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THE LINK BETWEEN STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION LEVELS IN FIRMS
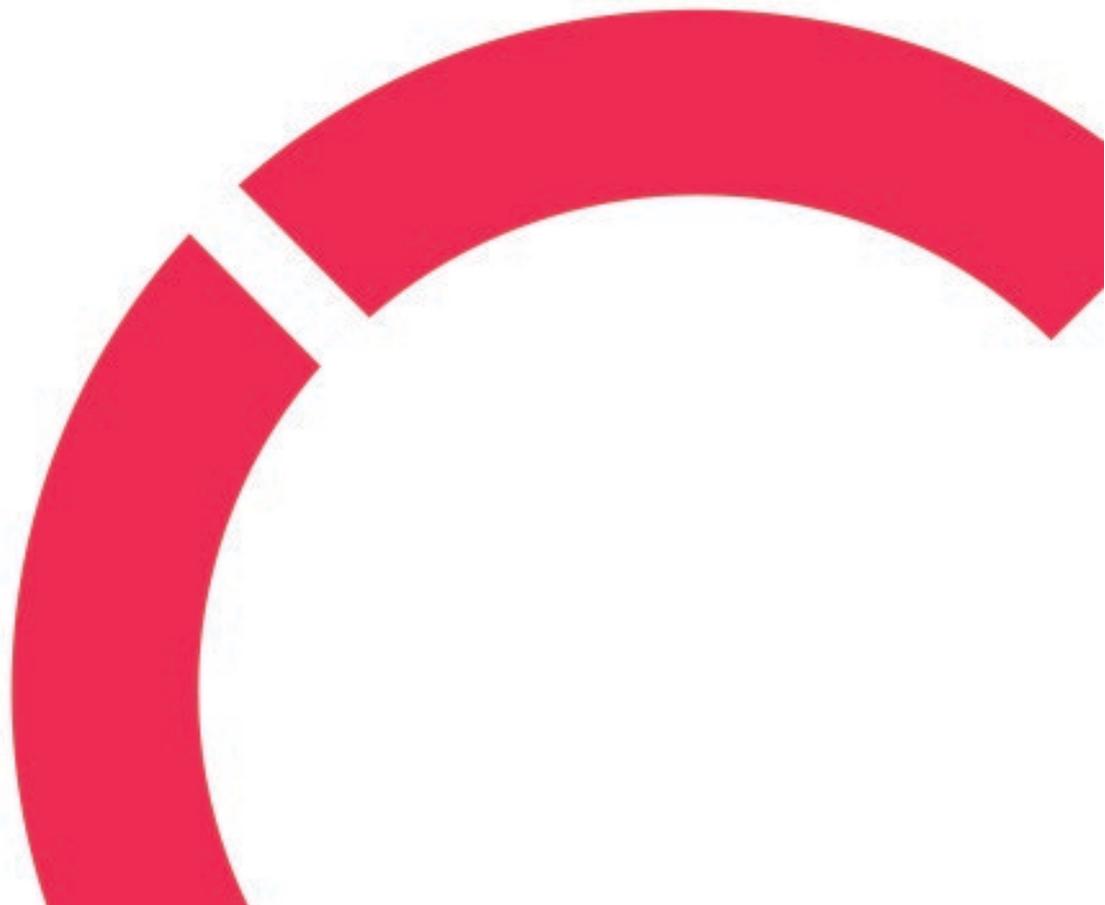
The Case of McDonald's in Finland

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This research investigated how training and development relate to staff retention in an organizational context by taking the case of McDonald's in Finland. To realize this aim, the research was guided by the following specific objectives: to investigate factors affecting employee turnover at McDonald's in Finland; to explore factors affecting the effectiveness of training and development at McDonald's in Finland; to explore the relationship between training and development and retention of employees at McDonald's in Finland; to suggest how McDonald's in Finland can improve employees' training and development to improve staff retention. The theoretical framework offers a critical review of past scholarly articles that explored concepts on or related to the link between training and development and employee retention, including the underpinning research: Herzberg's Two-Factor theory and definitions of key concepts. The study was qualitative research that adopted the deductive approach to help understand the relationship between staff training and development and retention levels in firms. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the data collection technique. The study found that McDonald's has a great commitment to training and developing its workforce through e-learning, e-business, and product development training. The company derived benefits from training and developing employees include improved organizational performance and overall wealth, better customer services, and improved employee productivity and performance. Also, the study found a positive relationship between training and development and employee retention in the organization. The researcher concluded that McDonald's could improve its training and development strategies to enhance staff retention by providing constant training and learning opportunities to employees and trainers, promoting employees within the company, and then training them to handle those higher positions. McDonald's should consider these and ensure that training aligns with employees' needs to enhance its effectiveness.

ABSTRACT

Table of Contents

TABLES

1 INTRODUCTION

One of the fundamental concepts in contemporary organizations is a resource-based view. Based on this view, there are three types of resources constituting a source of competitive advantage: organizational capital, physical capital, and human capital (Anis, Nasir & Safwan 2011). Managing these resources has become essential in this contemporary era of competitive advantage. As established already, the transfer of information and technological advancement can be achieved quickly, making it easy to acquire the first two resources. However, this is not the case for human capital as a competitive advantage because it is not easy to copy or reproduce (Anis et al. 2011). This also demonstrates that non-human resources do not provide organizations with many advantages because they are easily available and transferable. To that extent, Anis et al. (2011) pointed out that human resources are a significant differentiator between competing companies because they create a substantial and lasting impact. Thus, attracting and retaining skilled employees is significant because they contribute to competitive advantage.

One of the most troubling issues for organizations is staff turnover, which is upsetting both for employers and employees (Anis et al. 2011). Accordingly, Aleem and Bowra (2020) note that employers have to incur hiring and organizational costs whenever they lose their human capital. Employee turnover can be either involuntary or voluntary. Involuntary turnover implies that an employee leaves the company because of conflict with colleagues, poor performance, or other issues. In contrast, the voluntary loss of an employee relates to better opportunities in rival organizations (Anis et al. 2011). Since turnover is troubling to organizations, techniques to enhance retention are imperative.

Consequently, companies attempt to retain their skilled and talented employees through various strategies. The ability to retain employees and their valuable talent or skills helps the organization preserve its investment in human capital (Anis et al. 2011). Thus, talent management is a key aspect of every organization's growth. Organizations have realized that a sustainable competitive advantage can be obtained through retaining skilled and talented employees. The need to retain employees has forced organizations to take certain steps aimed at making employees feel valued and part of the firm (Aleem & Bowra 2020).

Past studies have identified various techniques organizations use to retain employees, including improving the work environment, training, and compensation (Hassan et al. 2013). Moreover, researchers

like Aleem and Bowra (2020) and Anis et al. (2011) have noted that labor shortages are a major concern for organizations, making employee retention a major goal, especially for skilled employees. Studies undertaken by various researchers have identified training and development as a key variable in determining or influencing staff retention (Anis et al. 2011). Since organizations have realized that training and development are critical to retaining employees, some firms focus on specialized training instead of general training to ensure that employees are unfit for rival companies (Anis et al. 2011). Thus, training and development have become fundamental aspects of organizational strategy to the extent that some firms have developed a training and development function as one of the areas of human resource management. Training and development, as a function, focus on systematic activities geared towards retaining and improving the quality of the workforce. In the contemporary business world, organizations continuously train and develop to secure employees' commitment and increase productivity and quality of services to customers (Hassan, Razi, Qamar, Jaffir & Suhail 2013.)

In the present dynamic environment, employees are most interested in acquiring new knowledge and learning new things to take responsibility for improved earnings and career growth (Anis et al. 2011). Training and development of employees play a significant role in increasing staff commitment and loyalty towards the firm because they aid career growth. The current study is based on the notion that fast food industry growth is grounded in human resource development. Thus, there is a need to gain a deeper understanding of training and development to help organizations in the fast-food industry retain their employees (Hassan et al. 2013.) In particular, the study uses McDonald's in Finland to explore the link or the relationship between staff training and development and employee retention. The fast-food chain has been selected for this study because it is the second-largest restaurant chain after Hesburger. Furthermore, McDonald's has operations across the globe, implying that the findings can be applied in a wider context.

This research aims to investigate how training and development relate to staff retention in an organizational context by taking the case of McDonald's in Finland. To realize this aim, the research will be guided by the following specific objectives;

1. To investigate factors affecting employee turnover at McDonald's in Finland
2. To explore factors affecting the effectiveness of training and development at McDonald's in Finland
3. To explore the relationship between training and development and retention of employees at McDonald's in Finland.

4. To suggest how McDonald's in Finland can improve employees' training and development to improve staff retention.

In recent years, the fast-food industry has stood out as a popular choice for research on employee behavior. However, most studies have focused on human resource behavior as an antecedent of performance. This implies that few studies have focused on talent enhancement and improvement as antecedents of employee turnover (Hassan et al. 2013). According to Gan and Yusof (2019), most researchers have mainly investigated employee turnover concerning intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Although training and development can also be categorized as a form of employee motivation, few studies have explored it as a single variable in relation to retention. The shift towards human resources as the source of competitive advantage makes training and development as a strategy for retaining employees an interesting area to explore. Based on a report by YLE (2021), young people in Finland are getting less inclined to work in fast-food restaurants after reports of mistreatment surfaced in various restaurant chains.

Despite the lack of enthusiasm from young people towards seeking employment in the fast food industry, few studies have examined what is causing the high turnover in the Finnish fast food industry or why prospective employees are not prioritizing it (YLE 2021). More importantly, limited studies have explored the strategies employed by fast-food restaurant chains to retain their employees. Although organizations in the Finnish fast-food industry may employ various strategies to retain their talented employees, exploring training and development as a potential variable is essential to providing insight into employee turnover in Finland.

Currently, many young people get employed in fast food chains, and students consider it an advantage to work in fast food restaurants even though they do not have much experience or training. However, as soon as they start working, they quit or leave the industry, citing the jobs as bad. This is somehow worrying because it contributes to the high turnover in the industry. Thus, this thesis is relevant because exploring training and development as a potential variable is essential to providing insight into employee turnover in Finland's fast food industry.

Correspondingly, this thesis is important because the findings will provide the basis for further research into the future, which other researchers interested in this area can explore. Secondly, the thesis is essential as the recommendations can be helpful for the company to utilize for the betterment of the

organization. Also, the thesis is important as the findings can provide valuable references for research-ers exploring this area in the future.

The researcher is motivated to choose this topic because it is an interesting topic that falls under the human resource management perspective, as was required in writing the thesis. This topic is interesting because it will help uncover how training and development can be done effectively in the fast food restaurants in Finland to enhance the retention level and help resolve the issue of high turnover and unattractiveness of the job opportunities in the industry, especially by the young people who seem to lack interest in working at the fast food industry. Secondly, the researcher is motivated to choose this topic because no study has been done that links training and development to retention levels at Mcdonald's in Finland. Therefore, it is valuable to explore this topic in the context of Mcdonald's as one of the big fast-food restaurants in Finland.

This research report is divided into five key chapters. The first chapter, the introduction, provides a background to the study, pointing out the aims, objectives, and rationale behind the study. The second chapter, literature review, evaluates and reviews relevant theories and published scholarly sources on the links between training and development and employee retention. The third chapter is about research methodology, which covers research design, philosophy, strategy, and data collection techniques. Moreover, the chapter highlights ethical considerations, sampling, and data analysis methods. The fourth chapter presents the findings from the data collection process and analyzes and discusses the same. In chapter five, the conclusion and recommendations are provided.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research's main aim and central problem is to investigate how training and development relate to staff retention in an organizational context by taking the case of McDonald's in Finland. As stated earlier, this chapter offers a critical review of past scholarly studies that explored concepts related to the link between training and development and employee retention. The chapter defines and explains the key concepts that constitute the subject of investigation. In particular, the chapter defines and explains concepts such as training and development and employee retention. Subsequently, the chapter identifies and justifies the theory that explains the relationship between the two variables in its entirety. The chapter also reviews existing articles on the topic to ascertain the factors that could lead to high employee turnover. This is significant because it provides insight into what causes employee turnover before attempting to understand how training and development could be a solution. This is followed by a review of scholarly published sources on the factors influencing the effectiveness of training and development. In other words, the review attempts to identify the factors that could enhance employees' training and development to ensure that desired outcome is realized. As central issues or key aims, the chapter critically reviews the relationship between training and development and employee retention. The review is critical because both sides of the relationship are considered. Finally, the chapter highlights the key arguments discussed and the gaps this research will address.

2.1 Definition of concepts

This section defines the main concepts used in this thesis. These include training and development and employees' retention.

2.1.1 Training and development

In the contemporary era of advancement, in which technology changes constantly, training is necessary for all organizations to remain competitive in the market. According to Anis et al. (2011), organizations can no longer solely rely on a conventional specialization but must improve employees' skills to compete in the current and future markets. This denotes the value accorded to training as a strategy

for developing or enhancing employees' skills and commitment towards the organization. In that regard, Sahinidis (2008) defined training as a planned intervention designed to improve the determinants of an individual's job performance. Essentially, Sahinidis (2008) argues that the concept of training comes from changes acquired through learning and development. However, Gan and Yusof (2019) conceived the concept differently. They defined training as the process of developing and gaining individuals' knowledge, abilities, and skills to ensure the smooth performance of daily operations in the firm. Although the two definitions suggest that training aims to improve performance, Gan and Yusof (2009) consider the concept as a process, making its definition more in-depth compared to Sahinidis (2008). Therefore, the study maintains that training is a process of acquiring and developing abilities, skills, and knowledge to enhance performance.

Similar to training, development is also a process of improvement for future jobs (Anis et al. 2011). Employees are always considered for development of career-enhancing skills, leading to employee motivation as well as retention (Al Karim et al. 2019). It is common knowledge that a well-trained and developed workforce will be a valuable resource to the organization, leading to an increased probability of their effectiveness and efficiency in undertaking their duties (Al Karim et al. 2019). However, Gan and Yusof (2009) point out that development implies learning opportunities created to help staff grow. This assertion is incongruent with the explanation of Anis et al. (2011) that development is not fundamentally skills-oriented but rather provides a general attitude and knowledge that will be beneficial to employees in higher positions. Thus, development programs in organizations are frameworks aimed at helping employees develop their professional and personal knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors, and abilities to undertake specific organizational tasks (Al Karim et al. 2019). Based on these definitions and explanations, it is plausible to argue that development equips employees with knowledge about the business environment, human relations, and management principles necessary for better management of the organization.

Notably, Al Karim et al. (2019) point out that training and development strategies used by the organization will need to move beyond techniques and traditions to be effective and achieve expected goals in the future. Nevertheless, Anis et al. (2011) note that training and development are meant to strike a balance between research and actual company practices that offer background into the essentials, such as learning environment, transfer of training, and evaluation. Therefore, training and development reduce turnover because they create advancement opportunities, reduce absenteeism, and improve employees' commitment to the organization. The significance of training and development is demonstrated in how most organizations create human resource development functions. (Anis et al. 2011.)

2.1.2 Employees' retention

In general, employee retention can be described as the actions performed by the organization to prevent talented employees from leaving the company (Abba 2018). Though somewhat similar, Aleem and Bowra (2020) described employee retention as the practices and policies used or adopted by organizations to prevent skilled employees from leaving their jobs. Thus, retention can be perceived as the organization's ability to hold onto the employees it intends to keep for longer than rivals can (Gan & Yusof 2019). Moreover, Gan and Yusof (2019) add that satisfied and contented employees tend to be committed to their job and organizations and prioritize the organization's interests. Employee retention is also the process by which the organization puts effort into retaining talented and core employees to accomplish the organizational goal (Abba 2018). Further, Abba (2018) claimed that retention could occur among employees when the firm takes suitable strategies or steps to make the employees stay or desire to stay in the company for longer.

Employee retention is essential because it could help the firm achieve economic stability and a competitive advantage since it entails knowledge and skill retention (Anis et al. 2011). According to Anis et al. (2011), employees will stay and work in the organization for the accomplishment and flourishing of the firm. Notably, Gan and Yusof (2019) point out that employee retention starts during recruitment and selection by acquiring the right candidates and continuing with practices that consider the interests of the employees. Similarly, Aleem and Bowra (2020) reasoned that employee retention is significant because hiring new employees after short periods is complicated and costlier compared with remaining with the present staff in the organization.

Balanagagurunath and Vijayalakshmi (2012) attempted to analyze the elements that affect employee retention in India's automobile industries. The study's goals included examining the employee retention strategies in the car sector, gauging how satisfied workers were with the workplace culture, assessing the effectiveness of the training and development opportunities provided, and examining salary issues. Chi-square analysis, regression analysis, Mann-Whitney test, Kruskal-Wallis test, and analysis of variance are the methods employed in this study. In this study, retention management was discussed from a global perspective. This included a competitive salary, balancing work and personal life, providing training, assessing employees' performance through semi-annual reviews, holding events (i.e., celebrations), and offering suitable rewards and recognitions with the goal of inspiring employees to perform better. These are all aspects that are taken into account by both the employer and the employee on a worldwide scale (Balanagagurunath & Vijayalakshmi 2012.)

Kamalaveni, Ramesh and Vetrivel (2019) used push and pull variables to categorize the reasons why employees leave their jobs. In their discussion of a comprehensive approach to employee retention, the authors noted that after identifying retention issues, action can be taken to improve employee retention through a variety of means, including pay increases, smart hiring practices, career discussions, offering direction and flexibility, attractive employee welfare programs, HR practices for high performance, and binding contracts, among others (Kamalaveni et al. 2019). In their work, Priyanka and Dubey (2016) used the principal component technique to do exploratory factor analysis. Eight factors, including poor management practices, low pay, no chance for career advancement, lack of support from peers, superiors, and family members, few learning opportunities, an unsafe workplace, poor communication, and insecurity in the job, have been utilized to identify employee turnover intentions. From the results of numerous prior research studies, Kossivi, Xu and Kalgora (2016) examined the various retention factors. They included some factors like the chance for development, work-life balance, compensation, management style, work environment, autonomy, training and development, social support. In contrast to organizational culture, autonomy, and training and development, supervision and leadership are more thoroughly examined in their study (Kossivi et al. 2016). All these findings show that training and development are one of the factors linked to employee retention in an organization.

2.2 The theory underpinning research: Herzberg's Two-Factor theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory was used to guide the study. This is the best-suited theory to explain the link between training and development and employee retention. The theory was developed to explain the elements influencing employees' motivation (Abba 2018.) The theory advances that it is essential to point out intrinsic factors that can enhance employees' motivation in the organization (Alshmemri et al. 2017). The theory refers to the intrinsic factors as "motivators," including position advancement, career growth, and training opportunities (Alshmemri et al. 2017). However, in developing the theory, Herzberg claimed that apart from investigating motivators, it is also important to determine the factors that could lead to employee dissatisfaction. They referred to these as "hygiene" factors, which include working environment, job stress, and organizational politics (Alshmemri et al. 2017.) Nevertheless, Abba (2018) asserted that the two-factor theory could be used to understand how enhancing employee motivation through motivators such as training and development could improve employee retention.

Further, the author also argued that failing to provide motivators such as training could make employees less interested in the organization, leading to turnover. Therefore, based on this theory, it is clear that there is a link between training and development and employee retention.

The implications of the theory are clear because motivation can be enhanced through some changes in the setup of the employees' jobs, such as job enrichment (Abba 2018). Herzberg asserted that for an employee to be motivated, their job must be fully enriched through opportunities for recognition and achievement, responsibility, advancement, and stimulation (Abba 2018). Since training and development equip employees with relevant skills and knowledge, it opens opportunities for advancement, recognition, and responsibility, leading to high employee retention (Alshmemri et al. 2017). Thus, the Herzberg two-factor theory has been applied in this study because the variable used is embedded in the theory. In other words, choosing training and development as the motivator reduces the rate of employee turnover while increasing retention. This theory is used to guide the analysis of the study findings in Chapter 4. The theory helped explain the link between training and development and employee retention based on the research findings.

2.3 Factors affecting employee turnover intention

The intention of employees to leave implies the workers have planned or thought to leave their current workplace voluntarily. Voluntary workers' turnover explains that the perception of workers can result in turnover. Workers turnover intention is also closely linked to their turnover since the actual staff turnover behavior relies on their intention to leave the company where they currently work. Thus, the workers' turnover intention has to be taken seriously since it will influence the performance of a firm and minimize productivity efficiency (Hussain & Xian 2019.) When an employee chooses to leave a position, it is referred to as voluntary turnover (Al Mamun & Hasan 2017). The employee may decide to end the working relationship at any time. While an example of involuntary turnover, or a discharge, indicates an employer's decision to end the employment relationship, a voluntary turnover, or a quit, reflects an employee's decision to depart an organization. Voluntary turnover can be influenced by factors including job stress, job dissatisfaction, finding a better position elsewhere, a run-in with management, or personal commitments like spending adequate time with family at home (Lazzari, Alvarez & Ruggieri 2022.)

However, voluntary turnover can be anticipated and subsequently managed. Conversely, involuntary turnover is described by Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) as a situation in which a discharge indicates a decision by the employer to end the work relationship. Retirement, death, and termination are all examples of involuntary turnover. Additionally, when an employee quits their job to join a spouse in a faraway location or care for a very ill family member, it is considered an involuntary departure. Employees choose to leave their jobs in this situation because they have no other choice (Lazzari et al. 2022). According to research by Lazzari, Alvarez and Ruggieri (2022), an organization can decrease avoidable turnover by hiring, evaluating, and motivating staff members more skillfully and efficiently. There is now no established model to comprehend the entire route of turnover. The causes of employee turnover are examined using a range of calculation techniques. It includes internal and exterior aspects as well as internal and external job content factors. According to Al Mamun & Hasan (2017), unforeseen turnover is caused by choices made in life that are out of the employer's control, including relocating or a spouse getting a new career. However, mistakes made during the hiring process account for roughly 80% of turnover, many of which are preventable. When choosing and assessing prospective personnel, organizations must take specific precautions (Lazzari et al. 2022.)

Understanding the factors causing turnover is significant because it provides insight into the problem before attempting to offer a solution through training and development as a motivation to make employees stay in the organization. According to Alias et al. (2018), employees' turnover intention implies that employees plan or think of voluntarily leaving their current organization. Since actual employee turnover is based on turnover intention, turnover intention is then closely related to eventual employee turnover. More importantly, Alias et al. (2018) explained that understanding turnover intention is crucial because it enables the management to understand challenges or issues that could make employees leave the organization, thereby designing strategies that would retain them in the firm. Although no universally agreed factors are associated with turnover intention, the most common factors include colleague relations, a lack of advancement opportunities, and an absence of learning and training opportunities (Al Mamun & Hasan 2017).

The colleague relationship is one of the factors that could lead to high employee turnover intentions because it has a negative impact on job realism and stress (Saraih, Zin Aris, Sakdan, & Ahmad 2016). The absence of a cordial relationship between colleagues implies that some employees will perceive the environment as hostile or out of place, thereby making them seek better options (Saraih et al. 2016). In the view of Alias et al. (2018), cordial relationships between colleagues often require the effort of the organization to create a supportive environment for the employees to minimize withdrawal

intentions on the part of the staff. However, it could be argued that it is challenging to solve the lack of cordial colleague relations through training and development. The intention to leave the organization increases when employees do not perceive advancement opportunities. According to Ooi and Teoh (2021), employees will be demoralized and intend to exit the organization when the executive does not recognize or promote staff with high performance or educational advancement. Ahmed and Nawaz (2015) determined that the promotion and recognition of employees are positively correlated to organizational commitment and low turnover intentions. Further, the authors argued that career advancement in the form of promotion is a key goal of most organizations, and its absence leads to higher turnover intentions. Notably, an organization that provides employees with training and development often provides promotion opportunities to its staff (Ooi & Teoh 2021).

Still, on the issues of training and development, Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) point out that a lack of training and development opportunities can also lead to high turnover intentions. In particular, the authors argued that organizations that do not offer training opportunities to their employees signal that they do not care about the staff's growth. Further, Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) note that training and learning opportunities considerably affect the employees remaining in the organization. It offers them the opportunity to improve their abilities and skills. Similarly, Ooi and Teoh (2021) asserted that employees could not stay in an organization where they could not achieve self-realization, making them think about quitting or leaving the company. In addition, Ooi and Teoh (2021) explain that organizations providing training opportunities and programs for their employees' skills improvement and learning achieve a high performance ratio and reduce employee turnover. Thus, the absence of learning and training opportunities increases the chances of employee turnover, while the presence of the same leads to a high retention ratio.

2.4 Factors affecting the effectiveness of employee training and development

Prior to engaging in an evaluation of how training and development could lead to high employee retention, it is essential to understand factors that could make the strategy more effective. Although past scholarly studies have identified various factors, this review focuses on three major factors influencing the effectiveness of training and development. One of the key factors influencing the effectiveness of training and development is employees' attitude towards the training and development programs (Punia & Kant 2013). According to Punia and Kant (2013), the effectiveness of training and development can

be affected to a greater degree by the attitude of the employees. In particular, employees with a positive attitude towards the training and development program initiated by the organization are more likely to view the program as essential and beneficial to their personal and professional growth.

On the contrary, Mohanty et al. (2019) point out that a negative attitude towards training and development programs would view the initiative as a waste of time, thereby limiting its effectiveness. The employees are likely to resist training and development programs if they do not perceive any benefit. In that regard, Mohanty et al. (2019) argue that the perception of benefit is an essential aspect with the potential to affect employees' attendance and level of engagement during the training. Thus, employees' attitudes are a significant aspect in determining the effectiveness of training and development programs in an organization.

One of the most significant factors that have been identified to influence the effectiveness of the training and development program is support from top management (Punia & Kant 2013). According to Mohanty et al. (2019), top management should focus on nurturing an enabling environment where employees can learn and be trained. Lack of support from the top management could lead to insufficient funds being allocated for the training and development program (Lim, Lee, & Nam 2007). Further, Lim et al. (2007) note that top management should aspire to grant the necessary support to training and development activities to realize effectiveness. Pradhan and Pradhan (2012) determined that certain factors, including support and goodwill from the management, perception towards training, and other job-related aspects, often contribute positively to the effectiveness of the training and development programs.

Furthermore, Pradhan and Pradhan (2012) maintain the view that various steps of training and development require the active participation of the management, which implies that the absence of their support is detrimental to the effectiveness of the process. Support from top management during training also benefits the managers because they can discover and recognize the defects or required skills that employees may lack to perform their respective tasks (Pradhan & Pradhan 2012). Thus, support from management is essential to realizing an effective training and development program.
The effectiveness of training and development also depends on the training program's alignment with individual needs and jobs (Al Karim et al. 2019).

Further, Al Karim, Islam and Rashid (2019) believe that organizations often use compensation to ensure that it reflects their dynamic jobs and economic situation. Although some employees are motivated by financial rewards such as compensation, others are motivated by non-financial rewards such as promotion and recognition (Punia & Kant 2013). In that regard, Punia and Kant (2013) postulate that for effective training to occur, it is necessary to carry out a needs analysis. The needs analysis ensures that the organization understands the gap to be filled through training and the motivation of the employees towards the training and development program (Punia & Kant 2013). Boardman and Sundquist (2012) advanced the idea that effectively identifying the individual needs of each employee and matching them to the training programs ensures that the trainees are motivated to engage in the process because its outcome satisfies their needs. For instance, the organization can ensure that employees with non-financial needs, such as promotion, are matched with training and development programs that guarantee long-term career growth (Boardman & Sundquist 2012). However, Boardman and Sundquist (2012) caution that aligning or matching employees with training and development programs that do not meet their individual and job needs could render the exercise ineffective. Therefore, the training and development programs designed by the organizations must meet the employees' individual and job needs, ranging from abilities, skills, and competencies to career growth.

2.5 Relationship between training and development and retention of employees

Several studies have examined the causes and leading factors of turnover in an organization, and some have identified some feasible approaches that can be applied to ensure employee retention. Thus, several researchers have attempted to determine the relationship between training and development and employee retention, with the former viewed as a solution to the latter. For instance, Abba (2018) evaluated this relationship by studying the effect of training and development on the retention of employees in the case of Bauchi State Metropolis Bank. In the study, the researcher used multiple regression to analyze quantitative data collected from the top and middle-level employees of the bank. After the analysis, the study revealed that training and development significantly affect employee retention (Abba 2018). Although this was a cause-and-effect analysis, it demonstrates a positive link between training, development, and retention. In particular, the researcher argues that since employees perceive training and development as one of the ways the organization takes an interest in growth and development, loyalty is the best way to repay the company (Abba 2018).

In the same way, Fletcher et al. (2018) also investigated the relationship between perceived training and development and retention, with a slight difference in introducing work attitude as a mediating factor. Relying on data from 1191 employees sampled from seven organizations analyzed using a multilevel analysis technique, Fletcher et al. (2018) determined that change-related anxiety and employee engagement as elements of work attitude mediated the relationship between training and development and the intention to stay. In particular, the authors argued that the affective state associated with training and development exerts differential effects on employee outcomes, such as the intention to stay in the organization. From a different perspective, Kakar et al. (2017) contended that investing in employees' growth and development through training makes them feel valued by the organization because it prioritizes their professional needs. Correspondingly, Hong et al. (2012) opined that training provides several benefits to employees' careers, such as career development and advancement, which implies improving employee retention rates. This assertion is similar to a study undertaken by Hassan et al. (2013) that found a positive relationship between the variables and concluded that when employees have high self-efficacy because of attending training, they tend to remain in the organization.

Moreover, another study conducted by Gan and Yusof (2019) revealed that training has a positive link to employee retention. In particular, Gan and Yusof (2019) explained that training and development programs provide employees with updated skills and competencies, which improve their commitment to their work and organization, thereby increasing the probability of retention. Fletcher et al. (2016) also supported this assertion when they adopted Social Exchange Theory, which showed that increasing training and development opportunities in the organization tends to help improve employee retention. Aleem and Bowra (2020) took a different approach to investigating the variables by investigating the role of training and development in employee retention in the banking sector of Pakistan. Although the authors did not set out to determine the link, they found a significant relationship between the variables. Aleem and Bowra (2020) indicated that employees perceive training as instrumental to their compensation, career growth, capacity building, and skill enhancement, thereby increasing their probability of remaining in the organization.

According to Nda and Fard's (2013) research, the retention of employees who have undergone training is mostly influenced by competency and professional growth. The cost of investing in training is not considered because it adds value and reflects an organization's strategy for expansion and successful

existence. The authors argued that giving employees the chance to receive on-the-job training is one way to increase commitment and retention. The writers also emphasized the significance of HR strategies in fostering employee loyalty to the company. This study discovered that giving employees greater training increases employee loyalty (Nda & Fard 2013.)

However, despite most studies finding a positive and significant relationship between training, development, and employee retention, some researchers have realized contrary results. For instance, Haider et al. (2015) revealed that there was a significant but negative relationship between training and staff retention. The researchers argued that most employees who have enhanced their knowledge and skills through training tend to seek better work or opportunities outside the company, thereby reducing the retention rate. Notably, Haider et al. (2015) point out that employees mostly leave after training and development because the enhanced skills and advancement are not accompanied by promotion or compensation commensurate with the new skills and knowledge. Further, the findings by Haider et al. (2015) contradict those of other researchers, such as Abba (2018), who found a positive relationship between the two variables. Perhaps the difference between these studies lies in the context and setup. For example, in the study by Haider et al. (2015), the participants came from the telecommunications sector, while in the case of Abba (2018), the respondents came from the banking sector. Nonetheless, the studies that revealed a positive relationship between training and development and employee retention were also carried out in different contexts and settings (Abba 2018; Aleem & Bowra 2020; Gan & Yusof 2019; Fletcher et al. 2018).

It is apparent that most studies have found a positive and significant relationship between training and development and staff retention. However, researchers such as Haider et al. (2015) revealed contrary results, adding uncertainty to the relationship between the variables. It is worth noting that Haider et al. (2015) brought attention to the notion that employees will tend to leave after undergoing training and development when they do not perceive any progress or advancement tied to the training within the organization. Therefore, further studies may be required where different mediating factors are introduced to determine the relationship between training and development and employee retention.

2.6 Chapter summary

Based on the corresponding links between training, development, and employee retention, the themes and objectives developed by the research have received support from several past scholarly research

articles. To begin with, the review of past studies has indicated that training and development are strategies organizations use to update and improve employees' skills, knowledge, and competencies to improve their performance and retention. Further, the chapter determined that employee retention concerns the efforts undertaken by the organization to motivate employees to remain or stay in the organization. Based on past studies, the chapter identified the factors affecting employee turnover intention, including colleague relations, a lack of advancement opportunities, and an absence of learning and training opportunities. After being studied as one of the strategies for ensuring employee retention, past studies established that the effectiveness of training and development depends on employees' attitudes, support from top management, and alignment with employees' needs.

The review of the literature has revealed that training and development could positively or negatively relate to the retention of employees. However, these studies were done in different contexts and settings, meaning the context and setting are mediating factors in the training and development of employees. Moreover, most studies were quantitative and systematic reviews. Therefore, this research will use interviews to conduct research in the fast food industry.

3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the progression of the research methodology, which entails the consideration of the approach that this study has employed and the justification of its use. Besides, this section provides the justification for choosing a qualitative research design for this study and explains data collection techniques and data analysis techniques. Furthermore, the presentation of the practical ethical considerations and remarks on the methodology limitations for this research is put forward in this chapter.

3.1 Research strategy

A research strategy refers to the overall plan that a researcher employs to conduct the study, which is how the research answers the research questions. It provides a high level of guidance to the researcher in executing, monitoring, and planning the research (Johannesson & Perjons 2014.) Bryman (2015) asserts that research strategy assists the researcher in effectively determining the type and nature of the data to be collected. Accordingly, the types of research strategies that researchers can use include grounded theory, action research, experiments, ethnography, case studies, and surveys. The type of research strategy adopted depends on the objectives or questions of the study, the research scope, and the subject control level (Johannesson & Perjons 2014.)

In this study, the case study is employed. The case study is employed in this research because, firstly, it is used to explore a single phenomenon in a natural setting by utilizing different methods to get in-depth knowledge regarding a particular phenomenon, which in this case is how training and development techniques relate to employee retention at McDonald's in Finland. Therefore, it is an appropriate strategy to investigate the study at hand. This study will use interviews as the method of collecting data for analysis. Additionally, case studies enable data collection from contemporary events or organizations. Remarkably, a case study is essential in addressing a company's internal issue, as persons directly involved with the firm are sampled to get their perspectives (Wedawatta et al. 2011.)

3.2 Research approach and strategy

The research approach refers to the techniques and plans a researcher uses to elucidate the extensive procedures and assumptions employed in data collection and how they are interpreted. In this context, the two major research approaches are deductive and inductive (Bryman 2015). The deductive approach entails testing the validity of existing assumptions and theories. Remarkably, in this approach, the author begins with a research idea and then splits it down into specific hypotheses that are adopted to collect the data. Contrarily, the inductive approach involves information and knowledge generation to be utilized in designing new theories (Bryman 2015). Against this background, this study will adopt a deductive approach to help develop an understanding of the relationship between staff training and development and retention levels in firms. The generated findings from the respondents can be used to derive conclusions that can be generalized and applied to the fast food industry in Finland (Ormston et al. 2014).

Regarding research design, Bryman (2015) notes that it provides a logical structure that the author can employ in answering the research questions/problem. In this case, the research designs that are most commonly used are quantitative and qualitative. This study adopts a qualitative approach to investigate the link between staff training and development and retention levels at McDonald's in Finland. The qualitative research design involves collecting qualitative data from the participants to capture their views, experiences, and opinions. In line with this, a qualitative study offers an extensive inquiry to provide fundamental justifications for any phenomenon or action taking place (Ormston et al. 2014). Furthermore, this design cuts through the social and context meaning and how individuals are directly impacted, which is of great advantage, especially in the social sciences (Ormston et al. 2014).

This design is suitable when the researcher is seeking to gather an in-depth understanding of a particular social issue from a small population sample of study subjects (Bryman 2015). Thus, a qualitative study is appropriate for this study because it will enable the researcher to gather detailed data on the experiences and feelings regarding the link between staff training and development and the retention levels at McDonald's in Finland. As such, quantitative research is declining because it gathers numerical data from a large sample size of respondents, which is not the focus of this study (Bryman 2015). The focus of the study is to obtain detailed information from a single-unit organization (McDonald), hence qualitative research is the preferred research design. Besides, the operation of a quantitative study is conducted in restricted environments that prevent the researcher from having direct contact with the respondents; hence, the perceptions and feelings of the respondents are ignored during data gathering (Bryman 2015).

3.3 Data collection methods, sampling, and data collection process

These entail the methods and procedures that researchers utilize to gather data about a particular topic of interest. Researchers commonly employ primary data collection techniques, including questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews (Saunders et al. 2019). This research will employ interviews (semi-structured interviews) because there are many topics to be covered in the interview, and using this method will provide space for the interviewees to share their experiences and knowledge with the training and development techniques employed by the firm (Bryman 2012).

Moreover, unlike structured interviews with little room for variation and flexibility in the way questions are answered or asked, an unstructured interview schedule is open and has greater freedom and flexibility. Even though the study questions will determine the questions the author will ask the interviewees, their wording, content, and sequence are entirely left to the interviewer. This will offer an opportunity for the interviewees to expand on the topics and give the author room to ask further questions that will not be reflected in the interview guide. Interviewees expounding on the topic and revealing more about their knowledge and experiences will enrich the qualitative data that will be collected using unstructured interviews (Alamri 2019). In this way, the researcher will be able to scrutinize some of the experiences or knowledge regarding training and development and its relation to retention in the firm in a more in-depth manner to assist in developing themes.

Additionally, interviews are more suitable for this study because, unlike questionnaires with fixed questions and answers, interviewing offers the opportunity to clarify or explain answers or questions, thereby enhancing the accuracy of the data collected (Bryman 2015). Furthermore, the interviewer can explain the questions to the interviewees, who then get the opportunity to clarify or elaborate on their answers. Finally, another advantage of interviews is that they can be video-recorded or taped, which assists with data coding, transcriptions, and analysis (Bryman 2012). However, the main disadvantage of interviews is that they can be costly and time-consuming, as the researcher requires time to record and collect data, arrange the interview schedule, transcribe the code, and perform data analysis (Alamri 2019).

To select the participants for the study from the population of interest, the researcher will employ non-probability sampling because it chooses respondents in the process, which guarantees equal chances of selection. This is unlike probability sampling, which focuses on random respondents' selection with a

known possibility of being selected (Saunders et al. 2012). In light of this, this study will adopt convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is suitable because it ensures that the basis of the selection of participants is availability and ease of access. Thus, the managers and employees at McDonald's will be more easily and quickly accessible at a lower cost.

To collect data, the researcher will approach the general manager at McDonald's and explain the objective and aim of the study. After understanding the study's significance and granting permission, the author will request that the manager link the researcher to other employees. After that, the researcher will ask the human resources manager to recommend the departmental heads or managers. The researcher will then brief the selected participants on the research aims, purpose, and objectives and agree with them on a convenient time for the interview. All the interviews will be conducted face-to-face, taking precautions due to COVID-19 guidelines. The responses will be recorded for transcription to be utilized in the data analysis. Each interview will be scheduled to last for 30 minutes. The interviews will be done in English, and interview questions will be designed according to the research objectives.

3.4 Validity and reliability

Concepts like validity and reliability are used to assess the quality of research. They demonstrate how effectively a methodology, method, or test measures something. Validity is concerned with a measure's correctness, whereas reliability is concerned with its consistency. In light of this, a method's reliability refers to how regularly it measures something. The measurement is regarded as reliable if the same result can be consistently obtained by applying the same techniques under the same conditions. Contrarily, a method's validity refers to how precisely it measures the variables it is designed to measure. When a study's findings are highly valid, it means that they accurately reflect the genuine features, traits, and variations in the physical or social reality. High dependability is one sign of a valid measurement. A method is probably invalid if it is not trustworthy.

If interview questions correspond to particular competencies mentioned on the Competency Assessment Worksheet, the interview is valid. A one-to-one relationship between the interviewer's questions and the candidate's underlying competency is required for optimum validity. All interviewers must use interview questions that are created in this manner in order to guarantee interviewer dependability. The interview data for a given candidate can only be judged trustworthy and valid, or consistent with the

competencies deemed important for the position, once this mapping has been documented and used by all interviewers.

The researcher's expectations during the interview session determine the validity and reliability of the qualitative findings (Dikko 2016). The researcher's role in conducting the interview session is crucial in ensuring that interviewees comprehend the questions being asked while also obtaining the data needed to answer the research questions (Dikko 2016). Most likely, a qualitative interview will help the researcher get in-depth data that could paint a clearer and more complete picture of the research findings. However, conducting a qualitative interview may be challenging for a novice researcher. As a result, doing a pilot interview is essential and advantageous when conducting qualitative research because it brings attention to the major study's improvisation. Every research project includes a pilot test to make sure the instruments are valid (Majid et al. 2017).

Numerous writers have emphasized the benefit of doing a pilot test to identify any potential problems early in the research process that might call for instrument adjustments (Dikko 2016), as well as to add value and credibility to the study. Aung, Razak and Nazry (2021) claim that, as a result, the researcher decides to carry out a pilot semi-structured interview test. A semi-structured interview is more adaptable in terms of modifying the order of questions and allowing for a more thorough follow-up on participants' responses than a structured interview, which is thought to be more rigid and limited to the planned list of questions. It enables the posing of additional questions throughout the interview if necessary in light of the participant's responses, and it strikes the right balance between rigidity and openness (Aung et al. 2021.) Thus, the research will conduct a pilot test interview with respondents from McDonald's, but they will be excluded from the main study. This will help ensure the reliability and validity of the interview instrument.

3.5   Data analysis method

To analyze the qualitative data, the researcher adopted thematic analysis, which manually codes the responses from the interviewees. Thematic analysis entails closely examining the collected data to identify common codes in participants' responses. Through code identification, patterns across the responses emerge as common themes in HRM practices (Vaismoradi et al. 2016.) Thematic analysis is an appropriate data analysis method for this thesis because the researcher is interested in thematic patterns (training and development) that influence employee retention levels in the firm. Bryman (2012)

contends that thematic analysis can be utilized as a realist or essentialist technique, a contextualist or constructionist method positioned between the two poles of constructionism and essentialism. The analysis of this research will be conducted through a contextualized lens that acknowledges the ways in which individuals make meaning of their experiences.

The researcher will use the six-phase guideline. Vaismoradi et al. (2016) highlight to guide the thematic analysis of the study, which includes familiarizing with the data, initial code generation, theme searching, reviewing the themes, naming and defining themes, and producing the report.

3.5.1 Phase one: familiarization with the data

Familiarization entails the reading and re-reading of the complete dataset to become closely familiar with the data. This familiarization is necessary to enable the identification of appropriate information that may be pertinent to the research questions. (Byrne 2022.) Thus, in this case, the researcher will familiarize himself with the data at this stage by listening to each interview recording once before transcribing it. The researcher will not be taking notes during this initial playback of each interview recording because it requires active listening. Then, before transcribing, the researcher will engage in active listening to gain comprehension of the key topics covered in each interview. This will provide the author with the chance to recollect gestures and mannerisms that may or may not have been noted in the interview notes without being constrained by duties like taking notes. After the active-listen playback, each interview will be manually transcribed by the researcher. The researcher will read each interview transcript several times after it has been finished. The researcher will now jot down any casual observations of early data trends and potentially intriguing transcript portions. In terms of transparency, the author will also record his or her views and feelings about the data as well as the analytical procedure (Clarke & Braun 2013.)

3.5.2 Phase two: generating initial codes

Codes are the essential building blocks of what will eventually develop into themes. To create concise, brief interpretive or descriptive labels for information pieces that can be relevant to the research questions, the technique of coding is utilized. It is advised that the researcher go through the full dataset methodically, giving each data point equal attention and noting any characteristics of the data points

that are intriguing and might be useful in creating themes. Codes should be succinct but provide enough information to stand alone and shed light on the underlying similarities among constituent data items with respect to the research's focus (Braun & Clarke 2012.)

Any piece of information that could help in answering the research questions has to be coded. The researcher can determine which codes are helpful for interpreting themes and which can be dropped through multiple repetitions of coding and increased familiarity. To follow the development of codes and even potential themes, the researcher must record the movement through iterations of coding (Clarke & Braun 2013.) To determine the best course to take, the researcher will investigate each of these potential possibilities. Tracking the development of codes will increase transparency and provide the researcher with waypoints and signposts in case a certain coding strategy is unsuccessful. In this instance, the researcher will document the data items in the first column of the paper and the iterations of the codes in each succeeding column in order to trace the development of the coding process (Byrne 2022.)

3.5.3 Phase three: generating themes

This phase officially starts when all pertinent data items have been coded. The interpretation of aggregated meaning and meaningfulness throughout the dataset takes precedence over the interpretation of individual data items within the dataset. In the context of this research, on the one hand, the coded data will be examined and evaluated to determine how various codes might be merged based on their common meanings to create themes or sub-themes. This frequently entails combining several codes that share a common underlying notion or data aspect into a single code. On the other hand, one specific code can prove to be symbolic of a larger story within the data and be pushed as a sub-theme or even a theme (Braun & Clarke 2012.)

At this point, it is important to note that themes are not hiding in the data, waiting to be discovered. Instead, the researcher must actively construe how the various codes relate to one another and consider how this relationship might influence the narrative of a particular theme. The number of codes or data points that contribute to a given topic is not a factor in determining its salience or relevance. It is crucial that the arrangement of codes and data points convey something significant that aids in resolving the study questions (Clarke & Braun, 2013.) Themes should stand out and may even contradict one another, but they should work in concert to provide a clear and consistent image of the dataset. At this

stage, the researcher will now put codes together to form preliminary candidate themes. The initial prospective themes will be mapped out thematically (Byrne 2022.)

3.5.4 Phase four: reviewing potential themes

During this stage, the researcher must perform a recursive review of the potential themes in relation to the coded data points and the full dataset (Byrne 2022). It is not unusual to discover at this stage that some candidate themes do not work well as insightful analyses of the data or do not offer details that answer the research objectives. Additionally, it can be discovered that some of the individual codes or data points that make up these themes are inconsistent and need to be revised. When analyzing prospective themes, the researcher should consider a number of crucial questions that Braun and Clarke (2012) recommended. The questions are:

- Is this a theme (it might just be a code)?
- If there is a theme, what does this theme tell me about the data set and my research topic that is useful?
- What are the restrictions (what does it contain and omit) of this theme?
- Is this topic sufficiently supported by useful facts, or is it too thin or too thick?
- Is the data's range and diversity too wide (does the theme lack coherence)?

There are two degrees of review involved in the analysis done at this stage. In level one, the links between the data items and codes that underpin each topic and sub-theme are reviewed. It can be assumed that the candidate theme or sub-theme makes a coherent argument and may contribute to the overall narrative of the data if the items or codes form a consistent pattern. In this stage, the proposed themes will be examined in light of the data set at level two. The effectiveness of the themes in interpreting the data with respect to the study questions will be evaluated. According to Braun and Clarke, it could be helpful to employ dual criteria while answering these important issues. Dual criteria would have the dual objectives of observing internal homogeneity within themes at level one review and outward heterogeneity among topics at level two evaluation. These two stages of review basically serve to show that items and codes are appropriate to inform a theme, as well as that a theme is appropriate to inform the interpretation of the dataset (Clarke & Braun 2013.)

This dual-level evaluation frequently results in the need to restructure some themes or sub-themes by adding or eliminating codes, themes, or sub-themes. Following an assessment of the potential topics, a

thematic framework will be created (Clarke & Braun 2013). In order to promote the most meaningful interpretation of the data, codes and themes may be updated or eliminated at this stage. As a result, it could be essential to go over some of the tasks completed in phases two and three of the analysis again. Some data items may need to be recoded, some may need to be merged, while others may need to be removed or promoted to sub-themes or themes. This stage's goal is to create a new thematic map or table that captures the most crucial information in relation to the study's topics (Byrne 2022.)

3.5.5 Phase five: defining and naming the theme

At this level, each subject must be named and defined. While defining themes entails stating precisely what we mean by each topic and determining how it aids in our understanding of the data, naming themes entails coming up with a brief and intelligible name for each theme. The researcher's job at this stage is to give a thorough examination of the theme framework. The dataset and the research questions should be discussed in connection with each particular topic and sub-theme. Each topic should offer a cogent and internally consistent description of the data that cannot be told by the other themes, in accordance with the twofold requirements. All of the themes should, however, come together to build a coherent story that is accurate to the dataset's content and instructive in light of the research objectives. At this stage, the themes' titles are also up for final change (Byrne 2022.)

Braun and Clarke (2012) assert that in order to define themes, a thorough investigation of the underlying data items is necessary. Each theme is likely to be supported by a large amount of data. At this stage, the researcher will need to decide which data points to utilize as extracts when summarizing the analyses' findings. The selected excerpts will present a vivid and convincing summary of the arguments advanced by a certain theme. In order to highlight the variety of ways that these data items communicate meaning and to show the cohesiveness of the theme's component data items, many extracts from the whole pool of data items that define a theme will be employed. In addition, each provided data extract will undergo a thorough analysis that goes beyond merely summarizing what a participant may have stated. Each excerpt will be analyzed in light of its underlying topic and the larger framework of the research questions, resulting in the creation of an analytical narrative that explains to the reader what is intriguing about this excerpt and why (Braun & Clarke 2012.)

The researcher will present data extracts either illustratively, giving a high-level summary of what participants said, or analytically, questioning what has been perceived as significant in what participants

said and situating this interpretation in relation to the body of literature that is currently available (Byrne 2022). At this point, a final evaluation will also be conducted on the theme names. The task of naming themes could appear unimportant and, as a result, receive less attention than is actually necessary. However, giving themes names is a crucial responsibility. The reader's first clue as to what the data has shown comes in the form of the theme names. The names should be short, descriptive, and memorable (Byrne 2022.)

According to Braun and Clarke (2012), there may be a predominating propensity to name things that describe the topic. Clarke and Braun (2013) recommend originality and the use of memorable names that may more readily grab the reader's attention while also conveying a crucial element of the theme. In order to achieve this, they propose that it could be advantageous to go through data items for a brief extract that might be utilized to encapsulate the theme name (Byrne 2022).

3.5.6 Phase six: producing the report

In this final stage, the analytical narrative and data extracts are combined, and the analysis is contextualized in light of previously published literature. Establishing the sequence in which themes are reported will be a beneficial task to solve at this time. Themes should be connected logically and meaningfully to form a compelling story about the data. Themes should, if appropriate, expand upon previously reported themes while maintaining internal coherence and the ability to convey their own unique narratives when separated from other themes (Byrne 2022.) Ideas that appear similar concerning the impact of training and development and the retention levels of employees are utilized in the creation of central themes.

3.6 Ethical considerations and trustworthiness

In this study, the researcher needs to obtain informed consent and assure the participants of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses, as this is one of the ethical issues in research (Fouka & Mantzorou 2011). Additionally, to ensure trustworthiness, the researcher should maintain the reliability and validity of the research findings (Fouka & Mantzorou 2011). In this research, the author will obtain a research permit or approval from the management of McDonald's Restaurant in Finland. The study will be done according to the requirements stated by the institution. Also, unwritten informed

consent will be acquired during the interview. Moreover, the author will assure participants of the confidentiality of any information they give and that their privacy will be safeguarded in any reports that originate from the study.

Moreover, the researcher will inform the participants that their participation in the study is voluntary and will ask for their perspectives on the experiences of training and development programs in the company and how it motivates them to stay or leave the firm. An interview guide will be sent to participants in advance to allow them time to reflect and identify their experiences with the training and development opportunities of the firm that they would like to share. Nonetheless, the validity and reliability of the research will be attained by designing similar research tools (interview questionnaires) to ensure the trustworthiness of the research findings.

Nonetheless, enhancing the trustworthiness of the data that will be collected through interviews will require the researcher to firstly ensure that all respondents will be requested to sign a consent form as a declaration of their participation on their own free will. Secondly, the researcher will record the interview proceedings and transcribe them afterwards. Finally, a document trail will be utilized to improve the study's trustworthiness, where interview records will be stored safely for the verification process in the future (Alamri 2019).

4 RESULTS

This chapter presents the study's findings. The research adopted a qualitative approach to explore the link between staff training and development and retention levels in firms such as McDonald's in Finland. The findings depicted in this chapter are apparent from the interview records attributed to the study respondents. The chapter commences by analyzing the responses and explaining the findings with respect to the study objectives, which included investigating factors affecting employee turnover at McDonald's in Finland. Then it goes on to exploring factors affecting the effectiveness of training and development at McDonald's in Finland, examining the relationship between training and development and retention of employees at McDonald's in Finland, and suggesting how McDonald's in Finland can improve employees' training and development to improve staff retention.

Finally, the chapter will conclude with an overview of the findings. The key topics that emerged from analyzing the interview responses include motivational factors that glue employees to work for McDonald's, factors that contribute to McDonald's employee turnover, the benefits of McDonald's training and development practices, the link between training and development and employee retention at McDonald's, and suggestions to improve training and development at McDonald's to enhance their staff retention.

4.1 Analyzing the staff training and development at McDonald's and its link to employees' retention

This section of the chapter outlines the responses to the interview questions as responded to by the interviewees. The responses are outlined in terms of themes that have been identified during data analysis.

4.1.1 Interviewees profile

TABLE 1. Interviewees' profile

Interviewee	Gender	Department
M1	Male	Trainee

M2	Female	Assistant Manager
M3	Female	Assistant Manager
M4	Male	Kitchen employee
M5	Female	Employee
M6	Male	Employee
M7	Male	Manager
M8	Male	General Manager

Out of the eight interviewees that responded, five (62.5 percent) were male while three (37.5 percent) were female. These eight interviewees worked in different departments including manager, general manager, two employees, one kitchen employees and a trainer.

4.1.2 Motivational factors that glue employees to work for McDonald's

The respondents had a mixed experience working at the organization. While some of the respondents said that they have had a great experience working at McDonald's in Finland, other interviewees also explained their bad experiences while working for the company.

The identified central theme that makes employees feel proud and enjoy working in the company is due to the large size and reputation of McDonald's. Three out of six respondents said that McDonald's is a large organization that provides them with the opportunity to work with people from diverse cultures and opportunities for learning and training to build their careers. Two respondents said it is enjoyable to work in the organization but, at the same time, recognized that it is stressful because of unpredictable shifts. One respondent said that his motivation to work with the organization is because he feels trusted and appreciated and also because McDonald's shifts are varied and flexible, which is good.

For instance, interviewee M5 asserted:

I have been working at McDonald's since last year (1 year). A good experience is that McDonald's is a large organization that allows me to work with people from diverse cultures. A bad experience is that sometimes I get unsuitable shifts because I'm already a student, and it becomes difficult to manage (Interviewee 5.)

I feel trusted and appreciated. Shifts are varied and flexible, which is good. It's great to be working in this organization with the people in it (Interviewee 7.)

Factors that motivate the employees to work for McDonald's, according to the interviewees' responses, revolve around six main themes, including "opportunity to develop," "work experience," "having a great team and teamwork", "appreciation", "flexible working hours/opportunity to work in shifts," and "opportunity to learn". Accordingly, three interviewees stated that having friends, great team members, and teamwork motivates them to work in the organization; two said that the appreciation they get is essential and acts as a motivation factor, while the other two respondents said that the opportunity to learn customer service, work life, and working in shifts is what motivates them to work for McDonald's. For instance:

Having friends coming to work and meeting/be with friends is what I would say motivates me to come to work, being a part of a great team, sending thank you cards and appreciation emails (Interviewee 2).

McDonald's is very nice overall. It's a place where people can come together, put teamwork and especially great for young employees as their first job (Interviewee 4.)
Work community, opportunity to develop, flexible working hours, succeeding together, work experience (Interviewee 7).

4.2 Factors that contribute to McDonald's employee turnover

When asked to describe the state of employee turnover in the organization, all the respondents anonymously confirmed that Mcdonald's has a high employee turnover as employees leave very often. One employee further described the normal cycle as half a year or a year, where employees work in the organization for half a year or less and then leave. However, not all employees leave. M4, for instance, affirmed:

Usually, the normal cycle is like half a year or one year, and then they change jobs. For instance, when I started three years ago, I knew over 70 employees, but now only less than ten people are left. Employees do not work for long with the organization. They keep on leaving after a year or so (Interviewee 4.)

The opinion of the respondents varied concerning the factors that contribute to the high turnover. However, there were some commonalities in the responses, where the recurring themes entailed "work satisfaction", "lack of adequate training and development opportunities", "managerial work" "students who leave to study", "work pressure that is unbearable", "unfavourable working environment", "odd working hours", "plans for the future" and "getting opportunities from other companies or development groups". For instance, M6 said: *Some are students and have to continue with studies; some may find the environment unfavorable to them, the pressure of the work* (Interviewee 6).

Work satisfaction, plans for the future, managerial work (Interviewee 7).

4.3 The benefits of McDonald's training and development practices

Interviewees held differing opinions regarding McDonald's overall HRM practices. Some respondents recognized it as having good planned and tested HRM practices for reasons such as good recruiting practices, being a large recruiting company, benefits and compensation packages, and training programs. In contrast, other respondents described it as bad, stating that the organization is working to improve its HRM practices.

When asked to describe the commitment of McDonald's to training and development practices, all seven interviewees said it is fairly good and gave different reasons, such as frequent training of new employees and frequent meetings with the managers of the company. These training programs are essential as new employees do not need any previous experience since they can lean skills and work duties from these training and development programs. For instance, M3 asserted:
Not bad because they often train new employees and managers and supervisors who train them (Interviewee 3).

They train new employees from time to time, and we hold meetings with managers of the company (Interviewee 5).

Training and developing starts right after you start working. You don't necessary need any previous work experience, you'll learn working life skills, work duties and team work from the trainers, managers and work community (Interviewee 7.)

Accordingly, the training and development practices in McDonald's, as per the interviewees' responses, include e-learning, e-business, and product development training, continuous development, course days training and training days for new employees. However, one respondent said there are few customer-handling trainees, so more must be added. M7 asserted that:

For example, training days when a new employee starts. Course days when you are proceeding in career. Continuous development (Interviewee 7.)

Regarding the benefits that McDonald's derives from its training and development practices, interviewees' responses revolve around four main themes, including "improved organization performance and overall wealth", "increased commitment of workers", "better customer services", and "improved employee productivity and performance". For instance, M3 said:

Boost productiveness, develops and motivate employees to create the best products and improve the quality of services they offer customers (Interviewee 3).

Commitment, knowledge, ability to function well and provide feel good moments for the customers (Interviewee 4).

4.4 The link between training and development and employees' retention at McDonald's

All the respondents anonymously agreed that training and development directly lead to employee retention in the organization. The interviewees agreed that when employees are well trained, they understand what they are expected to do, making work easier and making them love their job, so they stay longer in the organization. One interviewee (M4) further explained that he planned to quit after finishing his studies, but because of training, he is still working at Mcdonald's. Overall, training and development provided by the organization increases the commitment of workers and hence their retention in the organization. The interviewee recounted:

Training helps people to stay because it makes work easier. For instance, I had planned to quit working at Mcdonald's after finishing school that is after half a year, but now I'm done with my school and still here because training has enabled me to do my job better and reduce the level of stress that would make me want to quit faster (Interviewee 4.)

It has a direct link. For instance, training makes employees work smartly and efficiently, which leads to the employees' interest in loving their work, and they will stay longer in the organization when they

are not trained; it becomes challenging for them to upgrade their skills which can be frustrating and they end up leaving the company (Interviewee 6.).

4.5 Suggestions to improve training and development at McDonald's to enhance staff retention

The interviewees' suggestions revolved around two themes: "providing constant training and learning opportunities to employees and trainers" and "promoting employees within the company then training them to handle those higher positions". M4, for instance, asserted:

Most people do not consider applying for promotion, but if organizations can be committed to promoting among the employees and then provide the required training to them, then I guess many employees would stay and would want to become better at what they do through engaging in constant training to get the promotion (Interviewee 4).

4.6 Chapter Summary

This study has established that McDonald's is generally a great organization with excellent working experience because of its large size and reputation. However, the respondents hold different views on why they are motivated to work in the company, including having a great team and teamwork, appreciation, the opportunity to work in shifts, and the "opportunity to learn". Regarding McDonald's employee turnover, the analysis revealed that the organization is experiencing high employee turnover as employees leave often. Reasons for the high turnover include lack of adequate training and development opportunities, students who leave to study, unbearable work pressure, unfavorable working environment, odd working hours, and getting opportunities from other companies or development groups.

Also, the study has established that McDonald's has a great commitment to training and developing its workforce through e-learning, e-business, and product development training. The company derived benefits from training and developing employees include improved organizational performance and overall wealth, better customer services, and improved employee productivity and performance. Also, the study found a positive relationship between training and development and employee retention in the organization. Finally, the organization should provide constant training and learning opportunities to employees and trainers, promote employees within the company, and then train them to handle those higher positions as suggestions to enhance employee retention from employees' perspectives.

5 DISCUSSION

This chapter examines how the findings in chapter four compare with the critical academic articles presented in chapter two. Existing differences and similarities between the findings and the past studies are highlighted, with any apparent gaps identified and suggestions provided for appropriate future application.

5.1 Interview responses analysis

This section analyzes the interviewees' responses as outlined in chapter four and connects them to past study findings. The analysis will connect the thesis findings to the previous findings to determine if they agree or disagree regarding every theme identified.

5.1.1 Factors that contribute to McDonald's employee turnover

The study has established that the reasons for the high turnover at McDonald's include a lack of adequate training and development opportunities, students who leave to study, unbearable work pressure, an unfavorable working environment, odd working hours, and getting opportunities from other companies or development groups. Several studies' findings agree with this finding. For instance, Saraih et al.'s (2016) and Alias et al.'s (2018) findings concur with the thesis finding concerning unfavorable working environments. According to Saraih et al.'s (2016) findings, colleague relationships are one of the factors that could lead to high employee turnover because they have a negative impact on job realism and stress. The absence of a cordial relationship between colleagues implies that some employees will perceive the environment as hostile or out of place, thereby making them seek better options (Saraih et al. 2016). In the view of Alias et al. (2018), cordial relationships between colleagues often require the effort of the organization to create a supportive environment for the employees to minimize withdrawal intentions on the part of the staff. However, it could be argued that it is challenging to solve the lack of cordial colleague relations through training and development. The intention to leave the organization increases when employees do not perceive advancement opportunities.

Further, the thesis finding regarding training and development is in agreement with findings from Al Mamun and Hasan (2017), who point out that a lack of training and development opportunities can also lead to high turnover intentions. In particular, the authors argued that organizations that do not offer training opportunities to their employees signal that they do not care about the staff's growth. Further, Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) note that training and learning opportunities considerably affect the employees remaining in the organization. It offers them the opportunity to improve their abilities and skills. The thesis findings further concur with those of Ooi and Teoh (2021), who asserted that employees could not stay in an organization where they could not achieve self-realization, making them think about quitting or deciding to leave the company. Additionally, Ooi and Teoh (2021) explain that organizations providing training opportunities and programs for their employees' skills improvement and learning achieve a high performance ratio and reduce employee turnover. Thus, the absence of learning and training opportunities increases the chances of employee turnover, while the presence of the same leads to a high retention ratio (Ooi & Teoh 2021).

5.1.2 The benefits of McDonald's training and development practices

The study found that McDonald's derives several benefits from training and developing its workforce. These benefits derived from training and developing employees include improved organization performance and overall wealth, better customer service, and improved employee productivity and performance. A study by Al Karim et al. (2019) agrees with this thesis's findings, noting that employees are always considered for development and training in relation to career-enhancing skills, leading to employee motivation and retention. It is common knowledge that a well-trained and developed workforce will be a valuable resource to the organization, leading to an increased probability of their effectiveness and efficiency in undertaking their duties (Al Karim et al. 2019).

Gan and Yusof (2009) point out that development implies learning opportunities created to help staff grow. This assertion is incongruent with the explanation of Anis et al. (2011) that development is not fundamentally skills-oriented but instead provides a general attitude and knowledge that will be beneficial to employees in higher positions. Thus, development programs in organizations are frameworks aimed at helping employees develop their professional and personal knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors and enhance their abilities to undertake specific organizational tasks (Anis et al. 2011).

5.1.3 The link between training and development and employees' retention at McDonald's

The study found a positive relationship between training and development and employee retention in the organization. This finding is in agreement with Abba's (2018) study, which revealed that training and development significantly affect employee retention. Abba (2018) asserted that although this was a cause-and-effect analysis, it also demonstrates a positive link between training, development, and retention. In particular, the researcher argues that since employees perceive training and development as one of the ways the organization takes an interest in growth and development, loyalty is the best way to repay the company.

Additionally, the findings of this thesis are similar to those of a study undertaken by Hassan et al. (2013) that found a positive relationship between the variables and concluded that when employees have high self-efficacy because of attending training, they tend to remain in the organization. The authors assert that training and development, as a function, focus on systematic activities geared towards retaining and improving the quality of the workforce. In the contemporary business world, organizations continuously train and develop to secure employees' commitment and increase productivity and quality of service to customers (Hassan et al. 2013). Another study by Gan and Yusof (2019) also agrees with this thesis's findings and reveals that training positively links to employee retention. This positive link is because training and development programs provide employees with updated skills and competencies, which improve their commitment to their work and organization, thereby increasing the probability of retention. Moreover, Fletcher et al. (2016) further support this thesis finding by adopting Social Exchange Theory, which shows that increasing training and development opportunities in the organization tends to help improve employee retention.

Nonetheless, Aleem and Bowra's (2020) findings concur with the thesis findings. Aleem and Bowra (2020) found a significant relationship between the variables. The authors asserted that employees perceive training as instrumental to their compensation, career growth, capacity building, and skill enhancement, thereby increasing their probability of remaining in the organization. Further concurring with this study's finding is Kakar et al. (2017), who contended that investing in employees' growth and development through training makes them feel valued by the organization because it prioritizes their professional needs. Correspondingly, Hong et al. (2012) opined that training provides several benefits to employees' careers, such as career development and advancement, which implies improving employee retention rates. This assertion is similar to a study undertaken by Hassan et al. (2013). It supports the thesis findings as it found a positive relationship between the variables and concluded that

employees tend to remain in the organization when they have high self-efficacy because of attending training.

On the contrary, some researchers disagree with this thesis's findings that training and development positively correlate to employee retention in an organization. For instance, Haider et al.'s (2015) findings disagree with the thesis findings and revealed that there was a significant but negative relationship between training and staff retention. The researchers argued that most employees who have enhanced their knowledge and skills through training tend to seek better work or opportunities outside the company, thereby reducing the rate of retention. Notably, Haider et al. (2015) point out that employees mostly leave after training and development because the enhanced skills and advancement are not accompanied by promotion or compensation commensurate with the new skills and knowledge.

5.2 Chapter summary

This chapter analyzes the interview data used in this research. Overall, there is high staff turnover at McDonald's. The leading reasons for this include a lack of adequate training and development opportunities, work pressure, and an unbearable and unfavorable working environment. Also, the study established that there is a positive link between training and development and employee retention. This can benefit an organization in terms of improved organization performance and overall wealth, better customer service, and improved employee productivity and performance due to staff growth. However, other studies have established that there is a negative relationship between training and development and employee retention because employees always leave after training to look for better opportunities because their skills do not match their current roles.

6 CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

The last chapter has explored the findings of this research study in conjunction with existing articles to provide a further understanding of the link between training and development and staff retention at McDonald's in Finland. This chapter will review whether these objectives were achieved and whether the research identified any research gaps.

6.1 Conclusions and recommendations

This thesis establishes that many factors make employees leave McDonald's besides training and development. Other factors include some employees being students and needing to leave to study, unbearable work pressure, an unfavorable working environment, odd working hours, and getting opportunities from other companies or development. However, many interviewees stated that the main reason was a lack of adequate training, development, and learning opportunities. Thus, the organization should strive to factor in all these to create an environment that will be favorable and make employees stay for longer.

Also, the study has established that McDonald's has an outstanding commitment to training and developing its workforce through e-learning, e-business, and product development training. The company's benefits from training and developing employees include improved organizational performance and overall wealth, better customer service, and improved employee productivity and performance. Therefore, the organization should commit more to training and developing its workforce to continue reaping these benefits.

Additionally, the study found a positive relationship between training and development and employee retention in the organization. However, other findings have revealed a significant negative relationship between training and development and staff retention because employees leave to look for better opportunities that match their skills. However, McDonald's should continue to commit to constant and frequent training and development programs for its workforce to continue deriving the benefits of training and developing its workforce. However, it should simultaneously consider promoting these employees within the company to reduce the high turnover resulting from such programs that grow employees' skills.

Finally, the study has established that McDonald's can improve its training and development strategies to enhance staff retention by providing constant training and learning opportunities to employees and trainers, promoting employees within the company, and then training them to handle those higher positions. Therefore, McDonald's should consider these and ensure that training aligns with employees' needs to enhance its effectiveness.

6.2 Limitations of the study

The first major limitation encountered during this study is derived from the fact that the interview only had eight participants. This number is a relatively small proportion of employees, including the manager and assistant managers at McDonald's; hence, it minimizes the validity as well as reliability of the findings. Opinions from only eight people may not fully represent the link between training and development and staff retention at McDonald's in Finland. However, in this research, the eight participants provided rich and detailed data that offered insights to support the findings during the analysis. To avoid similar drawbacks in the future, the researcher should use a larger sample or different data collection methods, such as questionnaires, so that the opinions gathered could be more representative than in this research.

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APPENDICES

Interview questions

1. How would you describe the experience of working in this organization?

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2. What are some of the reasons that you would say motivates employees to work at McDonald?

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3. How would you describe the state of employees' turnover in the organization?

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4. What are some of the factors would you say contribute to the turnover?

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5. How would you describe the overall organization's HRM practices?

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6. How would you describe the organization commitment to training and developing its employ-ees?

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7. What are some of the training and development practices that the company has put in place?

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8. What are some the benefits would you say training and development offers to the company?
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9. How would you describe the link between training and development and employees retention in the organization?
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10. What would suggest the organization can do to improve employees training and development to enhance staff retention?
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