, the distance between each scale point was the same, and they were all measured on a continuous scale that ranged from 1 to 5.

I analyzed the data in SPSS v. 28 for evidence of multicollinearity, the third assumption for utilizing ordinal regression. Multicollinearity happens when there are two or more independent variables that are highly correlated with one another (Laerd Statistics, 2018). I looked at coefficients that included the collinearity statistics of tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF). The VIF is the reciprocal of tolerance. The tolerance level for satisfaction of training and development and work attitudes was 0.618 with a VIF level of 1.619. Because the collinearity tolerance was greater than 0.10 and the VIF was lower than 10, there was no issue with multicollinearity with this study. As shown in Table 4, the study met the assumption that there is no multicollinearity.

Table 4*Coefficients Model*

Variables	Collinearity tolerance	Statistics VIF
Satisfaction of training and development ^a	0.618	1.619
Work attitudes ^b	0.618	1.619

^a Dependent variable = employee retention.

^b Satisfaction of training and development, tolerance = 0.618, *VIF* = 1.619; work attitudes, tolerance = 0.618, *VIF* = 1.619.

Review of the model fitting information allowed me to review the model deviances and provide myself with a comparison between the baseline model with no independent variables, called the intercept model, and the model with two independent variables, called the final model (Muijs, 2011). I conducted a chi-squared test to look at improvement in prediction compared to the baseline model (Muijs, 2011). I determined the chi-squared statistic by taking the intercept-only model and subtracting the final model from it. The degrees of freedom were equal to 2 because there were two independent variables utilized in the study. Since the *p* value was significant at less than .001, this indicated that the model fit better than the baseline model with no predictors. As shown in Table 5, the test had statistical significance because $p < .001$, and significance occurs at less than .05.

Table 5*Model Fitting Information*

Model	-2 Log likelihood	Chi-squared	df	Sig.
Intercept only	116.644			
Final	55.834	60.81	2	< .001

Note. Model fitting table shows the difference between two log-likelihoods, the chi-squared statistic, and *p* value. That $p < .05$ represents that the model fits.

Review of the goodness-of-fit test allowed me to determine and compare the actual results for each participant with the outcome predicted by the model (Muijs, 2011). For this model, it was imperative for the difference between the expected and actual results to be nonsignificant with $p > .05$, suggesting that the observed and expected counts should be similar (Muijs, 2011). Both the Pearson and deviance measures had significance values greater than .05. Pearson's significance value was $p = .758$, and the deviance value was $p = .477$. Because both significances are high and exceed .05, as illustrated in Table 6, this would represent that this model is a good fit to the data.

Table 6

Goodness-of-Fit

Variables	Chi-squared	df	Sig.
Pearson	22.483	28	.758
Deviance	27.768	28	.477

Note. Goodness-of-fit model shows if measure have large observed significance level, $p < .05$, representing that the model fits.

In reviewing the pseudo R-squared statistics data, McFadden's measures represent the proportionate improvement in the fit of a model containing predictors relative to the intercept model. According to McFadden's measure, the predictor represents 25.2% improvement in fit relative to the null or intercept-only model. The parameters estimates data represented the parameters for the individual variables. The threshold statistics referred to the dependent variable. The statistics for the independent variables were provided under the "Location" section. Regression slopes reflect the predicted change and the log odds of falling into a high category as opposed to a lower category on the dependent variable. A positive slope means that high values in predictor variables are associated with greater confidence in higher employee retention,

whereas a negative slope would indicate that lower values in the predictor variables are associated with lower confidence in higher employee retention. The parameter of estimates test showed that as scores increased on satisfaction of training and development, there was a predicted 1.263 increase of falling at a higher level of the dependent variable, employee retention. As scores increased on work attitudes, there was a predicted 1.133 increase of falling at a higher level of the dependent variable, employee retention. The higher the value on the Likert scale, or the stronger positive association participants had with satisfaction of training and development and work attitudes, the more likely they would be to stay longer within the call center. There appears to be a relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes.

The fourth assumption for utilizing ordinal regression included testing the proportional odds model, which demonstrates that the regression slopes on the dependent variable are consistent cross levels of the categories on the dependent variable. During the testing of parallel lines, it is imperative for the significance to be greater than .05. When reviewing the significance test, I found that there was not statistical significance, as $p = .067$. Statistical significance is evident when $p < .05$. As shown in Table 7, because the test of parallel lines had a nonsignificant result, the assumption of proportional odds was met.

Table 7

Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2 Log likelihood	Chi-squared	df	Sig.
Null hypothesis	55.834			
General	47.076	8.758	4	.067

Note. The test of parallel lines shows if assumption of proportional odds is nonsignificant, $p > .05$, which represents that main assumption of ordinal regression is met.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based inbound call centers. The human resource department stakeholders have efforts in place to create initiatives to improve and strengthen retention. With this quantitative research study, I examined the nature of employee intention to stay with an organization. From a call center environment perspective, this study helped provide insights into whether feelings and perceptions of work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development significantly affected the relationship with employee retention. This quantitative nonexperimental research consisted of survey research. Furthermore, this study allowed additional investigation on if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development had a relationship with employee retention within the call center. Utilizing SPSS v. 28 was imperative for entering the data collected from the survey questionnaire, as well as for analyzing the data to understand how the results answered the initial research questions. Since there was a statistically significant relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes, I was able to determine that if participants had a stronger and more positive outlook on satisfaction of training and development and work attitude, there was a higher percentage chance they would stay within the call center.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental correlational research was to investigate if and to what extent customer service representative work attitudes and training and development had a relationship with employee retention within U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. For this study, I used a quantitative methodology to explore if work attitudes and satisfaction of training and development impacted employee retention of customer service representatives in U.S.-based SaaS inbound call centers. The survey instrument utilized to collect data came from the IES. The IES Employee Engagement Survey is an evidence-based employee attitudes survey used by company stakeholders who want to understand the perceptions and attitudes of their employees to better organize and design their human resource strategies and initiatives (Fletcher et al., 2018). The population for this research study included the SaaS inbound call center customer service representatives within a benefits administration organization.

The results from this study were that since there was a statistically significant relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes, I was able to determine that if participants had a stronger and more positive outlook on satisfaction of training and development and work attitude, then there was a higher percentage chance to stay within the call center. This chapter includes a summary of the results and a discussion of findings, implications, limitations, delimitations, and recommendations for future research.

Discussion of Findings in Relation to Past Literature

Employee retention practices are those company context factors that influence an employee's decision to continue to work for an organization (Schapp & Olckers, 2020). High

turnover, reduced retention, and high vacancy rates can be expensive and have adverse effects on employees and clients (Benton, 2016). With understanding of the key components and recommendations from the research, company stakeholders could create organizational development initiatives within the workplace in the hope of increasing employee retention (Garrido-Lopez, 2019). The data collected in the research study all stemmed from the study's initial research questions, which were the following:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between work attitudes and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between satisfaction of training and development and employee retention for customer service representatives within U.S.-based inbound call centers?

Russell's model of core affect framework helps in understanding work attitudes that are more likely to directly influence outcomes, as they have a specific evaluative function that drives action and behavior (Fletcher et al., 2018). According to this theory, evidence shows that work attitudes affect employees' intrinsic motivation, job performance, turnover intentions, and other work-related outcomes (Wang et al., 2020). Employees who are engaged at work are 87% less likely to leave their organization than are disengaged employees (Kang & Sung, 2019). The study's results showed a positive correlation between work attitudes and employee retention, meaning that for customer service representatives, the more positive their attitudes towards work were, the higher the chance they would stay within the call center. The ready availability of training and development opportunities also increases job satisfaction and employee retention (Schaap & Olckers, 2020). The analysis of employee retention revealed that for customer service representatives, employee retention rates increase when customer service representatives are

satisfied with training and development and have increased work attitudes. Although both independent variables had a strong significant relationship with employee retention, work attitudes had a stronger correlation to employee retention than satisfaction of training. A significant factor in employee retention is training because it helps reduce an organization's turnover rates (Girdwichai & Sriviboon, 2020). The study's results showed a positive correlation between satisfaction of training and development and employee retention, meaning that for customer service representatives, the higher their satisfaction of training and development, the higher the chance they would stay within the call center. Satisfaction of training and development has a positive psychological effect on employees because employees perceive that their company leaders value them and in turn will remain committed to the company (Dhanpat et al., 2018). There was a statistically significant relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes, and I was able to determine that if participants had a stronger and more positive outlook on satisfaction of training and development and work attitude, then there was a higher percentage chance to stay within the call center. The study's results were expected, given the literature on training and development, work attitudes, and employee retention.

Limitations

I did not measure the significance of the relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes for employees who worked in the call center but did not directly support phone calls. This population included chat and email agents, quality assurance agents, call center trainers, and call center leaders. In this study, I focused on the relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development, as well as employee retention and work attitudes, for

customer service agents only. I limited this study to one organization with employees located remotely across the country. All the data collected were from one call center specific to benefits administration. The results reflect the feeling around satisfaction of training and development, work attitudes, and employee retention for customer service agents based on their perspectives of one organization. Being able to collect data from other benefit administration organizations may provide additional understanding when comparing satisfaction of training and development, work attitudes, and employee retention. Additionally, due to the pandemic, all customer service agents worked remotely. Remote work may have influenced survey results, as customer service agents were no longer working in physical offices. Their ideas of being satisfied from a training and development perspective and happy and engaged from a work attitudes perspective could have impacted the results of the survey.

Implications

Employee retention has continued to be an overarching issue for organizations. As a whole, there has been a declining rate of employee retention in organizations today due to employee loyalty, efficiency, and turnover concerns (Johennesse & Chou, 2017). Employee retention practices are those organizational context factors that influence an employee's choice to continue to work for an organization and to leave the organization (Schaap & Olckers, 2020). Understanding satisfaction of training and development and work attitudes and the significance of the relationship those retention practices have with employee retention were the main purposes of this research study. More specifically, work attitudes had a stronger significance level with employee retention than satisfaction of training and development.

Of the 113 customer service representatives who participated in the study, the mode of the participant age was 23, and the average years of service was 1.57 years. The mode age of

customer service representatives shows that many of the participants are earlier in their careers. Building a strong foundation within the customer service industry is essential to retention; employees need to be engaged in their work. Low work engagement may contribute to decreased wellbeing and work performance for employees (Knight et al., 2017). Employees who are engaged at work are 87% less likely to leave their organizations than are disengaged employees (Kang & Sung, 2019). The results of the study were that the average tenure of customer service representatives was roughly higher than 1.5 years. This data illustrates that it is imperative that organization stakeholders ensure they are continuously working on and improving engagement and development within the first 1.5 years to drive longer retention of their employees. Based on the data, after 1.5 years of service, the likelihood of continuing on as a customer service representative seems to decrease. Training and development has the ability to increase employee retention because it prompts the employee to repay substantial obligations and to respect the organization for investing in their personal and career development (Fletcher et al., 2018). For customer service representatives, the more satisfied they were with training and development, the higher the chances of them staying within the organization. Training and development opportunities are crucial to increase thriving and decrease intentions to leave the organization (Mahomed & Rothmann, 2019). Also, for customer service representatives, the better their work attitude was the higher the chances they would stay within the organization. The findings from this study aligned with previous literature about employee retention within call centers when it comes to satisfaction of training and development and work attitudes.

This study was important to conduct because the job-related affect model, which refers to an employee's affective experiences in their role in the workplace, is impactful to employee retention within organizations (Kong & Li, 2018). The results from the study indicated that both

satisfaction of training and development and work attitudes had significant relationships with employee retention. This is essential information for leaders and human resource professionals to understand because excessive turnover can make it difficult for organizations to effectively provide high-quality services (Brown et al., 2019). Many call centers' core issue is high employee turnover, with an estimated annual turnover rate being 40% (Posey, 2019). The issue of employee retention is a matter of grave concern for organizations, which is why organization stakeholders employ a diverse array of approaches to retain employees (Bibi et al., 2018). Although satisfaction of training and development and work attitudes are only two aspects essential to employee retention, focusing on these areas can help to increase overall employee retention, according to the results of the study.

This quantitative study will impact future research in the benefits industry because it provides additional data regarding the significance of the relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes for customer service representatives. As a human resource professional, assisting in maintaining the employee population is a critical and valuable asset to the organization. Employees who are engaged with their jobs and feel empowered by their organization stakeholders to continue growing and developing are more willing to complete job-related tasks with no problems, which will drive them to stay with their organizations.

Delimitations

During the study, I only asked customer service agents employed for at least 6 months to complete the survey. There were various new hire classes of customer service agents that were onboarded over the past couple of months, but they were excluded from the survey to ensure that data was provided from employees who had been working for a substantial amount of time.

Recommendations

Many factors go into an employee's decision to stay with their organization. Training and development and work attitudes are retention strategies that human resource professionals work on every day. The survey questionnaire was a great start to understanding customer service agents' thoughts around training and development and work attitudes, but being able to have face-to-face conversations regarding this topic would be beneficial. Having the opportunity to have thoughtful and intentional conversations could be essential to learning the specific needs around satisfaction of training and development and work attitudes of customer service representatives.

Conducting an additional study within another call center with customer service representatives would be helpful for future research. It would be beneficial to study a different type of call center that services people outside of the benefit industry to understand if there is a statistically significant relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes within other call center environments. Continuing quantitative research within multiple call centers across various industries would allow a deeper understanding of employee retention within call centers. This could help uncover if employee retention issues exist just within call centers in the benefits industry, or if employee retention is an issue that extends throughout all types of call centers when it comes to satisfaction of training and development and work attitudes.

Because the most frequent age of the customer service participants of this study was 23, learning from the younger population could make an immediate impact on employee retention within the call center. Understanding the reasons why customer service agents are satisfied or not with training and development and have positive or negative work attitudes would be beneficial

for leaders and human resource professionals to start making immediate changes needed. Most organizations have overall strategic goals built in around employee retention. Based on the study's findings, I recommend that leaders and human resource professionals focus on employee satisfaction of training and development and work attitudes as part of their employee retention strategies for the call center. Potentially having human resource professionals conduct frequent surveys throughout the year to understand how customer service representatives feel about training and development and to understand their attitudes towards work could assist stakeholders in understanding if they are meeting the organization's strategic goals around employee retention.

Conducting a qualitative study with a smaller sample size of customer service representatives may allow a deeper understanding of employee retention within the call center. Specifically, a qualitative research study could help with deeper understanding of the relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes. Conducting face-to-face or phone interviews with open-ended questions could assist in gathering in-depth insights from customer service representatives to understand what would drive them to stay within the call center.

Lastly, the results of this study were based solely on data from customer service representatives. There are other positions within the call center environment that are essential to helping meet the needs of a successful call center. Because the focus of this study was on representatives, the recommendation would be to study all roles within the call center to provide a broader scope of how statistically significant the relationship between satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes and employee retention are for the entire call center environment.

Conclusions

In conclusion, I found there was a statistically significant relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes. I used the ordinal regression method, which is based on probabilities of reaching thresholds of the dependent variable, depending on the response to independent variables (Laerd Statistics, 2018). Because there was a statistically significant relationship between employee retention and satisfaction of training and development and employee retention and work attitudes, I was able to determine that if participants had a stronger and more positive outlook on satisfaction of training and development and work attitude, then there was a higher percentage chance they would stay within the call center.

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Appendix A: Participant Solicitation

Hello,

I am doing a research study entitled “Call Center Retention: A Correlational Study of Work Attitudes and Satisfaction of Training & Development for Customer Service Agents”. The purpose of the study is to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training & development has a relationship with employee retention within U.S. based inbound call centers. To qualify to participate, you must be an active customer service representative (Member Advocate).

Participation would require about five minutes of your time, to complete a survey.

If you are interested in participating, please click on the following link and you will be presented a Consent Form via Microsoft Word document with more info.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn Birocci
Primary Investigator

Appendix B: Informed Consent

Introduction: Call Center Retention: A Correlational Study of Work Attitudes and Satisfaction of Training & Development for Customer Service Agents

This study is being conducted to better understand if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training & development have with employee retention. Participating in this survey is a great way to assist with helping your organization create employee retention initiatives to increase employee engagement. Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. After reviewing this consent form, you can access the survey simply by clicking the link at the bottom of the form. Completing this short study will provide a great benefit to better understanding how to increase retention in the call center environment.

You may be able to take part in a research study. This form provides important information about that study, including the risks and benefits to you as a potential participant. Please read this form carefully and ask the researcher any questions that you may have about the study. You can ask about research activities and any risks or benefits you may experience. You may also wish to discuss your participation with other people, such as a family member.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or stop your participation at any time and for any reason without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this study is to investigate if and to what extent work attitudes and satisfaction of training & development has a relationship with employee retention within U.S. based inbound call centers. This study is being conducted to better understand how organizations can implement stronger employee retention strategies within the call center environment by understanding the relationship between work attitudes and employee retention as well as satisfaction of training & development and employee retention.

RISKS & BENEFITS:

There are risks to taking part in this research study. Below is a list of the foreseeable risks, including the seriousness of those risks and how likely they are to occur:

The only foreseen risk in conducting the study is a breach of confidentiality. Although this risk can be serious, it is *rare* that breach of confidentiality would happen.

You may not experience any personal benefits from participating in this study.

PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY:

Any information you provide will be confidential to the extent allowable by law. Some identifiable data may have to be shared with individuals outside of the study team, such as members of the ACU Institutional Review Board. Otherwise, your confidentiality will be protected by not collecting easily identifiable information from participants, only the researcher will have access to survey data collected, and all survey data will be deleted from computer upon completion of the study.

CONTACTS:

If you have questions about the research study, the lead researcher is Jacquelyn Birocci, ACU doctoral candidate, and may be contacted at xxxxxxxxx@acu.edu. If you are unable to reach the

lead researcher or wish to speak to someone other than the lead researcher, you may contact Dr. Jose Perez, xxxxxxxxxxxx@acu.edu. If you have concerns about this study, believe you may have been injured because of this study, or have general questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact ACU's Chair of the Institutional Review Board and Executive Director of Research, Megan Roth, Ph.D. Dr. Roth may be reached at

(xxx) xxx-xxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@acu.edu

328 Hardin Administration Bldg, ACU Box 29103

Abilene, TX 79699

Additional Information

Expected number of participants to be enrolled in the study are 200 customer service representatives.

Consent Signature Section

Your participation may be ended early by the researchers for certain reasons. For example, we may end your participation if you no longer meet study requirements, the researchers believe it is no longer in your best interest to continue participating, you do not follow the instructions provided by the researchers, or the study is ended. You will be contacted by the researchers and given further instructions in the event that you are removed from the study.

Please click the button below if you voluntarily agree to participate in this study. Click only after you have read all of the information provided and your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. If you wish to have a copy of this consent form, you may print it now. You do not waive any legal rights by consenting to this study.

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS SURVEY](#)

Appendix C: IRB Approval Letter

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
320 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29103, Abilene, Texas 79699-9103
325-674-2885

February 23, 2022

Jacquelyn Birocci
Department of Graduate and Professional Studies
Abilene Christian University



Dear Jacquelyn,

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I am pleased to inform you that your project titled "Call Center Retention: A Correlational Study of Work Attitudes and Satisfaction of Training & Development for Customer Service Agents",

(IRB# 22-020)is exempt from review under Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects.

If at any time the details of this project change, please resubmit to the IRB so the committee can determine whether or not the exempt status is still applicable.

I wish you well with your work.

Sincerely,

Megan Roth

Megan Roth, Ph.D.
Director of Research and Sponsored Programs

Appendix D: IES Employee Engagement Survey

The questionnaire will consist of questions asking you about training and employee engagement within your organization. Please select how each statement makes you feel on a scale of 1-5 (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree).

I am encouraged to develop new skills.

Strongly				Strongly
Disagree				Agree
1	2	3	4	5

My leader takes employee development seriously.

Strongly				Strongly
Disagree				Agree
1	2	3	4	5

I have many opportunities for training and development.

Strongly				Strongly
Disagree				Agree
1	2	3	4	5

I find real enjoyment in my job.

Strongly				Strongly
Disagree				Agree
1	2	3	4	5

I am seldom bored with my job.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

Overall, I am satisfied with my job.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I have felt emotionally drained by my work.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I feel burned out by my work.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I have felt under constant strain recently.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the pace of change here.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

The pace of change is too fast here.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I speak highly of this organization to my friends.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I would be happy for my friends and family to use this organization's products/services.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

This organization is known as a good employer.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

This organization has a good reputation generally.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this organization.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of performance.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I find that my values and the organizations are very similar.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I always do more than is actually required.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I try to help others in this organization whenever I can.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I try to keep abreast of current developments in my area.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I volunteer for things that contribute to the organization's objectives.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I frequently make suggestions to improve the work of my team/department.

Strongly

Strongly

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

Which of the following statements most reflect your current intentions?

- 1 – Plan to leave as soon as possible
- 2 – Likely to leave within the next year
- 3 – Likely to stay for at least another year
- 4 – Plan to stay for the foreseeable future

Fletcher, L., Alfes, K., & Robinson, D. (2018). The relationship between perceived training and development and employee retention: The mediating role of work attitudes. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(18), 2701-2728.

Appendix E: Permission Correspondence to Utilize and Adapt Survey Instruments



Jaquelyn Holmes
to l.fletcher1

Sun, Oct 17, 2021, 8:40 AM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Hi Mr. Fletcher -

I wanted to reach out regarding the use of the IES Employee Engagement survey instrument. Please see below the information regarding me.

My name is Jacquelyn Birocci. I am currently a doctoral student at Abilene Christian University. I reside in Charlotte, North Carolina. I currently work in Human Resources for a technology company. One of the departments that I support is the call center. Like many call centers, turnover rates are high! My dissertation is around the relationship between training & development, work attitudes, and employee retention. I am very interested in using the survey instrument in the journal article, The relationship between perceived training and development and employee retention: the mediating role of work attitudes.

Looking forward to hearing back from you!

Thank you,

Jacquelyn Birocci



Luke Fletcher
to me

Oct 17, 2021, 3:27 PM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Hello Jacquelyn

The survey instrument used in the paper is from the Institute for Employment Studies

<https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/what-we-know/employee-engagement>

A full list of the measures and items in the paper can be found in the appendix of the paper:

Appendix 1. Scales and items used in the study Training and development I am encouraged to develop new skills. My line manager takes employee development seriously. I have many opportunities for training and development. Job satisfaction I find real enjoyment in my job. I am seldom bored with my job. Overall, I am satisfied with my job.

Emotional exhaustion I have felt emotionally drained by my work. I feel burned out by my work. I have felt under constant strain recently. Change-related anxiety I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the pace of change here. The pace of change is too fast here. Employee engagement I speak highly of this organization to my friends. I would be happy for my friends and family to use this organization's products/services. This organization is known as a good employer. This organization has a good reputation generally. I proud to tell others that I am a part of this organization. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of performance. I find that my values and the organization's are very similar. I always do more than is actually required. I try to help others in this organization whenever I can. I try to keep abreast of current developments in my area. I volunteer for things that contribute to the organization's objectives. I frequently make suggestions to improve the work of my team/department. Intention to stay Which of the following statements most reflect your current intentions? 1 – Plan to leave as soon as possible, 2 – Likely to leave within the next year, 3 – Likely to stay for at least another year, 4 – Plan to stay for the foreseeable future.

Whilst IES has some good measures of various elements, there are also other evidence based measures of engagement out there, including

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13678868.2012.726542>

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/hrm.21811>

I hope this helps

BW



Dilys Robinson
to me

5:35 AM (3 hours ago) ☆ ↩ ⋮

Hello Jacquelyn, and thanks for your email - your research sounds interesting! I don't foresee any problems with your request, as long as IES is acknowledged and referenced in any report you write, but I'm waiting for someone at IES to give me the nod as the engagement research was done while I was an employee there (I'm now an associate).

I'll get back to you ASAP.

Cheers, Dilys

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**askies**

to me ▾

7:23 AM (1 hour ago) ☆ ↩ ⋮

Dear Jacquelyn,

Thank you very much for your request. We are happy for you to use the research instrument so long as Institute for Employment Studies is credited where you use it.

Many thanks

Rebecca

Appendix F: Independent and Dependent Variables Table

Type of variable	Variable specifics	Variable/Questions
Independent	Satisfaction of training and development, work attitude	T&D (1–3); WA (4–23)
Dependent	Employee retention	ER (24)