

Reducing Voluntary Employee Turnover in Small Construction Companies for Long-term Productivity

Prof. Dr. Joel Chagadama  DBA^{1*}, **Prof. Dr. Desire S. Luamba**  DBA² and **Prof. Dr. Ir. Edouard M. Mutamba PhD³**

¹President, Start Light Consulting LLC, Manassas, VA-USA, Jchagadama@hotmail.com ²Vice President and CEO, Star Light Consulting LLC, Manassas, VA-USA, luambade@gmail.com

³ Professor Faculty of Polytechnic, University of Lubumbashi, D.R. of Congo, emwemamutamba@hotmail.com

*Correspondence: Prof. Dr. Joel Chagadama, Jchagadama@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT- Voluntary employee turnover has caused considerable damage to small construction businesses, significantly affecting productivity, profitability, and sustainability. Based on job embeddedness theory, this qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore strategies small construction business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Participants were 4 successful small construction business owners in Virginia who successfully implemented strategies that reduced voluntary employee turnover by 75% over 5 years. Data were collected from company documents and semi-structured interviews. The three primary themes that emerged from the data analysis were; effective human resource management, favorable working conditions, and employee engagement. A key recommendation for small construction business owners is to improve human resource management, working conditions, and employee engagement. Reducing voluntary employee turnover is critical to business cost reduction and increasing key business processes' performance. In addition, small construction business owners may use the results of this study to offer job stability to employees and increase families' and governments' incomes to realize some basic projects from revenue generated by employees' vast career opportunities.

Keywords: Employee Turnover, Human Resource Management, Employee Engagement, Job Stability.

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construction companies are the main contributors to the economy and job creators, with at least 66% of new jobs added yearly [2]. However, small construction business owners need strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover because of massive competition in the job market to maintain a competitive standing and advantage.

Small construction business owners must have a stable workforce to operate efficiently and effectively [6]. Hur et al. [7] stated that voluntary employee turnover robs small construction businesses of the expertise and experiences needed to grow business operations and improve production capacity. Childs et al. [8] and Moon [9] echoed that high voluntary employee turnover adversely impacts business profitability. Porter and Rigby [10] also asserted that retaining a quality employee is more efficient than recruiting, replacing, or training employees. Reducing voluntary employee turnover remains strategic for small construction owners to maintain skilled, motivated, and devoted employees to increase profits and promote growth [11]. Therefore, small construction business owners must consider adopting strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover to maintain efficiency and competitiveness in the market [10].

3. PROBLEM AND PURPOSE STATEMENT

The voluntary turnover rate in small construction businesses is among the highest of all industries, resulting in lost revenues [12, 13, 14]. The construction industry's total turnover rate was 64.8% in 2019, adversely affecting business productivity, operations, and performance [15]. The general business

1. INTRODUCTION

In the United States, small construction business owners contribute positively to economic development. However, many small construction business owners or managers lack the strategies to retain skilled employees, negatively affecting their organizational productivity and profitability. According to Al-Mamun and Hasan [1], voluntary employee turnover negatively affects productivity and profitability in the construction industry. Therefore, small construction business owners should understand the implications of voluntary employee turnover and its direct effects on organizational functionality and sustainability.

2. BACKGROUND

The construction industry is the backbone of the U.S. economy and a significant contributor to the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP; [2]). In 2018, small construction business owners employed over 7 million employees and contributed over \$1,231 billion to the GDP [3, 4, 5]. Moreover, small

problem was that voluntary employee turnover in small construction businesses hinders operations and unit performance. The specific business problem was that some small construction business owners lacked strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover. This qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore strategies small construction business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover and increase productivity.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore practical strategies construction managers use to reduce voluntary turnover and increase productivity. To respond to this question, we explored effective strategies construction managers use to increase retention and promote long-term business success.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the professional and academic literature reflects and amalgamates information collected from several pieces of literature or scholarly sources related to the research topic [16, 17]. Given the high rate of employee turnover and the rapid market expansion in the construction industry, small construction business owners need efficient strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover or promote employee retention to increase productivity [18].

In the following literature review, we explored the conceptual framework of job embeddedness theory and the supporting leadership theory to reduce voluntary employee turnover in the construction industry. We also analyzed and explored the concepts of job satisfaction, employee retention, human resources management, the role of the construction industry, employee engagement, job satisfaction, employee turnover, organization commitment, and work environment in the current business context. Ferreira et al. [19] stated that business managers must promote job satisfaction and engagement and mitigate employee turnover to sustain their business. Aseervatham [20] and Mora et al. [21] echoed that employees in the organization are the primary production source. Also, Mora et al. [21] asserted that business managers need efficient human resources management systems to promote organizational commitment, work environment, and employee retention. Horvathova and Mokrisova [22] added that as competition affects business productivity and competitiveness, managers may encourage leadership strategy and human resource management practices by developing hiring or training attractive programs to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

5.1 Job Embeddedness Theory

The conceptual framework of this study was the job embeddedness theory. Mitchell et al. [23] introduced the job embeddedness theory and argued that connection, position, and sacrifice are the primary factors that justify employee retention in an organization. Per Mitchell et al. [23], the relations between individuals or ties between individuals and activities, alignment of an individual's perception of an organization, and the sacrifice employees offer to an organization are the foundation of the job embeddedness theory. Young et al. [24] used a

regression analysis to study employee retention among U.S. extension agents in two states to implement employee retention in an organization. In their finding, Young et al. [24] found a strong relationship between job embeddedness, intent to stay, discretionary effort, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and organizational commitment. Therefore, job embeddedness theory is one of the managerial tools that business leaders need to understand and apply to promote employee motivation to stay in the organization and eventually lead to employee retention [25].

Job embeddedness theory encompasses internal and external factors that motivate employees to stay in the organization. Lyu and Zhu [26] used a time-lagged method to analyze the impacts of job embeddedness on ostracism in Chinese workplaces. Lyu and Zhu [26] found that the workplace may be an external cause of ostracism because it can undermine affective commitment and induce the intention to leave. Therefore, per Lyu and Zhu [26], business leaders need to safeguard against ostracism, which leads to low organizational performance. Furthermore, Lyu and Zhu [26] highlighted the need for business managers to measure job performance and accurately link to specific employee rewards to promote employee retention. Therefore, small construction business owners might explore the benefits of job embeddedness to implement effective strategies to retain devoted employees for high performance, especially in the current business environment where competition is increasing because of globalization [26].

Job embeddedness theory includes three factors: (a) links, (b) fits, and (c) sacrifices. Mitchell et al. [23] stated that employee retention results from the combination of links, fits, and sacrifices. Per Mitchell et al. [23], links signify employee and organization relationships. Additionally, links may be related to the organization or the community where an employee belongs and may have developed social, psychological, or financial aspects [23]. On the contrary, failure to promote significant work relationships between employees and employers could lead to higher employee turnover [27]. Also, Zimmerman et al. acknowledged that links between individuals in an organization could cause pressure from family or team members at work.

Mitchell et al. [23] described fit as reflecting employees' feelings that align with the organizational culture and environment. Mitchell and Lee [25] also described fits in an organization as an employee's perception of an organization and its environment where they feel comfortable working. According to Zimmerman et al. [27], employees' values, career goals, and plans must fit the organizational culture and job demands. The tangible cases of fit include abilities, skills, and knowledge to do the job effectively. Furthermore, Mitchell and Lee [25] opined that employees quickly assimilate when their skills and abilities match the job demand. Therefore, business leaders need to recruit productive employees and assign them tasks that align with employees' capabilities to minimize voluntary employee turnover [28].

Finally, Zimmerman et al. [27] described sacrifices as the perception of material costs or psychological benefits that an employee may lose if they quit an organization. Mitchell et al.

[23] added that sacrifices are some materials and benefits or losses an employee would experience once they leave the organization. For example, the more employees give up perks such as daycare, the company's vehicle, health insurance, or a loss of exciting projects due to job changes, the less likely they are to decide to leave an organization [26, 29]. Furthermore, leaving an attractive, safe community where one is revered or respected can be challenging. Therefore, understanding the tenets of job embeddedness was crucial to minimize voluntary employee turnover.

Conversely, Faisal et al. [28] argued that off-the-job embeddedness stemmed from non-work factors that bound employees to a specific community and made it difficult to leave their present employment. Leaving the current job means relocating to a different location and missing the valued community-specific benefits [28]. These non-work factors encompass elements aligned with an employee's desired lifestyle within the community [30]. Link factors can also be related to an employee's intimate ties to the community [23]. Finally, the sacrifice aspects regarding apparent costs or loss can directly contribute to terminating employment [28, 30].

Some business leaders fail to reach peak performance within their companies because they lack strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Applying job embeddedness theory can enhance performance and employee retention [28]. Kiende et al. [31] used an empirical study to analyze the influence of employee satisfaction, motivation, and retention on the performance of small and medium women-owned enterprises. According to Kiende et al. [31], business owners may reduce voluntary turnover by improving employee satisfaction. Bilan et al. [32] echoed that it is paramount to retain skilled employees to minimize employee hiring and training costs, thereby reducing operational costs to reach organizational goals. However, finding new strategies to retain qualified employees may be challenging [26]. Small construction business owners might use job embeddedness theory to promote incentives and strategies necessary to mitigate or reduce voluntary employee turnover.

The job embeddedness theory encompasses various aspects supporting business development and employee retention. According to Mitchell et al. [23], the job embeddedness theory might provide business leaders with tools to reduce voluntary employee turnover, improve business profitability by promoting employee longevity, and enhance productivity. Likewise, Singh et al. [33] used an empirical study to analyze the impact of skilled employees on business. They found that employee retention and business longevity improve productivity by implementing attractive employee rewards. In addition, some researchers suggested that leaders who retain motivated, passionate, and qualified employees may be more likely to achieve organizational goals and sustain long-term business productivity [34, 35].

5.2 Supporting Theory of Leadership

Leaders or managers of small construction businesses may explore the benefits of leadership theory to increase employee motivation and reduce turnover. Unlike the job embeddedness

theory, which focuses more on retention and why employees remain at their present job, leadership theory focuses on how managers can improve their skills to effectively lead employees to reach maximum organizational benefits [23]. As a result, job embeddedness provided a solid theoretical framework for this study, while small business owners may also use leadership theories as a supporting framework for increasing organization benefit [36, 37].

Small construction business owners should build a strong, cohesive team and provide direction to achieve organizational objectives. Effective leadership requires creating, maintaining, and ensuring a team's success [36]. Furthermore, Arnold [38] argued that effective leadership improves employee motivation and retention. Arnold [38] also asserted that effective leadership is critical to motivating employees to reach organizational goals. For instance, utilizing a suitable leadership style in the construction industry is crucial to improving employee performance and reducing voluntary employee turnover. Similarly, Bass [36] opined that using leadership styles such as transactional or transformational leadership increases organizational value. Also, Bass [36] added that transactional leadership should be an alternative to building a strong relationship between employees and employers by establishing substantial mutual benefits and increasing mutual trust, which may be beneficial for reducing voluntary employee turnover.

Similarly, Hansen and Pihl-Thingvad [39] used transformational and transactional leadership to analyze the implementation of an ambitious innovation strategy in a large Danish municipality. In their analysis, Hansen and Pihl-Thingvad [39] found that innovative behavior is most often displayed when the leader combines transformational leadership with rewards. Building on Hansen and Pihl-Thingvad's [39] findings, Sun and Wang [40] used structural equation modeling (SEM) to explore how transformational leadership influences employees' intentions to quit. Their results indicated that transformational leadership is critical in reducing voluntary turnover and cultivating a collaborative culture. Therefore, construction leaders may use the tenets of transactional leadership theory to reward and motivate employees who desire to remain or stay in the organization.

In addition, transactional leadership is critical for leaders to assess employees' work or production. According to Matthews [40], business leaders also promote a positive change in employee behaviors and attitudes using transactional leadership theory. Similarly, Tung [37] analyzed the impact of transactional leadership on 50 electronic companies in China and found that high productivity was relayed on employee motivation and job satisfaction. For instance, the transactional leadership style could help improve sales and increase profits by offering employees incentives such as bonuses or premiums. Hence, leaders use transformational and transactional leadership to meet organizational goals. In addition, small construction business leaders might use transactional leadership to motivate employees in the workplace and promote a positive mutual exchange between employees and employers.

On the other hand, small business leaders or managers can also use transformational leadership to improve employee motivation and job performance. Using a time-lagged research design, Afsar and Masood [42] collected data from 322 nurses and their supervisors in public sector hospitals. They examined the managers' transformational leadership skills and how they affected innovative work behaviors. Afsar and Masood [42] found that the transformational leadership style had the most substantial positive relationship with creative work behavior when there was trust between supervisors and followers.

5.3 Employee Retention

Gilani and Cunningham [43] described employee retention as a strategy employers may use to reduce voluntary turnover. In addition, Vardaman et al. [29] conducted a study of 207 nurses working in a major U.S. metropolitan hospital's surgical medical unit and confirmed a correlation between employee retention and turnover. Similarly, Yamin [44] used structural equation modeling analysis (SEM) to investigate motivational and environmental factors and their effects on employee retention and organizational performance. Yamin [44] indicated a positive relationship between employee retention and organizational performance. Small construction business owners may explore the positive effects of the relationship between employee retention and organizational performance to reduce voluntary employee turnover and ensure organizational success.

According to Gilani and Cunningham [43], small construction business owners need to utilize employee retention as a business skill to encourage employees to continue contributing to meet organizational goals. Yumnam and Singh [45] echoed that managers should inspire followers to remain proactive and assume ownership roles in employee retention. In addition, employee retention is imperative because it increases employee confidence and minimizes production costs [46, 47]. Therefore, it is strategic for small construction business owners to mitigate voluntary employee turnover by retaining motivated and devoted employees.

To reduce voluntary employee turnover, managers implementing an employee retention strategy must focus on all organizational structures. Yumnam and Singh [45] used a survey to analyze the significant retention factors in private life insurance companies in Manipura. Strategies to increase employee retention depend on the company's nature and activity. For example, employee assignments may last for many months or years in the construction industry. Because of this, managers should focus on implementing job satisfaction strategies to retain motivated employees and reduce turnover for a period that will last the project [48, 7]. Yumnam and Singh [45] added that organization leaders should be to determine the factors that empower employees to execute their duties correctly, create a sense of ownership and belongingness, and influence employees to remain proactive.

Similarly, Coetzer et al. [49] collected data from 549 employees in four major South African businesses using a short form of the original questionnaire to examine the relationship between job embeddedness and turnover intentions. The researchers found

that influential business leaders can promote good relationships between employers and employees by recognizing performers, treating all employees equally, and creating an enjoyable work environment. Furthermore, Agusramadani and Amalia [50] opined that greater employee involvement in every aspect of the organization leads to higher retention. The essential purpose of these strategies is to increase employee satisfaction, boost employee morale, create growth opportunities, and achieve retention [48]. Therefore, small construction business leaders need to know employee retention strategies to plan for long-term success.

5.4 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement can influence employee intention to leave [51]. For example, a cross-sectional empirical study conducted by Sandhya and Sulphey [52] on 392 Indian professional technology companies revealed a positive relationship between employee engagement and voluntary turnover. In addition, a study by Putri and Setianan [53] confirmed a moderate relationship between employee engagement, organizational commitment, and the intention to quit the job. Putri and Setianan [53] suggested that managers link organizational commitment with employee intention to quit their job. In contrast, Bilal et al. [55] argued that disengaged employees might leave the organization because they are likely to seek employment elsewhere. Therefore, creating a highly engaged workforce is critical to increasing employee retention and reducing turnover [54, 55].

Similarly, Carleton et al. [56] used transformational leadership theory to analyze how to create a positive work environment to increase employee engagement and motivation. Carleton et al. [56] found that employee engagement resulted from managers' leadership style that promotes employees' social benefits. Similarly, Gould-Werth et al. [57] conducted 50 semi-structured interviews with a convenience sample of human resources professionals in 14 Arkansas-based employers to analyze the impact of retaining employees with disabilities in the healthcare industry. In their analysis, Gould-Werth et al. [58] found that keeping skilled and motivated employees with a disability was critical to increasing employee value, enhancing the corporate image, and reducing voluntary employee turnover. Furthermore, small construction business owners might increase social benefits to increase employee engagement and reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Moreover, employers must offer compensations that meet employees' needs to increase employee retention. Kim [58] and Harris and Ellis [59] added that engaged workers are positively involved in their jobs, respectful of their coworkers, looking to improve others' work efficacy, improve work-related skills, and committed to highly active exhibit in-extra-role performance. For example, employees who call off or take time off from work with or without notice negatively affect the productivity and morale of other employees [60, 61].

Similarly, several researchers have revealed that employee engagement is a significant predictor of employee retention [58, 59, 61]. According to Omari et al. [61], highly engaged employees are loyal and attached to organizations and lower

employee turnover. Furthermore, Omari et al. [61] confirmed that greater levels of employee engagement would lead to lower levels of absenteeism that may affect other employees' morale and increase their desire to remain in the organization, reducing voluntary turnover intention. In addition, Xiong and Wen [63] surveyed 227 participants from two central retail banks in China. The results showed that turnover intention and work engagement significantly correlated with organizational citizenship behavior and counterproductive work behavior. Moreover, Xiong and Wen [63] indicated that work engagement is also where employers should have strategies to mitigate counterproductive work behaviors. Business managers may promote employee engagement during economically challenging times to reduce voluntary employee turnover [57, 59].

In addition, Akhmetshin et al. [64] stated that employee engagement could help companies withstand, survive, and thrive in turbulent economic times. Dhir and Shukla [65] analyzed the differences in performance between engaged and disengaged employees and found that managers who used employee engagement strategies had the chance to double their production. In the construction industry, employees sometimes work overtime, so promoting a positive, safe, and vibrant workplace is paramount to enhancing employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and retention [66, 67].

5.5 Employee Turnover

High voluntary employee turnover is undesirable for any organization and a significant business concern for managers [68, 69]. Furthermore, employee turnover adversely affects production customer service and increases workloads. Several studies have shown that employee turnover negatively impacts organizational well-being, image, and reputation [70, 71]. Mkamwa [72] added that employee turnover adversely affects corporate sustainability and viability. Employees' decisions to voluntarily terminate their employment with an organization vary based on their circumstances. Commonly cited reasons for voluntary turnover include the availability of alternative employment opportunities, job satisfaction levels, interpersonal conflict, a sterile work environment, work-life balance challenges, or other personal reasons [68, 71]. Thus, any organization's high voluntary employee turnover rate leads to many adverse outcomes.

Effective managers should analyze and investigate why they quit when many employees leave an organization. Asimah [73] used a cross-sectional logic survey to examine factors influencing employee turnover in the hospitality industry. Asimah [73] suggested that effective managers should provide appropriate remuneration policies, better working conditions, communication between the management team and employees, and training opportunities. Per Asimah [73], managers may also know how to plan and assess their relationships with employees to retain them in the organization. An [74] opined that losing employees with unique skillsets is like losing a company's capital. Bilan et al. [32] echoed that turnover could affect an organization's prosperity and competitiveness regardless of its classification. Dutta and Khatri [75] added that it takes time to

get the replacement hire up to the same productivity level as the previous employee. Therefore, losing efficient employees might be costly for the organization.

Employee turnover can be voluntary or involuntary [74, 76]. The critical distinction between the two types of employee turnover lies in who initiates the process. Per Shaw et al. [76], voluntary employee turnover is an employee's decision to terminate his employment relationship, whereas involuntary turnover results from an employer's decision to terminate an employee's contract. Yildiz [77] echoed that business managers may use their leadership skills to stop the undesirable turnover of employees for business performance, which affects the loss of production capital. It is paramount for small construction business owners to understand the impacts of high voluntary employee turnover on production costs in the small construction industry.

Voluntary turnover is when employees leave an organization upon their initiatives [59, 78]. Saks [79] added that voluntary employee turnover is predictable and may have many consequences on employees and employers. For instance, an employee who voluntarily leaves a company may suffer if the new job does not offer what he expected and damages his morale [74, 79]. Shepherd et al. [79] echoed that voluntary employee turnover may negatively affect customer service because it may take time for a new employee to function at the same level as the replaced employee. Harden et al. [81] found that managers have a crucial mission to implement effective managerial business strategies to predict employee turnover. Small construction business owners might also use their business experience to implement critical strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

5.6 Work Environment

Improving the work environment is crucial for reducing voluntary employee turnover. Setiyanto and Natalia [82] argued that the work environment is vital in reducing turnover because of its effect on employees' decisions or desire to leave or stay in the organization. Hopkins and McKay [83] used an explorative study to examine employees' working arrangements and commuting habits from Melbourne's largest city-based firms in Australia. Based on their analysis, Hopkins and McKay [83] found that managers may use organizational policies, attitudes, transportation, and benefits to improve the employee work environment, performance, recognition, and retention. Setiyanto and Natalia [82] added that the work environment might be physical or nonphysical. They described the workplace's physical environment that can affect employees directly or indirectly, such as lighting, air temperature, space for movement, security, cleanliness, and music. Heryanto [84] described a nonphysical work environment as everything related to work relations, such as superiors, coworkers, or subordinates. When an organization provides a good working environment that fosters supervisor and coworker cooperation, employees will feel that the organization and its members care about them and feel morally obligated to return the care by increasing their emotional attachment. Therefore, based on job embeddedness theory, small construction managers might

improve the work environment to promote retention and reduce voluntary employee turnover [85].

Moreover, the determination and creation of the right work environment are critical to promoting employee retention. Tian and Robertson [86] added that the work environment affects employee behaviors, especially short or long-term goals. Employers who improve their work environment enhance how employees view their jobs, which, in turn, significantly impacts productivity and willingness to stay in the organization. Per Tian and Robertson [86], the work environment dramatically affects employee recognition, happiness, productivity, and retention. A comfortable work environment for employees could increase morale and encourage better performance, ultimately reducing voluntary employee turnover [87].

Employee perception of their working environment significantly impacts their attitudes, behaviors, and physical and psychological health. Al-Maaith et al. [88] argued that to implement jobs effectively and efficiently, business managers need to establish the right working environment that supports employees in carrying out their duties properly and effectively. Numerous researchers confirmed that improving the work environment led to higher employee retention, reduced voluntary employee turnover, and higher organizational commitment [88, 89]. Creating favorable working conditions that could motivate employees to work will influence the spirit of responsibility in the workplace.

A better working environment is a prerequisite for employees to do their job. A safe, clean, favorable working environment can comfort and relax employees [86, 88, 89]. Similarly, Nguyen et al. [90] added that the right work environment influences employees' attitudes and builds affective commitment. Per Pérez-Rodríguez et al. [91], the work environment strengthens employees' emotional connection with the organization.

An exemplary work environment significantly influences employee performance [92, 93]. Badrianto and Ekhsan [92] conducted an empirical study to analyze the relationship between the work environment and job satisfaction in Pakistan's banking, telecommunication, and universities. Badrianto and Ekhsan found a positive relationship between work environment and job satisfaction. Likewise, Kurdi et al. [94] echoed that physical and nonphysical work environments significantly affect employee satisfaction and retention. Therefore, small construction business owners have the mission to provide a safe and comfortable working environment to retain employees and reduce turnover.

Moreover, the physical environment's quality greatly influences an employer's ability to recruit and retain talented people [95]. Agbozo et al. [96] used a questionnaire to examine the work environment's effect on job satisfaction and employee retention in a Ghanaian merchant bank. In their findings, Agbozo et al. [96] attested that the work environment significantly affects employee satisfaction. Likewise, Firmansyah et al. [97] and Baek et al. [98] pointed out that uncomfortable work conditions

might lead to low performance, high absenteeism, and elevated turnover rates.

In pleasant work environments with competitive wages, a trusting relationship between employees and the owners, equity and fairness, and a sensible workload may lead to achieving the company's goals with success. A composite of all these conditions improves the work environment and promotes high satisfaction [90]. Therefore, based on job embeddedness theory, small construction business owners may improve the work environment to increase employee motivation and job satisfaction and reduce voluntary employee turnover.

5.7 Construction Industry

Construction activities are primary sources of the development of any country [99]. Per Hossain and Poon [99], construction services that include hospitals, schools, offices, townships, roads, bridges, residences, and warehouses generate job opportunities for millions of job seekers. In the United States, construction activities are actively growing each year, making the country the first economic power globally [100]. However, small construction companies' success depends on their employees' performance. Employees in the construction industry need to develop skills, motivation to perform their job at a higher level, and effective leadership to induce confidence. Loyal employees are likely to buy into the firm's strategic plans and pledge alliance to the organization long-term.

The construction industry is a significant contributor to the U.S. economy, providing more than 680,000 employers with over 7 million employees and creating nearly \$1.3 trillion in structures yearly. Many researchers argued that the retention of skilled employees and increased motivation to belong to the company are fundamental ingredients that lead to profitability [101, 102]. Famiyeh et al. [103] stated that the construction industry provides development, employment, and socioeconomic opportunities.

According to Xu et al. [104], construction companies create employment and generate income for the government through taxes. Using the grey forecasting model to predict managers' vision of potential development, Nguyen [105] found that construction services generate income through foreign exchange earnings from the trade of construction materials and engineering services. Despite the construction industry's economic importance, small construction owners found challenges in meeting job satisfaction, employee motivation, and customers' expectations to reduce employee turnover due to rapid technological advances and globalization impacts [106, 107]. Abyad [108] used an empirical study to analyze the effect of globalization on small business competition and found that globalization increased managerial challenges among business leaders to compete effectively and sustain their businesses. Per Abyad, business leaders need appropriate business skills and strategies to remain competitive in the market.

Therefore, a strategic competitive advantage plan was crucial to promoting business sustainability. Business leaders may use the competitive advantage to find and apply a strategic price to attract customers and increase productivity [109]. Rothman et

al. [110] discussed the mechanism and moderator factors that lead to positive outcomes. They found that flexibility is one of the positive aspects that managers may use to produce high job quality effectively and satisfy customers' needs. Rothman et al. [110] also argued that the lack of effective business strategies could lead to business collapse or failure. In compliance with the job embeddedness theory, small construction leaders should consider employees as the primary factors of production and strive to enhance their well-being and success.

Moreover, gender and age discriminations in the construction industry also have a tangible impact on employee turnover. Moreno [111] used semi-structured interviews to analyze female entrepreneurship's characterization in Usme-Bogota and found that women's productivity was closely related to their roles in organizations or communities. According to Moreno [111], business leaders who treat employees equally and fairly without gender distinction are likely to increase employee retention and reduce turnover. Therefore, for the success of small construction businesses, it is paramount for business owners or managers to be aware of gender discrimination and comply with job embeddedness and leadership theories to promote employee retention and reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Likewise, work or employment discrimination can also arise from other factors such as race, religion, or national origin. Employment discrimination negatively affects business productivity and longevity. Aqqad et al. [112] used a regression analysis to analyze the impacts of employment discrimination on job performance. They found that a strategy such as mediation during an employment conflict is critical for reaching an amicable solution and preventing job discrimination. Similarly, Lamare and Lipsky [113] used an empirical study to examine the effects of arbitration on discrimination claims. They found that employment discrimination claims differ from arbitration, which is appropriate for resolving anti-discrimination statutes at work. According to Lamare and Lipsky [113], construction leaders must be aware of mitigating employment conflicts based on religion, race, age, or physical disabilities to create a conducive work environment. Employers or small construction business owners may use job embeddedness theory for mediation, arbitration, or direct negotiation in their daily managerial activities to promote employee retention strategies and reduce voluntary employee turnover.

6. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

6.1 Method

For this study, we used a qualitative research method to explore strategies small construction business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Yin [114] stated that it is paramount that researchers select the correct applicable research method when conducting the study to meet the research goal. Researchers use the three essential research methods: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed [114]. Researchers use a qualitative method to analyze the phenomenon's human experience using interviews and observations [114]. For this study, we conducted interviews

using semi-structured, open-ended interview questions to analyze and review companies' documentation and official sources regarding small business activities. According to Hesse-Biber [115], the qualitative research method is not based on statistical data but rather words, images, and text; thus, a qualitative method was appropriate for this study.

Quantitative and mixed methods are also valuable research methods. Researchers use quantitative methods to test hypotheses based on numeric data [114]. According to Yin [114], quantitative methods help answer research questions that compare, relate, or describe objective measurements and statistical data about a population sample. Furthermore, researchers utilize the quantitative method to examine hypotheses and apply numerical data to determine the relationship between variables [114]. The research question was not comparative, relational, or descriptive; thus, the quantitative method was inappropriate for this study because we did not test hypotheses to analyze voluntary employee turnover.

The mixed method combines qualitative and quantitative methods in the same study [114]. Yin [114] stated that a mixed method is a research approach applied when only one quantitative or qualitative approach is inadequate. The mixed method helps measure and determine the relationship or variances among independent and dependent variables and explores the human experience in collecting verbal or non-numerical data [114, 115]. We did not test the hypothesis or determine correlations or relationships between variables; therefore, the mixed method was unsuitable for my study.

6.2 Design

The most used designs in a qualitative study are (a) case study, (b) phenomenology, (c) ethnography, and (d) narrative [114]. Researchers use the case study design to explore a single phenomenon bound in time [114]. We used a multiple case study design because it was appropriate to provide an in-depth exploration of strategies through individuals who lived or experienced voluntary employee turnover and reduced their business activities risks. According to Yin [114], a multiple case study is appropriate to collect data from two or more participants. Collatto et al. [116] added that a case study design enables the researcher to comprehend the phenomenon better and is ideal for empirical research studies. My sample consisted of four owners of small construction businesses; therefore, using a multiple case study was perfect or appropriate for my study.

The phenomenological research design is another design that researchers use to explore a single phenomenon bound in time [114]. The phenomenological research design provides information narrating what is perceived, sensed, and known from people's experiences [116]. Collatto et al. [116] argued that researchers use phenomenology to explore participants' lived experiences' central meaning. However, the phenomenology design was inappropriate for this study because we did not explore participants' lived experiences or gather information from many participants.

Researchers use the ethnographic design to explore participants' culture, behavior, or beliefs [117]. Ethnographic design requires

researchers to focus on the culture within a group's associated environment for an extended period [114, 117]. Ethnographic researchers engage themselves in the study to view life through the lens of a business or a social group [114]. The primary sources of data collection in the ethnographic design are detailed observations and interviews. We did not explore participants' cultures, behaviors, or beliefs; therefore, the ethnographic design was unsuitable for my research.

A narrative research design is all about collecting and telling participants' stories. Researchers describe individuals' lives in narrative design, collect and tell stories about people's lives, and write narratives of individual experiences [114, 117]. Narrative design helps exploratory research projects seek to engage with diverse individuals or groups' experiences and meaning-making processes [114]. Thus, the researcher interprets the individual's stories instead of the community (Poole, 2020). The narrative design is about collecting and telling a story or stories of participants; thus, the narrative design was unsuitable for this study.

Therefore, using a multiple case study design was appropriate in exploring strategies through individuals who lived or experienced voluntary employee turnover and reduced their business activities risks.

7. POPULATION AND SAMPLING

This multiple case study population consisted of small construction companies located in Virginia/ USA, which have been in business for over 5 years. The construction business owners must have demonstrated effective strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Measurements on the entire population of Virginian small construction companies were complicated, so we used a purposive sampling method to select a representative sample of the entire population. As stated by Saunders et al. [118], the population's selection should reflect the whole population's characteristics. However, a well-chosen subset provides the most information, allowing accurate inferences from the population [119].

According to Saunders et al. [118], qualitative studies have no predetermined sample size. Instead, Saunders et al. [118] recommended that researchers select a sample size that allows data saturation. Data saturation is when participants can no longer offer new information or themes to the interview questions [114, 118]. For example, we reached data saturation when we repeatedly heard the same answers from participants, and the participants could share no new information.

Moreover, researchers use sampling strategies to select a population sample because, in most cases, it will be costly and time-consuming to study an entire population [114, 118, 119]. We used purposeful sampling to select participants because purposeful sampling is crucial in choosing participants who are likely to provide the most valuable information to respond to the research question [114, 118]. Yin [114] suggested that purposeful sampling is suitable for qualitative research because it enables the researcher to gain detailed knowledge about a specific phenomenon. We also ensured that all participants met

the eligibility criteria for this study before any data collection process.

After receiving approval from Walden's IRB, IRB number 02-11-22-0628049, we contacted the preselected participants who met the eligibility criteria via email or phone. We also confirmed that each owner had a proven record of retention of employees and experience avoiding or managing turnover before conducting separate interviews in person or via Zoom.

8. PROCEDURES

The research question for this qualitative study was: What strategies do small construction business owners use to reduce voluntary employee turnover? Furthermore, the six interview questions were: (a) How did you develop strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover? (b) What strategies have been the most effective in reducing voluntary employee turnover? (c) What strategies have been the least effective in reducing voluntary employee turnover? (d) How did your organization address the critical challenges of implementing strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover? (e) How did your employees respond to your strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover? (f) What additional information would you like to share regarding your strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover?

After participants agreed to participate voluntary in this research study, we notified participants that interviews would be recorded and would last at least 30 to 45 minutes. After the interviews, we followed up with additional questions for clarification and member-checking participants for validation and research credibility. We also analyzed companies' internal documentation and administrative and financial reports to examine the research question, including payrolls and monthly employee turnover reports, employee hiring and training costs, strategic recruitment planning, state and federal employee taxes, and the SBA reports. We also used archival records to harvest data that helped analyze the case study and explore other social issues related to the research topic.

As the primary research instrument, we strictly followed the interview protocols to help mitigate the potential of any personal biases. Following the interview protocol, we started interview sessions by asking open-ended questions to engage participants, establish a rapport, and help participants feel comfortable and relaxed. We also summarized the final transcripts for member checking to ensure data and study accuracy, validity, credibility, and transferability.

We confirmed validity and reliability to establish credibility by mitigating bias and ensuring trustworthiness in the data analysis.

9. DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis is the process that converts raw data into a message that meets the researcher's conclusion, interpretation, or understanding of a topic [120]. As described by Yin [114], data analysis has five processes: (a) data compiling, (b) disassembling of data into subsets, (c)

reassembling data into patterns/themes, (d) interpreting of the data, and (e) developing of conclusions. For this study, we followed the five-step process and used methodological triangulation for data analyze.

We also used methodological triangulation from multiple external sources such as interviews, companies' internal documentation, and official sources to validate, challenge, or better unravel the study's processes. Candela [121] argued that methodological triangulation might help mitigate bias and the likelihood of misinterpretation of the data. Researchers must use multiple sources to explore a phenomenon's various levels and dimensions [122].

Researchers use computer software to improve the quality of qualitative data analysis [123]. One of the commonly used software in qualitative research is NVivo. NVivo is also used to code and categorize data according to emerging themes and data similarities. We used NVivo to sort, code, organize and analyze data. Coding consists of creating data categories and listing keywords before cataloging collected information into themes. NVivo also helped to create codes based on the research question and conceptual framework phrases.

Moreover, we used the data-coding feature of NVivo to identify patterns and themes and reorganize collected information until themes emerge to answer the overarching research question.

10. FINDINGS

Data analysis using NVivo 12 helped identify three primary themes and six sub-themes. The primary themes were (a) effective human resource management, (b) working conditions, and (c) organizational commitment. The sub-themes were (a) effective recruitment and selection techniques, (b) competitive remuneration, (c) employee benefits, (d) safe work environment, (e) job description, (f) workplace culture, (g) employee empowerment, and (h) employee recognition. The results of data analysis also indicated that participants used job embeddedness theory as a strategy to increase motivation, retention, and satisfaction to reduce voluntary turnover. All participants indicated that reducing voluntary turnover was critical for small construction business development.

Theme 1: Effective Human Resources Management. The first theme that emerged from data analysis was effective human resource management. Human Resource Management (HRM) is crucial to describing how employees work within an organization. The primary responsibilities of human resource managers are managing staffing, employee compensation and benefits, and defining each post of work [124]. Eckardt et al. [125] argued that small construction companies' sustainability should depend on the knowledge and expertise of their employees to create and increase economic value for their clients or customers.

Human resource managers are critical in sustaining a strong relationship between employers and employees [124]. Responses for human resources management came from questions 2 and 6, which focused on the most strategies to reduce voluntary turnover. The responses from all participants

attested that human resources managers should be proactive and creative to increase organization performance by promoting organization values and mitigating turnover. For example, P3 stated that "our human resources strategy to offer full insurance coverage to all employees and family members motivated employees to be productive, which increased values to our organization." P1 added that "the role of human resources managers is not only to implement organizational policies but also to improve work safety and engagement." P4 echoed that "human resource managers used matching 401K prime payment strategy. This was crucial to retain employees because they should work until their retirement ages to get all full benefits". Participants also recommended that selecting and recruiting devoted employees and offering good employee benefits and competitive remuneration was crucial for human resources managers to improve success and effectively reduce voluntary employee turnover in all the departments and divisions of the organization.

Recruitment and Selection of Employees: Recruiting and selecting devoted or motivated employees is critical for human resources managers [126]. De Winne et al. [127] argued that small construction business owners face unique challenges regarding voluntary employee turnover that impact their organizational sustainability. Then, small business owners should be aware of hiring qualified and competent employees to be technically proficient. Newman et al. [128] added that recruiting and selecting employees must comply with laws and regulations to avoid potential conflicts between employers and employees. P1 described the changes in their company recruitment practices from knee jerk hiring practices to more thoughtfully and well-structured processes that have taken place since the firm's inception 33 years ago. P1 categorized the process as going from a strategy of "just pick a person from the street and plug into a position to address an immediate need. However, over the years, we changed our recruitment strategy to a methodological fill open positions to improve retention. The process starts by carefully planning and identifying the Job's requirements, the skills to look for when interviewing, and selecting the candidate for a perfect fit". P3 and P4 explained their process and how they use artificial intelligence software to screen resumes to select a qualified candidate, interview the candidate, and determine if they will fit the corporate culture. P2 added, "During the interview process, the human resources managers ensure that all candidates are assessed on their technical skills and personalities before evaluation. This strategy helped us keep the same agents until now".

P2 observed that their general approach to recruitment and hiring had not changed significantly but emphasized the need to use personal judgment and all available tools in recruiting employees that fit into the established corporate culture. P3 and P4 further reiterated the critical roles of human resource managers in an ongoing process of ensuring that employees' continued commitment to the company by addressing issues such as disciplinary actions, employee grievances are addressed, employee evaluations are done promptly, and any other human resource management issues that may arise. Happy employees remain employed and become brand advocates to

other potential recruits. P2 agreed and added, "We always make it a point to regularly scheduled meetings with recruits to help acclimate and create that personal connection. Our job is to make you feel welcome and help with the transition." Based on job embeddedness theory, selection and recruiting practices are factors human resources managers should utilize to prevent voluntary employee turnover [130].

Competitive remuneration: A competitive salary or income in human resources may vary depending on a company's pay philosophy. Syahreza et al. [130] argued that employees are likely demotivated and looking for new job opportunities if their basic salary requirements are unmet. The findings from interviews attest that a competitive remuneration strategy increases retention and reduces voluntary employee turnover when applied. P1 noted, "Offering very competitive and fair helped enhance employees' morale and make them give out the best in them for the company." P3 reported, "One means of reducing employee turnover is by offering fair pay or wages that commensurate workers' experience contribution." P2 and P4 suggested that paying employee slightly above the industry-going rate is an effective strategy for reducing voluntary employee turnover. P3 and P4 added that to find skilled employees to compete in this complex and ever-changing market environment, offering competitive wages to employees allowed them to remain competitive and offer the best quality of services to clients.

P2 and P3 also agreed that paying employees at or above the market rate is catalytic to minimize employee turnover effectively. P2 stated, "We created and empowered our human resources management to use all the tools at their disposal to compensate employees. Effective human resource management's role is to establish an employee remuneration package that can motivate and influence employee decisions to stay in the organization [128]. Human resource managers should also ensure salaries and wages are comparable to market wage rates and promptly address employee concerns [130].

Employee Benefits: Choy and Kamoche [131] identified employee benefits as an interrupting authority for voluntary employee turnover. According to Das [132], voluntary employee turnover links with the employee benefits strategy. The participants' interviews attested that the benefits like health insurance, flexible spending accounts, life and disability insurance, retirement savings, paid time off (PTO), childcare, and eldercare were some of the social benefits that contributed to reducing employee turnover voluntarily. P1 said, "As a small construction company, we have limited resources; we cannot out-compete some established competition in terms of higher wages. Therefore, we offer, for instance, retirement benefits such as 401K matching up to 6% of employee salary. When an employee puts 6% of his or her salary, the company matches up to 6%." P3 and P4 echoed that they offered a 401K retirement plan with a 3% match, and they are planning to increase because of market competition. P1, P2, and P3 added that they also offer tuition reimbursement programs to employees willing to improve their education. P2 said, "We currently have people attending community college doing electricity and mechanical maintenance programs. The company supports tuition and

provides all school's needs to increase retention and reduce turnover." P3 mentioned that having well-defined employee benefits significantly affects employee decision to seek employment elsewhere.

Thibault et al. [133] attested that offering robust employee benefits can be a powerful tool that small construction business owners may use to retain talented employees. P3 revealed that his company included a tax-deferred annuity, saving programs, long-term disability, life insurance, free parking, and paid holidays in its benefits package to increase employee satisfaction and reduce turnover. P2 indicated that his construction company offers employees a liberal fringe benefit package such as paid time off, health, life, disability, dental, and vision insurance. P1 and P4 indicated that they offered an extension of tuition assistance to children under 18 years old and spouses of employees who completed at least 5 years of continuous service.

Job Description: Scott et al. [134] asserted that employees resign when skills and knowledge are not commensurate with the job requirements. Some organizations do not consider job descriptions a priority even though a mismatch of talent and capabilities leads to unnecessary absenteeism and low morale [135]. All four participants highlighted the need to evaluate the job requirements and skills required to do the job successfully. According to P1, "It is imperative that when you hire, you are looking for the right candidate with the correct skillset." A strategy that has worked for P3 is reviewing employees' job descriptions versus tasks to be performed to ensure employees are not overloaded.

P3 and P4 added that understanding the job requirements enables the company to help employees by providing the proper training for the job. It is essential to recognize that effective selection is not sustained if employees are placed in positions that match their skills to improve employee retention. According to P2, "The process of selecting and placing employees begins with accurate and thorough job analysis to establish the tasks, duties, and responsibilities of the available position along with the skills required for successful performance." P2 further added that the selection of the potential candidate needs to be based upon job-related criteria found in the job description to improve the probability of a successful pick and minimize the probability of mismatch that may lead to voluntary turnover. A realistic job description should improve the probability that the candidate's on-the-job experience will match the expectations developed during the selection process to improve employee retention and reduce voluntary turnover.

Links to the Literature Review: The findings from the interviews and review of publicly available company documents align with the human resource role and organizational commitment section of my professional and academic literature review. We discussed how small construction business owners could utilize human resource management, remuneration, and employee benefits to improve employee motivation and reduce voluntary employee turnover. All participants interviewed reflected that they use effective

recruitment and selection techniques, competitive remuneration, and employee benefits to improve retention and reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Links to the Conceptual Framework: The findings from the interviews align with the sacrifice element of the job embeddedness conceptual framework. A significant loss could mean the employee must sacrifice something, an aspect of job embeddedness. Small construction business owners must understand what motivates people to retain valued employees. Some employees might prefer a simple thank you and a pat on the back, while others might prefer financial rewards or bonuses. Therefore, the analysis of interviews and the publicly available company documents attest that employees may remain at an organization because of the positive social benefits and rewards recognition they receive from their employers.

Table 1: Subthemes for Theme: Effective Human Resource Management

Subthemes for Theme 1: Effective Human Resource Management

Nodes/Subthemes	Frequency	%
Recruitment and selection of employees	4	100
Competitive remuneration	4	100
Employee benefits	3	75
Job description	3	75

Theme 2: Working Conditions: The second theme that emerged was the working conditions. Good working conditions create an environment that promotes employee safety and an organizational culture necessary to achieve organizational goals. Based on job embeddedness theory, favorable working conditions are critical to reducing voluntary employee turnover. The participants' interviews attested that good working conditions are paramount to motivating employees to perform their jobs to their highest ability. Therefore, managers who promote favorable working conditions could increase productivity [83]. P1 and P4 stated that improving safety and promoting good working conditions increased employees' sense of belongingness. For example, P4 said, "Making employee voices heard by holding a regular staff meeting and allowing employees to share ideas and concerns freely, offer strong encouragement, and personalized employee work areas help increase confidence and strengthen the employer-employee relationship." P2 and P3 agreed that providing food and snacks every morning was strategic, promoting favorable working conditions and ensuring healthy eating among employees. Based on job embeddedness theory, good working conditions motivate employees to become proactively productive and remarkably reduce voluntary turnover. During the interviews, all four participants acknowledged the importance of promoting favorable working conditions as an effective strategy to reduce voluntary turnover.

Workplace Safety: Federal law requires organizations to implement a safe workplace to prevent health and safety hazards. Kelly et al. [136] argued that employers should

improve the work environment to increase retention and productivity. Kelly et al. [136] also added that improving safety hazards in the workplace may decrease stress and enhance employee loyalty, which is critical to reducing voluntary employee turnover. P2 and P4 indicated that a safe workplace creates a competitive atmosphere without stress. P1 and P3 added that they ensured workplace safety by conducting unannounced worksite walk-thru visits and inviting all employees to attend daily and weekly safety meetings. For example, P1 stated: "I participate in the safety field meeting with my employees to emphasize my organizational commitment to safety and invited all participants to share their thoughts to prevent hazards. These safety meetings were very productive, and employees were very receptive and enhanced commitment to upholding organizational safety standards."

A safe work environment is critical to building a positive relationship between employee job satisfaction and productivity and minimizing accidents or hazards on the job site. All four participants indicated that creating a safe work environment for employees in the construction industry was strategic to maintain a high level of production and sales. Evidence from the interviews indicated that all participants believed that improving the work environment was crucial for increasing employees' desire to belong to the company and reducing turnover. For instance, the response to question 4 from P4 supported the notion that a safety management strategy entails ensuring employees take periodic breaks away from their tasks and comply with the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) policy. P3 added that supervisors enforced the procedure of taking 15 minutes breaks after every 3 hours of nonstop work to decrease stress and potential hazards or accidents during work. P1 and P2 echoed that providing appropriate PPE and training all employees on using equipment safely was paramount to avoid incidents and protect employees from hazards.

Workplace Culture: Workplace culture is a compendium of employees' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that create a positive atmosphere in a work environment. Bourgault and Goforth [137] argued that a positive workplace culture aligns employee behaviors and company policies with reaching the organization's goals. All four participants agreed on maintaining an organizational culture that promotes flexibility and trust in small construction businesses. Participants also attested that increasing employee trust leads to high employee retention. For example, P1 said, "Promoting a workplace culture helped create a brotherhood environment which led to reducing turnover." P3 added, "I devoted most of my time getting to know all my employees and conversing with all employees at all levels of business activities to understand and learn their background to earn their trust. Employees learned to open up, trust, and buy into the company vision through genuine frank conversations. A genuine show of empathy help in earning employees' trust and creates a conducive environment that allows them to do their jobs, which is crucial for reducing turnover." All four participants attested that employees could relate to creating an identifiable work culture.

Links to the Literature Review: The findings from the interviews also align with the work environment and organizational commitment sections found in the literature review of the professional and academic literature. The work environment is crucial in establishing a positive employee-organization relationship. When business leadership shares critical information with employees, it is known as accountability and transparency, whether the message is good or bad [135]. P3 reiterated the importance of building a solid relationship based on trust and respect. Small construction business owners can help reduce voluntary turnover by promoting a safe working environment with strong work culture and well-defined tasks.

The findings from the interviews also align with the management and leadership section of the literature review, precisely where we discussed transformational leadership. Leaders who implement transformational leadership can considerably influence employee job satisfaction and commitment to the organization [36]. The success of a transformational leader relies on the leader's ability to offer inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration [37]. Based on the findings from the interviews, all participants appeared to display transformational leadership characteristics based on their techniques to communicate with their team to strengthen the employee-organization relationship effectively.

Links to the Conceptual Framework: The findings from the interviews align with the fit and link elements of the job embeddedness conceptual framework. When a small construction business owner provides a safe and conducive work environment, employees feel a sense of pride and ownership of the organization [138]. Additionally, the more the employees feel connected to their community or organization, the more likely they perform at optimal levels and surpass management, and their fellow employees' expectations increase [36]. Therefore, small construction business owners can positively influence employee fit and link embeddedness by creating a safe work environment, a solid work culture, and a well-defined job description to reduce voluntary employee turnover.

Table 2: Sub-themes for Theme2: Working Conditions
Sub-Theme for Theme 2: Working Conditions

Nodes/Themes	Number of participants	% of participant agreement
		with subthemes
Workforce safety	4	100
Workforce culture	3	75

Theme 3: Employee Engagement. Employee engagement is employees' emotional attachment toward their organizations and goals, which results in the voluntary use of discretionary effort [139]. Engaged employees experience pride and loyalty toward their organizations and usually perform above standards [36]. According to job embeddedness theory, managers should have the ability to increase employee engagement to increase

motivation and satisfaction. The results of the data analysis indicated that participants used employee empowerment and recognition to increase engagement. The theme of employee engagement emerged from interview questions 2, 4, and 5, in which participants presented their efficient strategies to increase employee desire to belong to the organization. The theme of employee engagement aligns with job embeddedness theory because it leads to satisfaction, which is crucial to improving employee retention and reducing voluntary turnover. For example, P4 argued that high-performing employees were self-motivated. P3 stated, "As the owner, I have to know who my best performers are and reward them accordingly. If one puts an extra effort and produces at a premium, showing a blind eye will be demotivating". P1 and P2 added that recognizing and rewarding good workers inspires other employees to positively replicate their behaviors or attitudes. All participants agreed that encouraging employees to think about where they would like to be long-term was essential to foster teamwork, creating a positive work environment, and reducing turnover.

Employee Empowerment: Participants agreed that empowering all staff to provide their best service leads to a strong comfort level that promotes engagement. Murray and Holmes [140] argued that employee empowerment strengthens an organization's operations and encourages employee retention. P1, P2, and P4 noted that their strategy to empower employees individually and collectively was critical to mitigate turnover and increase productivity. P3 shared, "Our staff is empowered to make things right on the spot. We provide extensive training and options for our staff to change the service or remain in the same department". P3 statement aligned with the conclusion of Murray and Holmes [140].

Employee Recognition: Recognizing employee accomplishments in the workplace and the family or social lives reduces concerns associated with work-life conflicts and potential voluntary turnover [136, 140]. All participants agreed that their strategy to make employee recognition part of the organizational culture increased engagement and reduced voluntary turnover. Also, participants recognized that employee recognition, including incentives, holiday and milestone celebrations, and bonuses, led to high employee satisfaction. P4 added that celebrating successes tiny victories strengthen the team and make employees feel valued. P3 claimed, "We try and give everybody New Year's Day off so they can have that time with their families." All participants attested that organizing holiday parties and events, including families, helped reinforce the family-centric management approach, positively impacting employee engagement and turnover.

All business owners agreed that recognizing employee effort while doing their job effectively increased engagement and reduced voluntary employee turnover. Within the conceptual framework, organizational support ties to increasing job embeddedness through the employee perception of fit within the team and the organization. Moreover, the excellent perception of administrative support for management practices increases positive fit job embeddedness and reduces voluntary turnover [25, 36, 139].

Links to the Literature: The findings from the interviews align with employee engagement and the professional and academic literature review. Employees who participate and engage in corporate governance in their organization can influence positive outcomes by having a voice in the organizational processes [36, 136, 140]. Therefore, construction managers who effectively engage their employees and encourage them to participate inside and outside the organization can positively influence job satisfaction and thus reduce voluntary nurse turnover.

Links to the Conceptual Framework: The findings from the interviews align with the fit and link elements of the job embeddedness conceptual framework. Organizational leaders who understand job embeddedness can improve employee retention by offering opportunities for growth and rewards and displaying fairness among employees [36, 135, 138]. In addition, small construction business owners who can effectively engage their employees and inspire participation may help them feel a greater sense of fit and link with their job and organization, ultimately reducing voluntary turnover.

Table 3: Sub-theme 3: Employment Engagement

Sub-Theme 3: Employee Engagement

Nodes/Themes	No. of participants	% of participant agreement with subthemes
Employee empowerment	3	75
Employee recognition	4	100

11. IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Implication for Business

The findings of this study highlighted how owners of small construction businesses successfully managed voluntary employee turnover. Successful managers of small companies should rely on promoting the effectiveness of human resources management, a positive work environment, and employee engagement to sustain their business. Moreover, small business managers should consider applying an effective recruitment and selection technique, competitive remuneration, and employee benefits. Managers should also consider improving the work environment and organizational culture to sustain favorable work conditions. Increasing employee empowerment and recognition is also crucial to maintaining corporate productivity engagement. Small construction managers can use the findings of this study to prevent and reduce voluntary turnover. The results are also practical solutions to meet employees' expectations by offering social benefits such as paid time off, promoting organizational culture, and providing high-quality professional services. This study also illuminated how owners of small construction businesses reduced voluntary employee turnover in their companies by addressing recruitment and hiring practices, competitive compensation, and healthy corporate culture. Small construction business owners may reduce voluntary employee turnover in their companies by improving recruitment and hiring practices, competitive salaries, and healthy corporate culture.

11.2 Implication for Social Change

The implications for a positive social change of this study include the potential of small construction business managers to develop strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover, which may support job stability, increase income from profitable businesses, and improve family relationships. Small construction businesses are professional service providers that rely on their human capital assets for profitability and viability. Then, motivated construction employees could provide their expertise by volunteering in local communities' programs to improve infrastructures such as schools, hospitals, and roads. Moreover, Business owners who recruit and hire skilled and motivated employees may provide individual growth and development opportunities and improve the overall talent in the local community. One of the ways that small construction managers can attract and retain talent is to create organizational cultures that foster high levels of communication and employee engagement, both of which add to overall employee satisfaction and stability for organizations and their families. The findings of this study on strategies for reducing voluntary employee turnover may contribute to ensuring a long career opportunity and providing additional retirement benefits.

12. CONCLUSION

Construction business owners are critical in promoting positive social change and economic development in the local communities. However, the increasing voluntary employee turnover affects an organization's productivity and profitability. For small construction business sustainability, managers need efficient strategies to reduce voluntary turnover at all business levels of activities. The main goal of this study was to identify and explore practical strategies small business owners in the construction industry use to increase employee retention or mitigate turnover. Exploring the benefits of reducing voluntary turnover was paramount to preventing employee burnout, ensuring success, and increasing productivity and profitability. Also, reducing voluntary turnover led to improving employee motivation and confidence.

Voluntary employee turnover in the construction industry has become frequent because of the attractiveness and competitiveness of construction business activities. The conceptual framework provided insight into the internal organizational factors influencing employee decisions to stay at a job and the external influences that affect employee decisions. Then, using job embeddedness theory was crucial in identifying strategies that small construction businesses need to reach their missions and goals. Job embeddedness theory was also essential to identifying and analyzing other constraints that affect employee dissatisfaction and providing leadership strategies that increase job satisfaction and improve business performance. Applying positive acts such as offering social benefits is essential to increasing trust between employers and employees, ultimately helping to cultivate a healthy working environment. Small construction business managers should understand the positive impact of reducing employee turnover as a strategic managerial tool for long-term business sustainability and viability.

Moreover, the findings of this study revealed that the role of human resources in recruiting talented and devoted employees, offering positive social benefits, and developing operational job satisfaction was crucial for small construction owners to reduce voluntary turnover. Promoting a safe and secure work environment and implementing a workplace culture were essential to increasing job satisfaction and retention. Furthermore, the findings revealed the efficiency of organizational commitment to employee engagement and recognition to improve performance. Current small construction owners affected by the high rate of voluntary turnover, entrepreneurs, researchers, and government leaders, can use the findings of this study to learn and understand the benefits of job embeddedness tenets and strategies to explore for reducing voluntary turnover. The results may also promote positive social change by offering vast career opportunities to employees and increasing families' and governments' incomes to realize some basic projects in the local communities.

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 Dr. Ir. Edouard M. Mutamba PhD.

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