FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO EMPLOYEE ATTRITION IN THE FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY

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FACTORS CONTRIBTING TO EMPLOYEE ATTRITION IN THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY (226 pp.)

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Globally, organizations are experiencing workforce and employee shortages that vary from one industry to another, and the hospitality industry is among the worst affected (De Smet et al., 2022). The primary purpose of this study was to identify and explore factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry so that recommendations for change can be given to those who work in the industry to decrease turnover and attrition rates and promote career longevity.

Data was collected from multiple sources: 1) Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality graduates who have worked in the foodservice industry, 2) Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality instructors, and 3) foodservice managers from Northeast Ohio. Data was collected from the graduates and instructors using a survey. The surveys gathered quantitative and qualitative data on factors contributing to foodservice worker turnover and attrition. Data from foodservice managers was collected using interviews. Additionally, participants from all three groups provided suggestions for reducing turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. Qualitative data was analyzed

using content and thematic analysis, triangulation, and SPSS was used to analyze descriptive and inferential statistics.

Findings revealed that compensation, environment, and management factors, along with worker feelings contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. Compensatory factors, such as wages and hours were cited by the graduates and instructors as the most prominent reasons why workers leave their foodservice jobs. Foodservice managers indicated that feelings and qualities of foodservice workers play a dynamic role in the turnover and attrition issue in the foodservice industry.

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DEDICATION

To my family for your patience, love, and support during my educational journey. You know that my quest for knowledge is never-ending. You also know that I am a full-blown teacher at heart.

To my friends for your encouragement and laughter throughout this entire process. It is because of you that I have a smile on my face and warmth in my heart every day of my life.

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To my students for your constant inquisitiveness and youth that has me wishing I earned this Ph.D. earlier in my life so that I could have inspired more of my pupils to continue their education and go down paths less traveled.

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When I was five years old, I used to play school on the basement floor with my Barbie dolls. As students, those Barbies were smart and well-behaved learners. I was an exceptional pretend teacher. School was a place where I thrived and excelled. I wanted to be encapsulated in the walls of a building where students lined up like soldiers ready for the next assignment. Thank you to all the teachers that helped me develop as a child, adolescent, and young adult. I can still see their smiling faces and hear their voices cheering me on to be someone special.

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God is good. He has granted me grace, strength, and wisdom all the days of my life.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There is an unemployment trend not only in the United States but globally termed the Great Resignation (Molchan & Clore, 2023; Weinstein & Hirsch, 2023). The Great Resignation refers to workers quitting jobs at higher rates than positions can be filled. As of April 2024, there were 8.8 million job openings in the United States (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, [U.S. BLS], 2024). While there are many reasons for workers to leave or change jobs, one issue seems evident, skilled workers are desperately needed worldwide to fill the massive worker shortages. These shortages span many industries from service jobs like healthcare, retail, and hospitality to skilled trades labor such as assembly line workers and equipment technicians (Ferguson, 2022).

Several reasons can be attributed to worker shortages, namely an aging workforce, the Coronavirus, and a mismatch of skills also known as the skills gap (Hackbarth, 2018; Isabella & Ferguson, 2022; U.S. Chamber Poll, 2021). As the baby boomer generation quickly approaches retirement age, many have already opted for early retirement due to the pandemic; the open job positions left in their wake become an increasing concern across nations (U.S. Chamber Poll, 2021). The able workers that often fill entrance positions are choosing to remain unemployed, leaving industries with already high employee quit rates to struggle while trying to keep up with the constant demand for goods and services in the global economy (Hackbarth, 2018). The labor force (those working or looking for work) is not gearing up new workers as has happened in the past, and this phenomenon raises concerns for not only businesses, but consumers as well (Fowers & Van Dam, 2021).

A shortage of workers could be due to the threat of the Coronavirus returning, leaving workers reluctant to move back into the workforce (Chen & Qi, 2022). Or perhaps younger generations, like Generation Z and millennials have different views of the workplace after witnessing and enduring a pandemic (Mahand & Caldwell, 2022). Regardless of the cohort of workers or reasons for increased unemployment rates, industries are suffering, and society must investigate reasons for worker attrition so that solutions can be identified and put into place before livelihoods and economies collapse (Dube et al., 2021).

The skills gap is another issue that plagues the workforce. Perhaps the gaping holes in the workforce are due to under-skilled or unprepared workers (ACTE: Issue Brief, 2019). Hackbarth (2018) suggests the workforce skills gap can be addressed by ensuring higher quality educational programs promote graduate readiness, making sure all families have access to childcare which gives young children the proper foundation of skills and ability, and engaging businesses to partner with educational institutions to provide input on curriculum that provides in-demand skills for the workplace. By creating relationships between educational entities and industry members, businesses can identify changes in the workplace so that educators can alter their teaching methods and curricula to fit the needs of the current job market. Graduates are the future of the workforce and aligning educational experiences with workplace necessities can help students secure more productive futures (Hackbarth, 2018).

Vocational programs across the globe are a logical place for businesses to look for new hires. Skilled trades education, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET-globally) or Career and Technical Education (CTE-in the United States) offers secondary pupils a myriad of occupational pathways (Gyimah, 2020). The overarching objectives of TVET and CTE programs are to highlight relevant career skills needed in the workplace and to give students insight into

challenges that businesses face regarding hiring and employee retention (Imperatore & Hyslop, 2018; Reinsch & Nyangweta, 2023). When training programs cultivate working relationships with industry members, student workers can engage in apprenticeship programs, job shadowing, and job coaching to allow for enhanced communication between workers and employers that can alleviate some of the training costs on the part of the employer (Monthey, 2019). These career opportunities allow students to engage in real workplaces that can better prepare them for jobs in their chosen career path. Ultimately, these vocational programs guide students toward becoming competent workers in a focused trade or career. Businesses desperately need employees, and many industries require interpersonal communication skills, often called soft skills, and technical skills of the trade (Cheng & Hitt, 2018; Engelhart & Mupinga, 2020). According to Deba et al. (2014):

> Everywhere around the world, interpersonal skills have been considered as a very important human springhead for both individual and workplace development particularly in the current reality of life. Considering the previous statement, researchers in many fields of studies have [recommendations] for the need to provide trainees in high school with this skill (p. 1).

On that Ng, (2021) asserts “The world runs on TVET skills in virtually all industries and sectors” (p. 5). By enrolling in TVET and CTE programs, students are assured practice in acquiring occupational skills that lead directly to the workforce, post-secondary education, or both. Not only do TVET and CTE programs pursue educational training in technological advances, but these programs also prepare students to recognize change in the workplace and help them develop problem-solving skills as global economic needs change (Kennedy, 2021). Workers who understand the ever-changing world of work are valuable assets to developing and

contributing to global economies but can also help to sustain these economies over time. When businesses (i.e. employers) open channels of communication and identify the essential skills needed for on-the-job success with educational training programs, both entities reap the rewards: businesses gain knowledgeable, skilled workers, and future employees (i.e. students) gain first-hand experiences in a career that could be more lasting (Englehart & Mupinga, 2021).

The bottom line is that TVET and CTE programs prepare students for occupations in the workforce and help fill vacant job positions. Skilled training programs provide students with career opportunities. When occupational education and training is approached with industry members' input, students can elevate their knowledge and work competencies and apply these skills to a long-term career. Ideally, when businesses lean on educational training programs, vacant positions can be filled, unemployment rates are addressed, and economies continue to grow, but this is not always the case.

Statement of the Problem

There are long lines for services in almost every industry. For example, there are long waits at doctor appointments, at airports, and in retail establishments such as dining services. When it comes to the hospitality industry, dining out has become less and less enjoyable (McCarron, 2024). One reason for this is due to a continued shortage of workers in the foodservice industry. It is common to enter a restaurant and linger for long periods in hopes of being seated and approached by waitstaff. Every customer understands the frustration when asked to wait patiently at a table for a considerable length of time to order drinks and a meal. In addition to such delays, when food and drinks do arrive at the table, orders are frequently incorrect, food is cold, and service is often not very hospitable or friendly, yet customers are expected to pay higher meal prices and leave above-average tips. These issues have become all

too common in the foodservice industry and are only exacerbated by minimal staff reporting for work (McCarron, 2024).

While the foodservice industry is not the only sector affected by staffing shortages, foodservice workers all too frequently quit their jobs and walk away from the industry (Fantozzi, 2022). When workers vacate positions, the workers that remain are burdened with higher workloads. Those workers who do remain in the industry become burned out, overly stressed, and often quit in search of employment that is less taxing. A study by Dewi and Riana (2019) showed a positive correlation between higher workloads, stress and burnout. Worker fatigue can cause employees to consider other job options and constant job vacancies force management to scramble to fill job openings while trying to maintain customer satisfaction resulting in a collapse of the service structure that is the foundation of the hospitality industry (Sukhu, 2017).

The number of openings in the foodservice industry indicates a high separation rate associated with the occupation (Fantozzi, 2022). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S. BLS, 2023), the term separation includes employees that were removed from payroll for any number of reasons, including 1) quitting voluntarily (turnover), 2) involuntary leaves such as temporary or permanent layoffs, and 3) company downsizing or closings, firings, and terminations (attrition). The separations not tallied in the job separation statistics are job transfers to new locations, disability leave, retirements, and deaths.

The U.S. BLS (2023) data shows that as of July 2023, the number of employees that quit in hospitality and tourism was 876,000 individuals. The accommodations and foodservice sector accounts for 766,000 of those quits and leads in the number of resignation levels across all career pathways in the United States. This is not a positive attribute of the hospitality industry nor of the foodservice industry. The large number of job openings and the entry-level qualifications for

being hired in the foodservice industry surely point toward ample career opportunities and pathways for success.

Employee turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry are damaging to business reputations and can cause many restaurants to close their doors permanently because they cannot sustain the resources it takes to hire and train countless employees for the day-to-day tasks needed to entice customers into an establishment (Parsa et al., 2005). Wages in the industry have risen in the past two years from a little more than $13 per hour in 2020 to over $17 per hour in 2023 (Canham-Clyne, 2023). High hourly wages are in high demand from employees but also hard for restaurant owners to maintain, especially when workers constantly leave these job positions. Owners offer competitive wages to gain new employees, but as soon as a better offer comes along, workers head for the door, leaving owners, managers, and other employees in a bind to pick up the extra workloads. Employees realize that in an economy where workers are in high demand employees have the upper hand and feel free to search for more fulfilling work elsewhere (Azinuddin et al., 2021). This creates a vicious cycle of employers being forced to pay higher wages to keep employees on the payroll, which increases costs for customers. While job hopping for financial gain is common, business owners must understand that reasons other than wages urge employees to leave their jobs. Understanding and curbing “job hopping” is crucial to the success of many businesses. For this reason, it is important to identify factors that lead workers to seek new employment and different careers (Pandey, 2019).

The importance of figuring out the factors that cause workers to leave their jobs is twofold. One, educational training programs are preparing students for the workforce through government funding. Money is being wasted on these programs if the underlying objectives of developing and training foodservice career-ready students are not attained. Two, workers who

choose the foodservice industry as a career path and leave the industry within a few short years are throwing away precious time and resources that could be better spent exploring a more fitting career. The funding being spent on occupational training may not be accomplishing outcomes that promote career longevity in the hospitality and foodservice industry and it is imperative to figure out the reasons why this industry has constant fluctuation of employees. Identifying these reasons and potential solutions is also vitally important to the livelihoods of business owners who currently spend time and money trying to find, train, and retain competent workers who are dedicated to their jobs and the industry (Guilding et al., 2014).

Significance of the Study

One industry that constitutes a consistently high percentage of job openings from year to year is the hospitality and tourism industry. The hospitality and tourism industry has seen an increase in available jobs from 1 million in 2019 to 1.34 million (McCarthy & Akinyooye, 2020; U.S. BLS, 2023). The hospitality industry is an overarching career pathway that includes tourism, lodging, and foodservice, and employed over 8% of the United States workforce in May 2022 (Major Occupational Groups, 2022). Yet the hospitality industry continues to struggle to fill positions and retain employees with the accommodations and foodservice sectors accounting for 1.18 million of the total current job openings in the United States (U.S. BLS, 2023).

The quit rate in the State of Ohio alone is nearly 44 % on average, and hospitality workers in general stay in a new job for only 110 days (Constantino, 2022). These numbers are staggering and create a constant need for new hires in restaurants and lodging establishments across Ohio and the country. The perplexing issues and factors that likely cause turnover and attrition are not easily specified. The problems of foodservice job departures and attrition burden the industry and businesses alike with hiring and training costs due to employee quits. The losses

of employee investments are often a losing financial battle as “entry level employees typically cost 50% of their salary to replace” (Bradshaw, 2023b, p. 3). This study is designed to highlight factors that contribute to foodservice and attrition from the viewpoints of CTE hospitality graduates, CTE hospitality instructors, and foodservice managers. This study's intention is to include solutions to the problem from the graduates, instructors, and managers’ perspective. Prior research fails to investigate the problems of foodservice and attrition from the combined perspectives of CTE graduates, CTE instructors, and managers and compare the data for a 360-degree view of the factors that contribute to turnover and attrition and offer solutions from the participants viewpoints.

Training workers is not a cheap endeavor. The revolving door of foodservice workers puts pressure on individual businesses to operate with staffing shortages while still trying to maintain quality customer service and with the rapid decline of available workers, those in positions to train and hire new employees must look for solutions to retain viable workers (Parsa et al., 2005). This research will examine the role of a CTE hospitality program curriculum by surveying CTE hospitality graduates and instructors to gauge how the training program readies students for foodservice work in the industry. This is an area of limited research that could play a role in helping with the problem of turnover and attrition in foodservice (Knight, 2016).

The relationship between CTE hospitality programs and the foodservice industry must be fostered. The constant need of skilled workers is an issue that can be lessened if both enterprises work together and communicate effectively the needs of the industry while comparing the desired skills to the CTE curriculum being taught to future foodservice workers (Mupinga & O’Connor, 2013). Business members need to vocalize the most needed skills for success in the

industry and nurture occupational parallels with CTE instructors to produce workers capable of moving right into the workforce after graduation (ACTE, 2018).

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this research was to identify and explore factors that contribute to turnover and attrition of workers in the foodservice industry and determine probable solutions. As such, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived factors (as indicated by graduates of CTE hospitality programs, CTE hospitality instructors, and foodservice managers) that most contribute to workers leaving the industry?
2. What does each stakeholder (i.e., graduates of CTE hospitality programs, CTE hospitality instructors, and foodservice managers) identify as needing to change in education and industry practices to reduce attrition and turnover in the foodservice industry and how do these recommendations compare to one another?

This study highlights participants' beliefs about reasons for foodservice turnover and attrition and provides insights on whether CTE curriculum and instructional strategies facilitate and develop pertinent industry knowledge and training that reflects the needs of the workforce.

This study not only informs CTE hospitality program instructors of gaps in the school-to-work transition of students but also identifies ways to help prepare prospective hospitality students for the demands of foodservice occupations and provides valuable information to business owners on possible solutions to attrition and turnover.

Definition of Terms

When talking about careers and education, many terms reoccur in the literature and discussions but often have confounding meanings. The terminology in this study will be used as

defined in this dissertation. Oftentimes jargon, such as “86’ed” and “canned” are used in the foodservice industry to mean fired or let go from a job position with terms such as these, if derived by a participant, will be defined here to afford the reader an understanding of the informant’s underlying meaning.

- Attrition: When employees leave a job position without being replaced (Pryzstanski, 2020).
- Behaviorism: Human actions and behaviors influenced by physical stimuli found in the environment (Graham, 2023).
- Career: A field which a person trains for and can often become a permanent occupation (Merriam-Webster, 2024).
- Career and Technical Education (CTE): Prepares youth and adults for a wide variety of skilled occupations (What is CTE?, 2018).
- Career Cluster: Occupations organized into pathways by skills and academic and technical knowledge (The National Career Clusters, 2023).
- Constructivism: A learning theory derived from the idea that learners construct knowledge as they act upon the world around them and develop their own experiences and ideas from these interactions (McLeod, 2024).
- Credential: “A set of competencies, skills, and/or knowledge that is recognized as necessary or desired for a particular occupation by the relevant industry” (Dortch, 2014, p. 4).
- Culinary Arts: The art of cooking, preparing, presenting, and serving food (Zuberbuehler, 2024).
- Entry Level Position: Work or job that requires little to no training to acquire.

- Happenstance: Unplanned events that affect decision making (Hirschi, 2010).
- Hospitality: Providing services to guests in restaurants, hotels, bars, and cafes. A career path that includes foodservice and beverage service, lodging, travel, tourism, and event management (The National Career Clusters, 2023).
- Longevity: A lengthy continuance (Merriam-Webster, 2024).
- Management: One who oversees and coordinates day to day operations in a business or establishment (Kashyap, 2022).
- On-boarding: Programming for new employees to ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and awareness of policies and procedures, and can include an orientation period (Onboarding and Exiting-US Department of the Interior, 2020).
- Pragmatism: An approach to problem solving that is practical of real-world issues and existing situations (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020).
- Retention: To hold secure or intact (Merriam-Webster, 2024).
- Satisfaction: To fulfill wants, needs, and expectations-usually a happy or content notion (Merriam-Webster, 2024).
- Skills Gap: The difference between what employers or industry needs and the actual skills of the workers (Waltower, 2023).
- Turnover: A worker leaves a position; the worker will be replaced (Przystankski, 2020).
- Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET): Programs that educate students in technical subjects relevant to occupations (Winch, 2013). TVET is a predominantly global version of the United States' CTE.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on worker turnover and attrition is vast and complex, thus requiring a review of four types of information important to this proposal. First, the problem of attrition is not solely a foodservice industry dilemma and generalizations within the workforce and career paths must be established. Second, career theories that provide a framework for how and why workers select careers and explore the workforce will shed light on the behaviors of students, workers, and employers. Third, definitions of the hospitality and foodservice industries must be differentiated to indicate the foodservice sector as an underlying pathway encompassed by the hospitality industry. Schooling, training, workforce readiness, identifying the skills gap, and career counseling are related topics that help foster a better understanding of technical programs. Fourth, and most importantly, many ideas surrounding foodservice turnover and attrition will be presented so that the direction of this research can be guided by issues and events that are relevant to finding answers to why workers are vacating job positions and leaving the foodservice industry. These issues of investigation are not limited to the physical demands of the job, individuals' fitness of career choice, personality characteristics, work environment including stress, and quality of life. This literature review will conclude with aspects of motivation and compensation, leadership and culture in the industry, and job satisfaction as these issues round out the areas of focus in the hopes to reduce foodservice turnover and attrition and enhance CT hospitality programming.

General Turnover and Attrition

To discuss worker turnover and attrition, turnover and the three types of worker attrition must be identified and defined. Attrition is best described when an employee leaves a position

and is not replaced (Wooll, 2022). Voluntary, involuntary, and retirement attrition are the customary routes of exit from employment. Voluntary attrition (turnover) is when workers decide to leave a career field due to other work opportunities that do not align with their current employment, they experience a change of heart or unhappy circumstance within their current position which drives workers to switch careers completely, or employees leave the industry due to health concerns or illnesses that prevent them from doing the work (D'Allessandro, 2024). Involuntary attrition happens when employers decide the worker is no longer needed in the company and this is usually called termination, job layoff, or organizational restructuring and the job itself is no longer available (D'Allessandro, 2024; Wooll, 2023). Retirement attrition is when workers of retirement age remove themselves from the workforce completely to align with their stage of life circumstances (Wooll, 2023). Of the three types of attrition, two are in the control of the employee, voluntary and retirement, and one is controlled by the employer or industry, which is involuntary.

Turnover is often connected to attrition conversations; however, turnover is when workers voluntarily leave a specific job and replace employment with a position in the same career field (Buchan, 2010). Turnover, from the company's point of view, indicates that the position will be refilled, while the term attrition indicates that leaving workers will not be replaced (Przystanski, 2020). Turnover can often be surprising, catching employers off guard, especially when workers leave their positions hastily (Przystanski, 2020). Turnover and attrition are often used synonymously in workplace discussions because both terms identify that workers are noticeably leaving their positions (Przystanski, 2020; Masese, 2016; Khilnani & Nair, 2022). While attrition is a real issue in the workplace, employee turnover is a large focus of this literature review and investigation.

The life cycle or stages of employment must be considered when discussing job turnover and attrition. Although the employee life cycle is used more frequently in corporate human resource settings to engage employees, evaluate productivity, and determine the need for workers, the stages of the employee life cycle pertain to all careers and can be used to understand why workers leave jobs by investigating the stages to identify areas of corporate improvement that can enhance employee experiences (Kesavan & Dhivya, 2022). The employee life cycle is often referred to as the employee journey within a company and employees can move through the cycle at different paces. The employee life cycle is a series of stages that are an important tool for not only recruiting employees but also retaining them (Gladka et al., 2022).

Authors Michael Beer, Bert Spector, Paul R. Lawrence, D. Quinn Mills, and Richard E. Walton (1984) were among the first to define the employee life cycle and incorporate the importance of the stages in the book titled Managing Human Assets. Beer et al. (1984) discussed three main stages of the employee life cycle and broke down the stages further into sub-stages. The first is the inflow stage which includes recruitment, assessment, and selection. The second stage is the internal flow that incorporates orientation and socialization, evaluation of performance and potential, career development, placement, promotion, and demotion. The third stage of the employee cycle concludes with outflow processes such as termination, outplacement, and retirement. Beer et al. (1984) distinguishes from these employee life cycle stages, four likely outcomes ensue, those being lifelong employment, up or out, unstable in and out, and mixed pattern results. These four outcomes represent the diverse options that are common to employment cycles. The lifelong employment outcome is preferable to ensure career longevity. The up and out outcome refers to employees that leave the workplace after gaining experience and promotions or the lack thereof when seeking new job positions. The unstable in and out

outcome of the outflow process is when workers leave a job without predictable reasons, leaving the employer with voids in worker productivity due to the time it takes to hire and train new employees. The mixed pattern outcome of the outflow process is when employees appear to be committed yet are lured away for other reasons such as higher pay, a more prestigious job title, and even more desirable locations or job expectations (Beer et al., 1984).

The Academy to Innovate Human Resources (AIHR) offers a simpler model of the employee life cycle and highlights the importance of the employer and employee relationship. AIHR indicates seven stages in the cycle: attraction, recruitment, on-boarding, retention, development, off boarding, and happy leavers (Verlinden, 2023). These seven stages are not unlike the Beer et al (1984) model where management plays an important role in facilitating employees through the stages of inflow, internal flow, and outflow while utilizing mentoring and effective listening, even though the final stage of leaving. The leaving stage in each model proves to be one of the most important phases because valuable information lies within those employees that exit the workplace. Future processes, progress, and productivity are reliant on departing employees' feedback (Verlinden, 2023).

When employees resign, figuring out the causes of their exits and using that information to transform workplace procedures could limit worker attrition and quit rates in the future, saving companies hard earned revenue. "Experts estimate that the cost of a lost employee is anywhere from tens of thousands of dollars to 1.5-2.0 times an employee's annual salary. The bottom line for organizations: Turnover, if not systematically studied and understood, can impede achievement of organizational outcomes" (Patrick & Sundaram, 2023, para. 2). This study will collect data (survey or interview) from CTE hospitality graduates, CTE hospitality instructors, and foodservice managers. Surveying workers before they quit or have intentions to quit may be

one way to pinpoint reasons for leaving. By collecting data from graduates (currently working or have worked in the foodservice industry), instructors (those who educate and train new foodservice workers), and managers (those who work with entry-level employees) not only creates a study with three different viewpoints from which to analyze factors that contribute to turnover and attrition, but also offers participants the opportunity to divulge, in their own words, the factors that they perceive are reasons why workers leave the foodservice industry.

Two years ago, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021) found that general worker job abandonment was at 57% and according to Bradshaw (2023b) 75% of employee exits could be prevented. Employees discussed not being challenged, feeling bored, and even cited feeling underappreciated as reasons for leaving a company (Fabrizio, 2022). These issues may appear simplistic, yet the statistics tell the story of unhappy employees in the workforce with a call for higher quality of leadership, acute on-boarding programs, and enriched management interactions with employees (Collins, 2022). Pinpointing why people leave jobs is critical to a business' success. Having management that is dialed in to employees' needs could affect those employees who are considering leaving or voluntarily leaving the workplace. These voluntary leaves are unwanted exits that could be prevented. Managers who recognize employees that are considering quitting, who are empathetic to employees' struggles, who inspire and recognize employees' achievements, and who coach and inspire are those managers that are creating a workspace where employees want to remain (Pendell, 2023). Losing high performing employees to unwanted turnover and attrition affects other employees, brand value, and the ability to deliver high quality goods and services (McFeely & Wigart, 2023; Patrick & Sundaram, 2023).

In the article "Managing Employee Life Cycles to Improve Labor Retention", Smither (2003) refers to employees as capital and considers this practice as a resource management

method that is closely related to product management in many industries. Referring to employees as capital concludes that investments must be made in workers in order to reap the reward of employee retention. The underlying issue with the employee life cycle is that while it is a natural process in the working world, companies that invest in their employees have a better grasp of what employees need throughout the employee life cycle phases and can lower hiring costs by making concerted efforts to effectively address workplace issues and concerns in order to retain efficient and talented workers (Kesavan & Dhivya, 2022). Efforts to support employees in the workplace that promote retention and worker sustainability can deter the unstable and unpredictable outflow and attrition of workers. Quitting a job is not an unusual circumstance, but employers must learn to listen to employees and try to control the effects that lead to attrition (Singh & Singh, 2019).

A global study on "The Great Attrition" investigated by De Smet et al. (2022) found that the top reasons for general worker attrition were compensation and career development with advancement. In addition, respondents from India were sixty-six percent "somewhat likely" to "almost certainly" going to leave their jobs within three to six months, those from Singapore tallied forty-nine percent, Australians at forty-one percent, and Americans were not far behind with forty percent. The study by De Smet et al. (2022) further shows that attrition is not only a United States problem, but a global issue that requires solutions. Retention strategies seem appropriate and could be put in place to find employees with personalities and work characteristics that match the company's outlook, which could deter workers from exiting jobs. In agreement with De Smet et al. (2022) about attrition being a global issue, combating turnover and attrition could have a very practical answer. A study conducted by Bilginsoy (2018) indicated that apprenticeships are one way to retain workers. While apprenticeships are usually

correlated with the trade industries, perhaps offering more internships, externships, and apprenticeship programs in all industries would result in lower general workers quit rates.

Hospitality and Foodservice Turnover and Attrition

As of July 2023, the hospitality industry, specifically accommodations and foodservices, had the highest employee separation rates at 5.2 percent (U.S. BLS, 2023). While this may seem like a big strike against the hospitality industry, the 2023 statistics show employee separations are on the decline compared to July 2022 at 6.4 percent. Fantozzi (2022) states that the level of vacancies in the foodservice industry are creating a "chasm between restaurants needing workers and employees leaving the industry, the rate of foodservice job openings has grown significantly from 5.8% to 8.4% over the past year" (para. 2). While quitting jobs is part of an employee cycle and not just a hospitality and foodservice issue, there is no doubt that job openings in the food industry top the charts and catch the attention of other industries. By learning more about the reasons why workers quit jobs, organizations can structure the hiring and mentoring processes to better assure employee productivity, engagement, and job satisfaction (Verlinden, 2023).

Recent studies have investigated turnover and attrition in the hospitality industry. One study by Khilnani and Nair (2022) explored realities of low skill requirements for entry-level positions in the hospitality industry. Wages reflect the low skill requirements of the industry and indicate that hospitality workers are easily dispensable (Khilnani & Nair, 2022). Low wages and being easily replaceable can heighten workers' feelings of imbalance and dissatisfaction (Khilnani & Nair, 2022). The imbalance of the work-life structure due to abnormal hours and workplace stress can create the perfect recipe for turnover. When looking for causes other than work-life imbalances, Khilnani and Nair (2022) found that from the employees' perspectives, long hours, ever-changing shifts, interpersonal tensions, low morale, work overload, and low pay

contribute to turnover in the hospitality industry. This study also found that the work-life balance of women working in hospitality is especially difficult because of the lack of time needed to raise families and simultaneously meet the expectations of the industry (Khilnani & Nair, 2022). Implications of this study showed an increased need for management to look at the industry through the eyes of the employees and offer more flexibility. Managerial insight, employee-management relations, and raising salary levels could be the keys to retaining service employees (Khilnani & Nair, 2022).

Another study investigating hospitality turnover and attrition by Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang (2022) discussed the difficulties in attracting new recruits to the industry. The Covid-19 crisis disrupted routine operations and changed the face of the hospitality industry for approximately two years starting in 2020. The "new normal" that resulted from this period left workers feeling unsure and anxious about their place in the industry (Liu-Lastres et al., 2022). Hospitality workers were sent home in droves as weeks and months of uncertain job security followed. Many of these displaced workers eventually found more stable employment in agriculture, retail, and schools and as a result, found better scheduling for a more positive work-life balance (Liu-Lastres et al., 2022). Recent reports showed roughly 38% of those hospitality workers that were laid off during the pandemic did not wish to return to the industry (Joblist, 2021). Fifty-eight percent of surveyed hospitality workers stated they would prefer to work in a different setting, 37% said that pay was too low, 20% mentioned the lack of benefits for their disinterest in returning to the industry, and 16% said that there was not enough schedule flexibility in the hospitality industry (Joblist, 2021). The study by Liu-Lastres et al. (2022) aligns with the Khilnani and Nair (2022) research; flexibility, management insight, and higher wages are needed to entice workers back into the hospitality industry.

The foodservice industry, a sector within the hospitality pathway, has also been tormented with worker turnover and attrition. Studies on turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry indicate many reasons why workers quit. Because this study seeks to identify and explore factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry, previous studies on the subject matter are an important place to begin when discovering and exploring the reasons (factors) that employees in the industry are leaving their jobs. Establishing factors for turnover and attrition can lead to solutions to the problem (Tews et al., 2020).

Studies conducted from 1991 to 2020 feature many common factors that influence turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. In 1991, Cantrell and Sarabakhsh investigated reasons why the foodservice turnover rate was at 250 percent. Using surveys in 10 random restaurants, the researchers gathered participant ratings of eight turnover factors. These factors were hours, pay, work done by others, quality of supervision, training, employee attitudes, management practices, and chance of promotion. There were 150 total participants in this study that ranked pay as the most important reason for leaving restaurant jobs (Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991). Hours and work schedule ranked as the second most important reason for quitting, and supervisors were the third highest ranked reason for workers quitting their foodservice jobs (Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991).

A study done by Huang (2006) in Taiwan used a questionnaire to poll 240 culinary arts workers to explore the relationship (ANOVA) between the locus of control, demographics, job satisfaction, stress, and turnover. The results of the study indicated that workers with strong internal locus of control were significantly negatively correlated with work stress and turnover and were positively correlated with job satisfaction (Huang, 2006). Those workers with strong external locus of control were significantly positively correlated with work stress and turnover,

and significantly negatively correlated with job satisfaction (Huang, 2006). This study is important because it shows external factors in the workplace cause stress on workers and can lead to low levels of job satisfaction and higher turnover rates.

Mohsin and Lengler (2015) performed a study in New Zealand exploring antecedents (factors) that cause fast-food service turnover. A questionnaire was used to survey 104 fast-food restaurant workers about job satisfaction, training, recognition, job security and loyalty, personal development and lifestyle of the job, job perception, and leaving intentions. The results of this study indicated that job security and loyalty had a significant relationship with satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the job and that job satisfaction had a significant relationship with turnover (Mohsin & Lengler, 2015).

A study conducted by DiPietro, Moreo, and Cain (2020) researched perceptions of employees and managers about changes in operational procedures to investigate if these changes played a role in on-the-job well-being, commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover rates. Two-hundred and seventy participants in the Midwest U.S. completed the survey. The following results of this mixed methods study highlighted a few themes that emerged from participant responses. The work environment emerged as the first main theme, and a positive relationship was identified regarding a sub-theme, management. Respondents used words like friendly, family, passion, and team as they related to the work environment and management combined. There was also a negative relationship with management that identified unprofessional behavior, degradation of employees, general organizational disarray, drama, and fighting among managers. Teamwork was another sub-theme under the environment theme that had a positive correlation with job satisfaction and a negative correlation with turnover. There was a negative relationship surrounding teamwork discussed as injustice, inequality, and accountability. These factors had a

negative impact on job satisfaction and turnover. The second main theme that emerged from the study was responsibilities, with a sub-theme of pay versus work. Manager participants felt that their own wages were competitive, which had a positive relationship with appreciation and opportunities in the industry. Employees' sentiments surrounding pay versus work were largely negative and focused on the pay not matching work expectations. These results indicate that workers are very attuned to the workplace environment, the roles and responsibilities of workers within the workplace, and that there are absolute factors that cause turnover (DiPietro et al., 2020). Ample suggestions for revisions in the service industries have been noted based on previous research and have had little impact on turnover, however, over time, the factors contributing to turnover and attrition in the hospitality and foodservice industries have remained constant (Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991; Huang, 2006; Mohsin & Lengler, 2015; DiPietro et al., 2020).

Looking at the past three decades for patterns in the reasons that contribute to turnover and attrition in the hospitality and foodservice industries, we can see that multiple factors recur. Regardless of the changes recommended by past research, there is still a deficit of hospitality and foodservice workers today for copious reasons. Inflexible work hours, inadequate staffing, unclear job descriptions, lack of job recognition, poor management practices, low wages, negative work environments, lack of promotions, employee relations, and communication issues afflict the hospitality and foodservice industries (Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991; Huang, 2006; Mohsin & Lengler, 2015; DiPietro et al., 2020). Understanding turnover and attrition and the reason for these vacancies is often a puzzling task and can cost companies not only money but also workplace morale. According to previous studies, workers' perceptions, management practices, and workplace environment play large roles in job satisfaction and worker retention

(Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991; Huang, 2006; Mohsin & Lengler, 2015; DiPietro et al., 2020). A deeper dive into the contributing factors is necessary so that we can unravel the mystery of turnover and attrition in the hospitality and foodservice industries.

Influential Career Theories

John Dewey and Charles Prosser tackled Career and Technical Education as theorists of constructivism. John Dewey (1916, 1938/1963) believed that stimulation of the child's will and having them learn a skill was an important part of education. As students grew older, their interests were considered. If students were not interested in a subject matter, then meaning and learning would not occur. Dewey also believed that teachers were a big part of student engagement because the teachers that were specifically skill trained showed students a better version of the subject versus a teacher that was not skills focused (1916). Lastly, Dewey believed that various types of learners are present in the classroom and all learners need their education to be real and relevant (1938/1963).

Charles Prosser's ideas overlapped Dewey's beliefs about education. Prosser thought that students needed learning in real life situations, education needed to be cost effective, flexible, repetitious, relevant, and offered in different mediums for the various types of learners (Flinders & Thornton, 2017). These theorists were pragmatists that felt a person must experience the reality of the world. Both men were champions for vocational education, and both knew that workers were needed everywhere around the globe to help economies thrive.

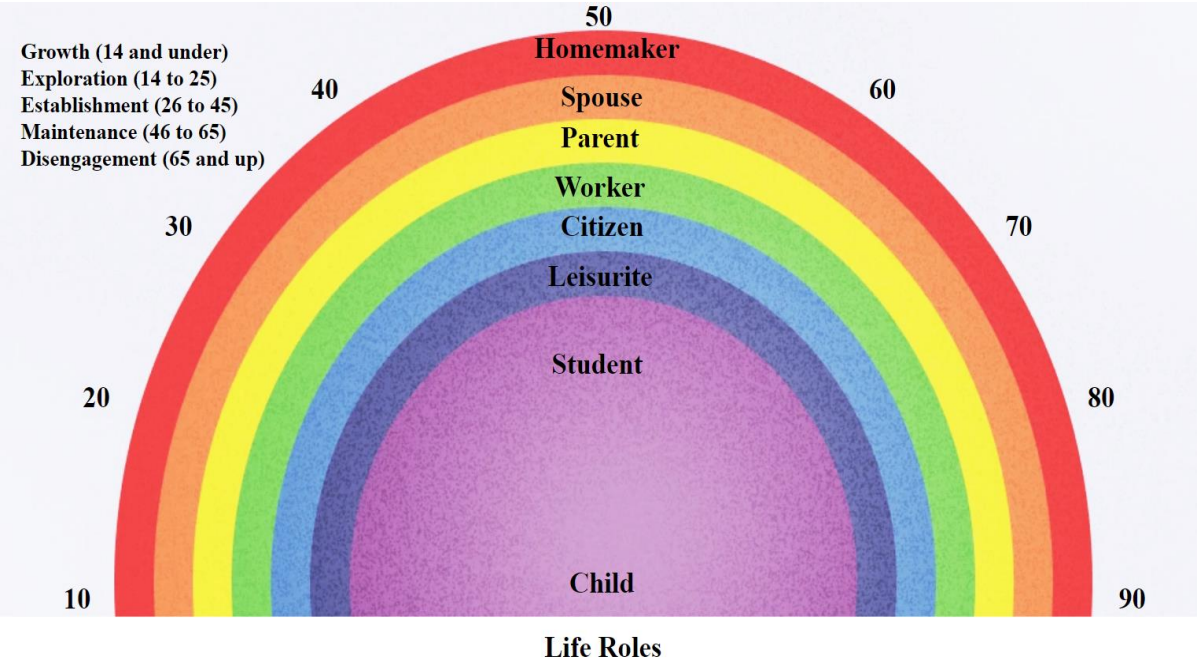
While constructivism is the umbrella by which vocational education was founded, there are four other theoretical lenses by which the issues of careers and workplace longevity will be explored in this study. Those theories are Super's self-concept theory, Holland's theory of occupational personality types, Krumbolz's theory of happenstance, and Savickas' career construction theory.

Super's Lifespan Theory

In the early 1950s, Donald Super created a self-concept theory that stated age groups play a huge role in career circumstances and from age, workers get their perceptions of the world. This theory is a macro-perspective of living, and these age groups correspond with larger life events (Woerner, 2022). There are five life stages in Super's theory and eight life spaces. The life stages are growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. The life spaces are child, student, leisurite, citizen, worker, parent, spouse, and homemaker (Dumsch, 2016). Breaking down each age phase and life space better explains a person's position within the time frame where larger events tend to define occupational actions. Super (1980) argues that workers go through these stages regardless of career path until a person eventually removes themselves from the workforce (retirement attrition). The framework for Super's lifespan and life stages can be found in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Super's Life Span Theory



Note: Figure adapted from Super (1980)

Although Super's theory defines life stages and spaces, his supposition does not particularly describe why workers are fluid in occupational choices and why people move from one career path to another. The search for factors that influence workers leaving the foodservice industry is the focus of this research dissertation; for this reason, Super's theory, while important to note life phases, is not extremely helpful in understanding the influx of jobs and career moves in the foodservice industry. Super's theory, for all intents and purposes, states that humans move through stages, and career changes are a part of occupational development and does not provide answers to why some people gain career longevity while others vacate career paths for which they are trained to encounter entirely new occupations. Savickas (2005) regarding Super's theory states:

> Super formulated his theory by focusing, in turn, on circumscribed segments of vocational behavior, which resulted in a "segmental theory" that is actually a loosely unified set of theories, each dealing with specific aspects of vocational development. Super (1969) hoped to someday integrate the segments into one comprehensive theory. (p. 42)

Career theories are as variable as the types of jobs found in the workplace. Not one single career theory defines the exact behaviors of workers, and singular career theories fail to piece together the entire puzzle of human decision making (behaviorism), career personality, personal narratives, situational circumstances, and the dynamics of specific occupations (Brown & Lent, 2004). We can see this by investigating career theories and comparing them to one another, then grab the pieces that fit the situation. By looking deeper into career theories and trying to connect the many pieces of the vocational and occupational decisions and experiences puzzle, the subsequent three theories allow for more connectivity of ideas that are central to not only the age

span and time phases of careers but also personality characteristics of a worker, physical and environmental factors, significant workplace events, personal narratives surrounding work confidence, and actualization of career development. Considering and exploring Holland's Theory of Career Choice, Krumbolz's Theory of Happenstance and Savickas' Career Construction Theory might afford better insight into worker attrition and help to assemble a more vivid picture of workers' practices in the foodservice industry.

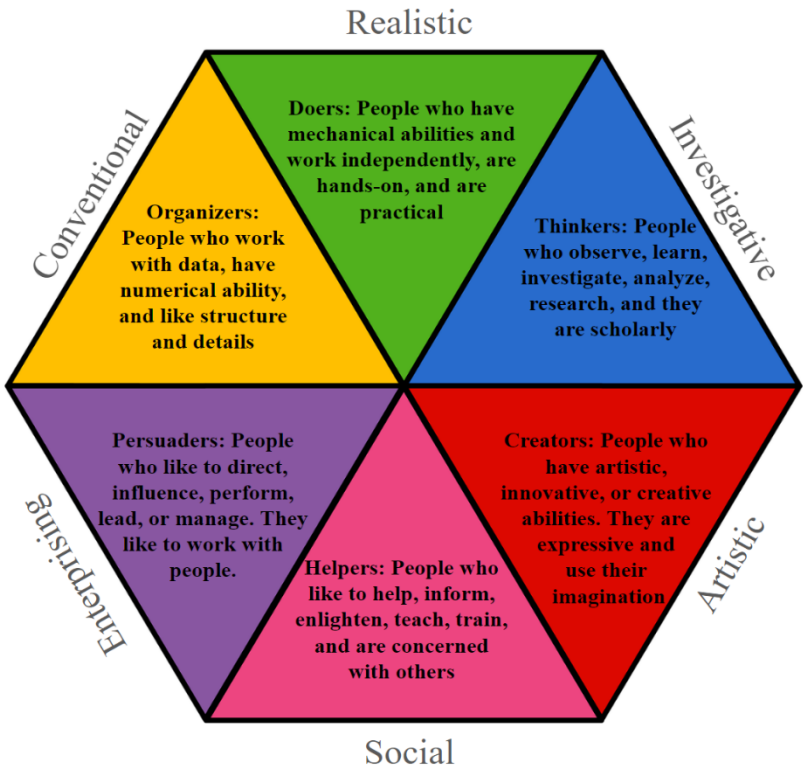
Holland's Theory of Career Choice

Another supporting career theory to foodservice attrition is that of John Holland who constructed ideas based on career personality types. This theory is especially interesting when investigating the workforce because the central point of the theory is that personality plays a large role in what people choose for lifelong careers (Hansen, 2020). Holland thought that people were born with specific characteristics that propelled them toward career fields in which they would succeed (Hogan & Blake, 1999). These six personality types are realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, or conventional (Hansen, 2020). A visualization of Holland's hexagon is found in Figure 2. A worker's longevity in a career depends on their personality and when employees do not reach longevity or job satisfaction, they are clearly not in the correct occupation. The aptitude of an individual would place them in a part of the Holland career hexagon, indicating the personality type needed in certain career fields. Users of the Holland hexagon could possibly fit into more than one career personality, creating a career inventory. This inventory would be analyzed in addition to a personality assessment then used in tandem to match individuals with a particular environment that best suits their characteristics and interests (Francis, 2020).

A study by Hogan and Blake (1999) analyzed adjectives that describe personalities and interests. The study showed that personality had a steady relationship with the ability to get along with co-workers and to get ahead in work environments (success). Personality fit within the work environment played a role in occupational performance, but this analysis also found that workers had a greater chance of success if expectations in the work environment were set by others who shared the same values (Hogan & Blake, 1999). Another study by Ng et al. (2005) investigated predictors of occupational success and found that personality traits did influence achievement and prosperity. Lastly, a project done by Kundi et al. (2022) investigated the interactions of two personality traits, independence and perfectionism, to identify if these traits influenced career success. The findings showed positive results between the two personality traits and career commitment and satisfaction showing that personality can be an influence in the workplace. Holland's theory is intriguing to the hospitality and foodservice industries because career personality characteristics play a large role in which occupations people choose, yet it fails to highlight why workers divert from their original choice of profession. Holland's theory of career choice together with Super's life span theory still do not fully expose the theoretical spectrum of worker attrition, they are merely two converging lenses into the perplexity of the issue. There needs to be the realization that not one perfect theory exists for employee attrition. It may be plausible that multiple theories unite or intersect to offer foundational support that directs the inquiry of reasons for worker attrition.

Figure 2

John Holland's Theory of Career Choice



Note: Figure adapted from Francis (2020)

Krumbolz's Theory of Happenstance

An additional career theory worth considering as a piece of the framework for foodservice attrition is Krumboltz's learning theory. "Planned happenstance is a conceptual framework extending career counseling to include the creating and transforming of unplanned events into opportunities for learning" (Mitchell et al., 1999). Krumboltz's theory takes into account the ideas of Albert Bandura's social learning theory (learning by observing others), plus the inner workings of career counseling and happenstance to suggest how and why people choose specific careers. The counseling piece is a portion of Kumboltz's Theory that stands out due to the career development and the active role that individuals take in career choices. Career counseling or career development is a way to provide workers or those deciding to become workers the opportunity to discuss career options, career development, and career sustainability.

The Krumboltz Learning Theory also utilizes the idea of happenstance, which is brought about by the universe, luck, and fate to direct workers toward a career path (Krumboltz & Levin, 2010). It must be noted that happenstance is not just an event that happens to an individual, but it also incorporates the actions that an individual takes during and after an unplanned event occurs.

Happenstance is a social learning theory where behaviors, environment, and chance form a triad of circumstances which an individual must navigate while dealing with the unknown forces of the universe (Marshall & Bennett, 2020). There are five skills that facilitate happenstance as it pertains to career decision making. These skills are engaging curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism, and risk-taking (Krumboltz et al., 2013). Happenstance paired with career counseling can encompass a broad picture of an individual's work choices paired with events that force career decisions (Mitchell et al., 1999).

Rojewski (1999) defines happenstance, also known as chance, as "unplanned, accidental, or otherwise situational, unpredictable, or unintentional events or encounters that have an impact on career development and behavior" (p. 269). The word chance itself can imply something that individuals cannot control, yet applying happenstance to career choices could be a solid reason why workers leave one career path for another. New opportunities occur, which require action, which in turn causes a reaction elsewhere regarding professional matters. Considering specific situations such as economic events, personal issues, and other work-related obstacles may require individuals to make decisions that will affect their future and could correlate with worker attrition, yet the effects of chance do not push all workers to leave a career for which they were trained in lieu of another industry. There must be reasons for attrition that lie specifically within the foodservice occupation when coupled with happenstance that allow for expeditious shifts in occupations.

The utility of skills and necessity of job function are considerations when happenstance is applied to a career move. Workers have personality and vocational characteristics and skills that apply to their occupation of choice. How do skills and job functions transfer to unrelated jobs? Working in most careers requires basic functions and perhaps these skills transcend industries making it easier for employees to use happenstance and previous training to move to different occupational sectors. Happenstance is a theory based on chaotic events. Judith Scott and Josie Hatalla (1990) discuss "the thought of including chance factors such as unexpected personal events into the theory and practice of career counseling are disconcerting because it is, by its very definition, unpredictable and untidy" (p. 28). The characteristics of situational untidiness and chaos could explain the who, why, and when of foodservice attrition. Consequently, happenstance, personality, incorrect career fitness of choice, timing, physical and environmental factors, compensation, and age all play a role in the reasons for worker attrition.

Albert Cabral and Paul Salomone (1990), as quoted in a study about the role of chance events in school-to-work transitions by Hirschi (2010) suggest that "personal factors such as locus of control beliefs or clarity of self-concept affect the likelihood of experiencing and being able to capitalize on chance events" (p. 40). At the heart of Cabral and Salomone's (1990) research are two dimensions that explain why one person, when confronted with situations of happenstance, chooses one path, while another chooses to remain unchanged in their position. The first dimension, locus of control personality, is described as heavily controlled by external forces. These external forces include peer and familial influences, economic pressures, and labor markets. Individuals that move in the occupational orbit as a locus of control type tend to blame circumstances and forces beyond their control for their decision making. The second dimension, self-concept personality, tends to be more fortuitous when faced with happenstance. These

individuals offer insight into the event as a learning experience and use it as empowerment to move onward and upward (Cabral & Salomone, 1990). Kim et al. (2018) conducted a study similar to Cabral and Salomone's research that showed individuals that perceived high level career barriers proceeded with happenstance and created higher job satisfaction. Happenstance skills prove to be an important factor when paired with personality factors and could justify tailored career counseling for those workers looking to create lasting futures (Kim et al., 2018). It appears that happenstance and personality type intertwine and steer workers toward various culminating circumstances leading up to and after a chance event, but somehow these two factors do not fully explain why foodservice attrition is so prominent.

Along with actual events that require an individual to make a change in career choice or career path, self-narratives must also be explored and be part of the attrition puzzle. Those workers that are optimistic have self-narratives or self-actualizations that are positive in nature and view happenstance events as a steppingstone to a better circumstance, while workers that are pessimistic hear internal negative voices, which guide them to make rash decisions (Rhee et al., 2016; Tews et al., 2020). Blaming the universe for such instances is not uncommon and these types of employees change jobs within an industry, but often lack the confidence to jump ship and change occupations completely.

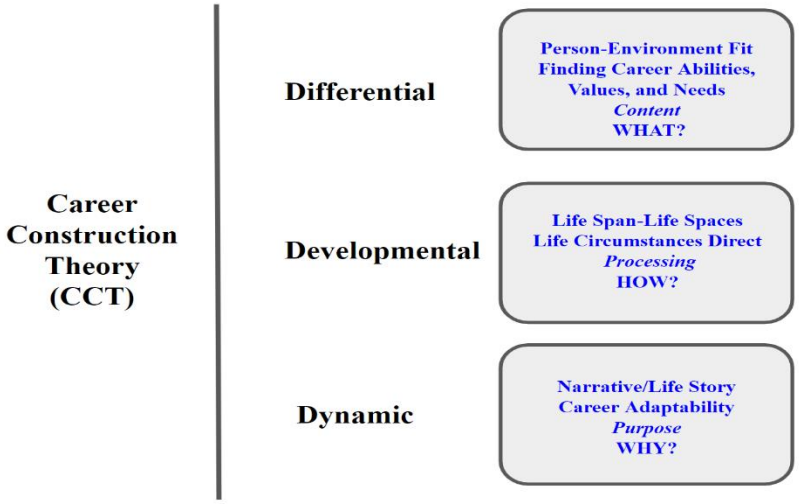
Savickas' Career Construction Theory

The final career development theory worth noting is that of Mark Savickas, a professor at Kent State University and an expert on guidance and counseling with over forty-five years in the discipline. Dr. Savickas brings Career Construction Theory (CCT) to the discussion table and expresses ideas surrounding work experiences and personal narratives that help develop career journeys. Career Construction Theory describes how occupational choice and work adjustment

affect career behavior (Del Corso & Rehfuss, 2011). Savickas' theory constructs supporting ideas around the Career Tech (CT) process in three phases. First, students' vocational personalities are revealed. This differential phase is done by finding career abilities, needs, and values of the individual. Personal interests and strengths are considered during this initial phase (Savickas, 2005). In the second developmental phase, life circumstances play a role in career choices. Life experiences give purpose and meaning in work situations and the way workers construct self-narratives on these experiences plays a role in the career outcome (Savickas, 2005). The last phase, classified as the dynamic phase, career adaptability allows workers to manage challenges, put problem-solving skills to use on the job, and learn how to cope with change, which eventually leads workers through life's challenges (Savickas, 2005). See Figure 3 which depicts a diagram of Savickas career construction theory framework.

Figure 3

Career Construction Theory Framework



Note: Figure adapted from Gerryts (2014)

Savickas' theory holds up well when investigating why workers stay or leave their careers as Savickas leans heavily on Donald Super and John Holland's theories to incorporate personal narrative, counseling, and guidance as the final pieces to the occupational behavior

conundrum (Savickas, 2001). The worker and career relationship has always been hard to define, explore, and navigate, yet Career Construction Theory tries to answer why workers behave the way they do. Savickas (2013) states that "career construction theory emphasizes the interpretive and interpersonal processes through which individuals impose meaning and direction on their vocational behavior" (p. 147). "Career Construction Theory incorporates . . . what, why and how of vocational behavior . . . under the rubrics of vocational personality types, career adaptability, and life themes" (Savickas, 2005, p. 43). Savickas uses personal constructivism and social constructionism to explain that we construct representations of reality but do not construct reality itself. The theory suggests that workers do not create careers; careers unfold as workers move in and out of the experiences and make decisions based on individual roles and personal goals within the career field (Savickas, 2005).

An editorial done by Rudolph et al. (2019) laid out empirical developments in career construction theory by looking at the least approached layers of influence, such as job tasks and characteristics, team environments, length of time, and socioeconomic factors and their influence on adaptability. One study in the editorial by Fasbender, Wöhrman, Wang, and Klehe (2018) focused on using the age of the worker combined with career planning. Fasbender et al. (2018) found that time in the occupational perspective had a positive effect on career adaptability and personal growth, but a negative effect on physical aspects of late career planning. Another study highlighted in the editorial administered by Santilli, Nota, and Hartung (2018) compared two groups of adolescents. One group received well-structured CCT intervention, while the control group only received a few occupational materials and a questionnaire that inquired about career interests. The group which received the intervention made greater gains in career adaptability (Santilli et al., 2018). One last study discussed in the editorial brief performed by Wehrle, Kira,

and Klehe (2018) looked at the effects of career counseling on refugees living in Germany. The refugees posed an unusual group due to being uprooted and placed in a country that was unfamiliar (Wehrle et al., 2018). The refugees were quick to adapt and use career counseling resources to make social and occupational connections. The refugees also employed goal setting skills, optimism, and career exploration, further verifying that CCT strategies are useful in many contexts (Wehrle et al., 2018).

By using Savickas' Career Construction Theory, concepts of abilities, values, interest, strengths, and experiences combined with Super's Lifespan Theory, Holland's personality hexagon, and Krumbolz's happenstance, a full framework emerges by which reasons of worker attrition can be explored and explained. Career Construction Theory could be the avenue by which attrition is deterred. Future research using CCT, and the three-career development approach might be considered when striving to generate self-discovery, skills and career awareness, and personal narratives as occupational guidance in students as early as the middle school years so that attrition dissipates in the foodservice industry. Table 1 provides an example of the three career development approaches. Simply put, career guidance and counseling might be the key to career longevity not only in hospitality, but across many CTE pathways.

Table 1

Three Career Development Approaches

Career Intervention	Vocational Guidance	Career Education	Career Counseling
Questions	What is it like? Congruence	How does it develop? Readiness	What does it mean? Reflexivity
Goal	Fit	Adaption Developmental Stages	Narrative Life Design Construction Reconstruction
Focus	Trats	Tasks	Themes

Career Intervention	Vocational Guidance	Career Education	Career Counseling
Person's Task	Self-Matching	Self-Managing	Self-Making
Person's Role	Actor	Agent	Author
Theorist	John Holland	Donald Super	Mark Savickas

Note: Table adapted from Savickas & Welds (2015)

Hospitality Industry Defined

The United States Department of Education (USDE) officially identifies sixteen career clusters which include agriculture, food, and natural resources; architecture and construction; arts, audio-visual, and communications; business, management, and administration; education and training; finance; government and public administration; health science; hospitality and tourism; human services; information technology; law, public safety, corrections, and security; manufacturing; marketing, sales and service; science, technology, engineering, and math; and lastly, transportation, distribution, and logistics (Career Pathways-U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). These sixteen career clusters offer trade-specific career paths that afford students many different options when deciding future educational and work goals. For instance, therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development all lie under the health services career cluster (Health Science-Advance CTE, n.d.). The hospitality and tourism career cluster includes lodging, travel and management services, restaurants, food, and beverage services, recreation, amusement, and attractions services. The food, beverage, and restaurant services can be broken down even further to include baking, pastry arts, and culinary arts (Hospitality & Tourism-Advance CTE, 2023).

Hospitality can be defined as the services that customers seek away from home and are seen as acts of friendliness and kindness that give customers a feeling of being welcomed

(Hemmington, 2007; Morrison & Lashley, 2002). The hospitality career pathway includes hotels and lodging, bars and restaurants, places where food, drink, entertainment, and events are provided for recreation or business (National Restaurant Association [NRA], 2018). Hospitality may include social or private experiences and can encompass leisure or work events (Slattery, 2002). When thinking of hospitality, people often think of opening doors to guests and inviting visitors in for a meal or an overnight stay. The enjoyment of these encounters is usually felt by the guests with the host bearing the burden of offering heartwarming comfort with an overall feeling of being taken care of within a large range of accommodations and premises (Brotherton, 2002). Oftentimes, there is a symbiotic relationship between the host and the guests in a hospitable environment and even though this relationship appears to be an orchestrated ballet of skills, hospitality in general terms is as complex as humans are individually distinct. The needs of guests differ based on initial reasons for seeking hospitality and the time and money spent on activities away from home, whether in a social setting or in a private home.

Within the overarching industry of hospitality and tourism, culinary is one aspect of hospitality dealing with the service of food and beverages. Culinary is the art form of preparing food for enjoyment and refreshment purposes (Zuberbuehler, 2024). “The foodservice industry spans an entire spectrum of eating experiences, from mom-and-pop joints on the corner to swanky five-star restaurants and further on to the extremes of molecular gastronomic adventures in science, art, and fantasy” (Mack, 2012, p. 3). Culinary arts can be a mixture of refined French techniques with kitchen know-how, but the result is something that is appealing not only to the eye but also to the tongue.

There are many foodservice establishments worldwide ranging from quick service to fine dining. These establishments include quick-service (fast-food) restaurants, quick-casual

restaurants, family style dining full-service restaurants, casual dining full-service restaurants, and fine dining full-service restaurants (NRA, 2018). Quick-service restaurants are establishments where guests order at a counter or window, payment is made prior to eating, the menu is designed for speed, and guests can eat in the restaurant or take the food to go (NRA, 2018). Examples of quick-service restaurants are McDonald's, Burger King, and Subway. Quick-casual restaurants are establishments where guests order items at a counter or window, patrons pay before eating, the menu reflects freshly prepared, higher quality ingredients, and diners receive food quickly to either eat at the restaurant or take the food as carryout (NRA, 2018). Examples of quick-casual restaurants include Panera Bread, Jimmy John's, and Chipotle. Family dining restaurants are establishments where service is provided at the table, the orders are taken while the guests are seated, menu emphasis is on families, and guests pay after they eat (NRA, 2018). Examples of family dining restaurants are Denny's and Cracker Barrel. Casual dining restaurants are establishments where service is provided at the table, the orders are taken while the guests are seated, the menu items are cooked to order and have popularity and flare, and guests pay after they eat (NRA, 2018). Examples of casual dining include Texas Roadhouse and the Cheesecake Factory. Fine dining restaurants are establishments where service is provided at the table, the orders are taken while the guests are seated, the menu provides intricate items, linens and plates are of high quality, and guests pay after eating (NRA, 2018). A few examples of fine dining restaurants are Morton's Steakhouse, Ruth's Chris Steak House, and Flemmings. Monetary means typically define these levels of service and require employees with appropriate skills to create the menu choices found in each place of business. Quick-service and quick-casual dining options often offer menu items ranging from $3 to $10, family dining and casual dining

restaurants offer menu items ranging $10 to $25, and fine dining establishments offer menu options are typically higher than $25 (NRA, 2018).

Most quick-service restaurants do not require food servers, but the waiters and waitresses in all the types of establishments are considered foodservice workers. In the foodservice industry, the job positions are divided into two categories, front-of-the-house and back-of-the-house staff (NRA, 2018). In a typical restaurant, front-of-the-house staff are seen by the guests while back-of-the house employees remain out of the view of patrons. Front-of-the-house staff include hosts, bussers, bartenders, servers, and managers (NRA, 2018). Hosts and hostesses have very specific job duties. These workers greet and seat customers, answer the phones, organize carryout orders, manage the number of tables that servers receive during a shift, and operate and control the cash register (NRA, 2018). Bussers, also known as dining room attendants, are responsible for clearing tables, assisting the servers, and removing dirty dishes from the front-of-the-house (NRA, 2018). Bartenders must be 21 years or older and serve alcoholic beverages are often responsible for waiting on customers that prefer to sit at the bar and it is customary for this type of service to be more casual in nature (NRA, 2018). Servers, also known as waiters and waitresses, are responsible for taking orders from the customers, serving drinks and meals to their tables, presenting checks, and managing the overall service for customers during their visit to the establishment (NRA, 2018). Front-of-the-house managers range from shift supervisors to general managers and have many responsibilities. The managers organize shift schedules to ensure proper staffing during various peak dining times, they work closely with the banquet coordinator to make sure rooms and spaces are available with ample staff for service for the parties, they watch and calculate employee hours, they interview and hire new staff, and ensure that safety and on-boarding procedures are initiated. Another aspect of the managers' job duties

is to ensure customers are satisfied. Managers often take care of disgruntled customers and employee issues in the workplace (NRA, 2018).

Back-of-the-house employees include executive chefs, sous chefs, pastry chefs, station chefs (line cooks), prep cooks, food expediters, and dishwashers (NRA, 2018). Executive chefs are responsible for all kitchen operations and back-of-the-house employees. Sous chefs are known as the second in command in the kitchen and are responsible for scheduling personnel, helping the station chefs prepare orders during busy times, and reviewing dishes before service (NRA, 2018). Pastry chefs are responsible for producing the baked goods and desserts. These chefs may work in a separate part of the kitchen (NRA, 2018). Station chefs, also known as line cooks, are responsible for working in the kitchen at various food preparation stations that are assigned specific tasks based on cooking method or equipment so that food orders are made as efficiently as possible (NRA, 2018). Prep cooks are often responsible for organizing food items prior to service times. These employees stock workstations with items according to preparation sheets and help replenish ingredients during busy service hours (NRA, 2018). Food expediters are also known as food runners and help service staff transfer food orders from the kitchen to the customers (NRA, 2018). These employees "run" food, hence the name food runner. Dishwashers are an integral part of any kitchen. These employees are responsible for washing all the dishes in the establishment and are tasked with making sure flatware, dinnerware, and stemware are clean, sanitized and restocked for reuse (NRA, 2018). Each member of the front-of-the-house and back-of-the-house plays an important role so that customers receive the best experience possible while dining out. "Employees, especially in the restaurant and foodservice industry, must be team players, doing their share of the workload. Employees must be willing to do more than their share of work for a team . . . to get the job done" (NRA, 2018, p. 29). For all intents and

purposes, when foodservice employees are referred to in this research, it will be the all-encompassing group of individuals that work in either the dining areas or the kitchens in any type of restaurant.

Employment Rates and Job Statistics

A study done by the U.S. Department of Education shows students that remain in their CTE career path eight years after graduation earn more annually than their non-CTE counterparts and are more gainfully employed as well when compared to non-CTE graduates ("CTE Data Story," n.d.). This statistic alone promotes the justification for CTE programs but begs one to ponder with such positive career outcomes, why do CTE students walk away from their career training? Business owners and consumers must consider reasons why the hospitality industry struggles to maintain employee longevity and seek to discover ways to combat such high turnover and attrition rates. CTE hospitality instructors should assess programs so that issues found from this study can be addressed in the classroom. Students entering the workforce may not be given full disclosure of the jobs, skills, and demands found within the foodservice industry (Ross, 2005). Evaluating CTE hospitality programs and on-the-job opportunities in comparison to the actual tasks and demands in the workforce could save states and school districts per pupil costs while they are enrolled in a CTE program by deterring those that want to join solely because they think it might be a fun subject to learn. Evaluation and modification of CTE hospitality programs could better prepare students for a life in the industry and enlighten all stakeholders to the benefits and downfalls of careers in foodservice by initiating inquiry into problems associated with attrition and guiding students and workers toward a path that fits not only their needs but the needs of the industry.

As of July 2023, the hospitality industry employed over 16 million people in the United States and has been steadily on the rise since May 2023 (Industries at a Glance: Leisure and Hospitality: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S.BLS), 2022). Americans are getting back to work after the Covid-19 pandemic, and the hospitality industry is booming. On average, those employed in the hospitality industry are working a little more than 25 hours per week and making slightly more than 20 dollars per hour. During the first quarter of 2023 (January through March), there were approximately 950,000 dining establishments in the United States within the private sector of foodservice (U.S. BLS, 2022). The restaurant industry provides nearly 90% of the total jobs within the hospitality industry and contributes over 91 billion dollars in sales each year in the United States alone (Total Restaurant Industry Sales, n.d.). Not only do these numbers mean that the foodservice industry is big business and that there are plenty of restaurant choices for those seeking dining experiences, but it also means plentiful job opportunities for anyone interested in working in the industry. Because of the plethora of job opportunities, hospitality is a highly sought after career. Those that enter the profession typically do so with energy and enthusiasm because the types of jobs offered are countless and appeal to all types of people with varying skill sets.

With the ease of becoming employed in the industry there are downfalls; workers have many options and often change work sites frequently. Employee loyalty to one owner or corporation is one of the biggest challenges in the hospitality and foodservice industries that must be addressed (Camilleri, 2024). A study conducted in Vietnam among 315 hospitality workers showed a direct positive correlation between job satisfaction, job performance, and employee loyalty (Phuong & Tran, 2020). It is not enough to have workers in the service industry, job satisfaction and growth opportunity must be realized by employees for higher job

retention percentages. Considering the numerous jobs in the industry and the competitive wages earned by its employees, the issue of attrition becomes even more mysterious. Perhaps the problems are not with the type of work, but with the type of customers, workers and environment encountered while on the job.

Highly Skilled Workers

Competency in the industry can refer to technical skills and non-technical skills (Suhairom et al., 2019). In culinary arts and foodservice, generalized highly qualified skills are food safety, product knowledge, communication skills, skills of the specific trade such as proper knife handling and cooking techniques, and can even mean above average math proficiency (Hertzman, 2008; NRA, 2018). When dealing with customers, front-of-the-house employees need soft skills which are those non-technical skills that deal with interpersonal relationships, responsiveness, and attitudes (Suhairom et al., 2019). Kitchen workers and back-of-the-house staff rely on technical skills such as food preparation techniques and food product mastery, which entails enormous amounts of knowledge due to the availability of global food products that are on many menus incorporated as cultural fusion dishes. Depending on the position and level of worker in an establishment, highly skilled workers can incorporate many diverse skills. For the sake of the subject matter in this research, highly skilled will pertain to those working in the front or back-of-the-house in a restaurant or foodservice business and that "meet expectations to ensure that restaurant and foodservice operations are successful from day to day" (NRA, 2018, p. 44). Highly sought after skills include knowledge of the job tasks required to perform according to industry standards, communication and teamwork skills, personal responsibility and ethics, and problem-solving skills while on the job, appropriate work attire, and respect for workplace diversity (NRA, 2018). Job training for a career in the foodservice industry can be on-

the-job-training, an internship or apprenticeship, classroom work-based learning, and can also include a Career and Technical Education program in the hospitality career cluster. One resource that is useful for all restaurant and foodservice business employees is the ServSafe® Manager Certification. ServSafe® is a national curriculum for food safety and the State of Ohio requires that at least one employee be certified as a food protection manager through the ServSafe® program and designate a minimum of one Person in Charge (PIC) of the establishment.

The food industry does not require education or degrees to be employed in food preparation and service; nonetheless, those with more training and experience tend to earn higher wages and take on managerial roles (Johnston & Phelan, 2016). Taking into consideration that not all foodservice workers enter the profession through technical training programs, management positions being filled by employees acquired through years of service might perpetuate issues in the workplace that increase attrition due to the lack of technical and managerial knowledge (Q.S.R. Magazine, 2022). Culinary arts schooling often consists of an associate degree in food preparation and techniques for those wanting to jump start their career and earnings, but entering the industry with minimal expertise is common. Those culinarians that earn a bachelor's degree in culinary arts often move to the higher earning positions such as sous chef, pastry chef, and executive chef much faster than those without the technical training due to the extensive business and administrative skills that are embedded in post-secondary culinary arts education courses (Johnston & Phelan, 2016).

Schooling, Training, and Guidance

Issues of foodservice turnover and attrition might lie in the beginning phases of a culinarian's schooling. Career and Technical hospitality programs are not likely students' first encounter with food, cooking, or service, yet during the most formative years young chefs

become more aware of culinary arts as a hobby or as a profession. Frequently, humans use strengths and weaknesses to propel themselves forward into careers. Holland's hexagon (1959) combined with Super's life stage theory (1980) fully accepts that young people are searching for a future that fits with their most dominant personality traits. This type of career selection, while logical, might not be plausible in the long-term. Students encounter many subjects and talents and base career decisions on these experiences during a phase in life when the brain is not fully developed. Here lies an opportunity to facilitate young students in career planning and offer coursework that strives for career readiness, closes the skills gap, and nurtures occupational counseling to help ensure students are making decisions that will benefit their future.

Countless studies have been conducted on societal perception of CTE courses (Blackwell, 2023; Gammill, 2015; Jordan & Dechert, 2012). While public perception of CTE programs is generally negative, there is a slight shift because CTE programs are being looked at to provide highly skilled workers to a workforce that is struggling to fill open positions (Bennett, 2006; Yavuz et al., 2019). Students face many challenges surrounding their decision to enroll in a CTE program. They must decide which career path to take and often must figure out if trade school, 2 or 4-year college is the next step or would movement straight into the workforce be more profitable. Research by Kreisman et al. (2020) has shown that wages for students that complete CTE programs are higher, and students can begin working during high school, maintain their employment after graduation, and do not have to worry about the cost of post-secondary education.

CTE programs are essential for skilled workers, but technical skills are not enough anymore, students need college skills as well. Lower income students are twice as likely to be enrolled in CTE programs. Two thirds of the United States' high schools have Career and

Technical Education Programs. CTE graduates are three times more likely to delay college, leave college or pursue trade school (Packard et al., 2012). This means students need to be ready to work after graduation and require the skills to succeed in whichever career path they choose.

Workforce Readiness

Has CTE or the industry changed so much that there is a disconnect between the two entities? Technical education has changed dramatically over the past forty years. What was once called Vocational Education (VoEd) is now referred to as Career and Technical Education and there are more changes to technical education than just the name. VoEd had a pretty simple goal, to get students ready for immediate employment. CTE has gone a step further and added two requirements to prepare students for the workforce and help them transition to work, college, or both. These requirements include "a curriculum based on integrated academic and technical content and strong employability skills. And [CTE provides] work-based learning opportunities that enable students to connect what they are learning to real-life career scenarios and choices" ("Investing in America's Future," U. S. Department of Education, 2012). The National Assessment of Career and Technical Education (NACTE) discovered that VoEd was considered an alternative to regular academics; hence, students enrolled in VoEd were not college bound. Today, more and more students are enrolling in CTE programs with the hopes of gaining college credits, thus, putting the misnomer that CTE students are not a good fit for college to rest.

There are various ways in which information on CTE graduates can be examined. Tracking CTE graduates using their work and college choices after graduation is mandatory due to regulations set forth in the Carl D. Perkins Act 2006, which makes data on academic performance, skills attainment, and progress through secondary and post-secondary education readily available. There is reason to believe that aligning the Career and Technical Education

standards to the labor market could be very important, not only to industry and the job market, but also to the Career and Technical Education curriculum. We must ask the question: How well are we preparing CTE students to meet the labor market needs? This could be a reason that graduates leave the career path; therefore, discovery of collaborative data is pertinent to accessing implications surrounding the career inconsistencies in the hospitality field.

There are two ways to find data regarding CTE outcomes and the labor market: we can look at the traditional labor market data and projections or use real time data from online job postings. This can be national or localized data. The U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Employment Projections Program gives a nationwide ten-year projection of the job market. Specific occupations can be found through the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes in the Occupational Outlook Handbook BLS, 2021. This handbook provides information regarding educational training needs and median income for specific careers (Imperatore, 2014).

The National Research Center for Career and Technical Education (NRCCTE) and the National Association of State Directors of CTE Consortium (NASDCTEc) are organizations that work together to validate crosswalks or career clusters and facilitate connections between educational facilities and industry. There are a few websites that are particularly useful for discovering data on job markets, careers and occupational opportunities. Two such resources are ProjectionsCentral.com, which shows trends in the job market and puts the focus on relevant geographical locations, and the CareerOutlook in the U.S. website (ACTE, n.d.), which allows users to search for occupations by cluster, state or interest.

According to the ACTE (2018), laws and legislation regarding work training and goals include the “Educate America Act of 1994, School-to-work Opportunities Act of 1994,

Workforce Investment Act of 1998, No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006." ACTE (2018) asserts, "all of these laws focus on increasing and measuring skills needed in education, work and life" (p. 2). These laws help develop rigorous standards, certifications, accountability, and allow for more emphasis on graduating students with more skills for work readiness and college experiences.

Many assessments are used in educational facilities, including but are not limited to Career and Technical Education's Role in Workforce Readiness Credentials, 2018: ACT WorkKeys, SkillsUSA Workplace Readiness Certificate, and the National Career Readiness Certificate. Credentials also drive measurement of skills attainment. Industry credentials can become the backbone or standards for CTE programs (ACTE, 2018). CTE programs also offer relevant training that allows students to easily transition to the workplace during high school, after graduation or move straight to a college program with employability skills. Literacy and math skills are embedded into CTE programs, and these skills easily transfer to the workplace as they are an integral part of the technical skills needed to perform specific careers.

Skilled workers are in high demand and CTE programs allow students to choose a trade, develop the needed skills for the industry workforce, and gain confidence all while earning credentials and, oftentimes, college credit. By collaborating with industry professionals, CTE programs can engage students, replenish the workforce, and create skilled workers that can adapt and communicate in the ever-changing job market.

The disconnect between CTE graduates and the hospitality industry is still unclear, and more research is needed on the subject. Exploration regarding the alignment of CTE program standards to employer expectations could reinforce that CTE programs are fulfilling the industry demands. A proposed qualitative study regarding current and recently graduated hospitality CTE

students' career counseling concerns, defined purposes, and training needs could be the next step to prescribe additions to the CTE curriculum in the United States.

Skills Gap

The skills gap is the problem of finding the right workers, that is workers who possess the right skills and credentials. We know that 50-year-olds and baby boomers make up a large part of the workforce, but they will soon retire and leave too many jobs vacant (Bano et al., 2022). This will create a larger gap in the workforce. The growing use of technology has made it harder to find skilled workers. There are skills referred to as 21st Century skills that are highly sought after. These skills include critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills (Boettcher, 2014). Although these skills are not obligatory in the foodservice industry, a worker with these skills will essentially earn higher wages than someone without such skills (Boettcher, 2014). Countries that lack 21st Century skilled workers are not as competitive in the global markets and risk businesses and jobs being sent overseas (Boettcher, 2014). The way to fill the skills gap and compete in the global marketplace is for communities and educational institutions to collaborate with businesses. Educational programs need to build opportunity-ready workers. Workers also need to adapt to a continuously changing global economy. According to the National Association of Manufacturers Skills Gap Report (2005), 80% of businesses are experiencing a shortage of qualified workers and 13% say they are experiencing a severe shortage of skilled workers (ACTE: Issue Brief, 2018). Workers with technical, employability, communication, reading and writing skills are in high demand. These skills are typically taught separately in secondary schools, but employers are looking for individuals with all these skills because they are more adaptable in the workplace (ACTE: Issue Brief, 2018; Carnevale & Smith, 2013).

The Industry Workforce Needs Council (IWNC) helps members of this group work with CTE programs to teach students skills and help them gain experience and earn credentials, so they are ready for the workforce. In addition to collaborating with industry, educational facilities need to be upgraded with new equipment that resembles what is found in industry so that students can learn on equipment that is common in the workplace. Industry members and instructors need to work together to make sure the curriculum is on par with skills needed in specific industries. CTE programs can help large companies train skilled workers, but schools need to make connections with industry leaders, communicate needs and goals of the educational programs, and provide real world experiences through career counseling and development.

Career Counseling

Career counseling and job development is an interesting topic that could create a better understanding of career pathways for CTE students and allow them a deeper appreciation for their own career choices during and after high school, which could lower attrition rates. School to work transitions, information about apprenticeships, and internships could be the missing link between career satisfaction and longevity for CTE students (Ertelt et al., 2021). Career Construction Theory "explains the interpretive and interpersonal processes by which individuals organize their behavioral dispositions, impose direction on their vocational behavior, and make meaning of their vocational development" (Savickas, 2005, p. 42).

A study by Packard et al. (2012) looked at how CTE students construct their careers and how going to work, social support, and higher education influenced students. Lower income students or first generation, college bound students feel pressured to enroll in college or finish college quickly. These students are guided by survival and not interest, so they do not often choose a career path or college program that fits their goals. These students are only choosing

something to get to the finish line and are not thinking about what they will do with the certificate or diploma once their schooling is complete. This situation leads to unemployment, being in debt, and being confused about where they fit into society.

Data from this study illustrated that of the 40 men and women CTE high school graduates, all were first generation college students, and all were from working class backgrounds with a mean GPA score of 3.11 out of 4.00. Of the 40 participants, 25% found relevant jobs or careers from their CTE programs, 50% refined their career plans because of an inability to find work, and 35% reported that college was not a good use of their financial resources. Of the individuals in this study, 28% wished they had taken more advanced math and science classes in high school to prepare them for college. Jobs based on CTE program training was a backup plan for 10% of the participants to help support themselves while they took college courses (Packard et al., 2012). Those that said the CTE program was a backup plan might be worth exploring as it could indicate workers that lean toward foodservice attrition because first career choices were available and attainable.

Counselors state that not many high school graduates ask for support after graduation and that on average, maybe two graduates per counselor make contact within a year of leaving high school. Counselors also admit that they do not seek out high school graduates to check in with them because they are bogged down with new students and the day-to-day needs of their districts. While high school counselors rarely have enough time for career development counseling because of the sheer number of students in their buildings, a prescribed career construction theory course might be put to good use in CTE classrooms, which would allow teachers to further develop discussions on their trained career pathways. Career development counseling and CCT combined could be a way to encourage students to evaluate their own ideas

about career choices and help foster a better understanding of the jobs offered in their chosen industry.

Career development is defined as efforts to establish and refine a worker's needs by exploration, then considering and committing to different career options (Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013; Porfeli & Lee 2012). High school students are not being properly trained in career development. Even if students plan to go to trade school, a two-year or four-year college, or the military, chances are they will need to enter the workforce eventually and research shows that students are not fully prepared for any of the options mentioned (Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013). Often, the focus of high school is getting good grades, participating in sports and socializing, which are all important, but career readiness is not usually a top priority. Classroom lessons are proving to be less effective and meaningful outside of the school setting, thus creating a graduate that cannot help themselves: no job, no skills, no prospects. Lack of career guidance contributes to non-skilled graduates entering the workforce (Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013). Students are not only under-prepared for the workforce but are also not ready for college. Often, students are not guided in the right direction toward their desired career path. Lack of planning is a major issue. Students are pushed to enter a four-year college program, attain that degree, then go back to get an associate degree because the job requires skills their four-year degree overlooked; this is a waste of money (Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013). If students were more versed on career training options, they might skip spending money on a degree they do not need to be successful in the workforce (Carnevale et al., 2010; Curry & Milsom, 2021). Another issue in high schools is that students can discuss what classes they are taking, but they cannot answer why they are taking them, or how the class will translate to the world outside of high school. Maybe teachers are not helping students learn the meaning of transferable skills. Although school counselors are needed

to bridge the gap between academics, skills training, and career readiness, they are overloaded and cannot help every single student on their roster with career preparation after high school.

According to Mupinga and O'Connor (2013), there are ten reasons why career development is needed in high schools today.

1. Students are unprepared unless they are in a CTE program. The Career Tech Education model is effective for career development, as CT programs are based on skills transferable to the working world after graduation.
2. Job opportunities are decreasing for students without solid transferable skills.
3. Little time preparing for life after high school leads to higher unemployment rates.
4. Remediation at the college level is increasing because high schools are not producing quality workers or workers that are ready as soon as they graduate.
5. Most negative post graduate outcomes are related to minorities.
6. CTE students already receive career development information as part of their coursework and usually leave their program with industry credentials.
7. No career development for the groups with disabilities can lead to low graduation numbers and low college enrollment levels.
8. Minorities and at-risk students are not in CTE programs, but they desperately need it.
9. Personnel and resources are very limited in most school districts, so by deploying more CTE programs that are available to students, the CTE teachers bear some of the responsibility and take pressure off the counselors to meet with each student about career goals.
10. Graduation requirements are increasing nationwide, and without a clear path after graduation, students will become lost in the shuffle and thus, the cycle continues.

To provide what the workforce needs from CTE graduates, solid workers with strong skill sets, industry members must be a part of the career development as well. Industry members can serve as mentors, provide internships, and work with CTE instructors to develop apprenticeships for high achieving graduates (Torpey, 2015; Bilginsoy, 2018). Business owners and industry members can also allow for higher wages for CTE pathway graduates and add bonuses for those students that earn an industry approved credential or that remain on the job longer than 6 months. Considering the depth and breadth of mentoring in CTE hospitality programs, students could find more career specific opportunities that lead to career longevity and job satisfaction. By incorporating new approaches to educating, training, and counseling students, workforce attrition could be decreased or avoided not only in the hospitality industry but also in other career pathways.

Areas of Investigation Surrounding Foodservice Attrition

The various types of jobs and workplaces found within the hospitality and foodservice industries appeal to entrepreneurs and franchisees galore. Restaurants are spread out in every corner of the world and offer workers flexibility of location and tasks. While workers under the age of 18 must avoid highly hazardous work environments such as working with heavy machinery and slicers, there are plenty of job options that give younger workers a start in the industry. For example, working in quick-service is a typical starting point for those under 18 years of age because the workplace environment is fast-paced, the pay is competitive, and the work hours are plentiful as most quick-service restaurants are open all day and night. Regardless of the establishment type, the foodservice industry has many experiences to offer its workers. Being that foodservice is so abundant, the pitfalls of the industry itself are even more ample than the available jobs. The problems of turnover and attrition in the hospitality and restaurant

industries are worldwide and costs businesses trillions of dollars annually (Han, 2020). A book written in 2005 by Leigh Branham about reasons why workers leave indicates that attrition could be avoidable and could save businesses billions of dollars each year. The literature on reasons for foodservice turnover and attrition is vast; and consequently, the need to refine the number of explored accounts for losing workers is optimal to guide the reader toward understanding the most common sources of turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry.

Factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry can be organized into three categories, organizational, internal, and external factors. Various resources were used to locate journal articles containing pertinent information about turnover and attrition, foodservice job satisfaction, and related research studies on the topic. The Kent State University Library database and Google Scholar made searching for key words simple. Examples of the words and phrases used in the search engines were attrition, turnover, factors that lead to quitting, foodservice stress, Great Resignation, problems in foodservice, worker retention strategies, hospitality jobs and employee satisfaction, worker motivation, and work-life balance, just to name a few. Table 2 shows the breakdown of factors and offers a simple visual representation of issues that foodservice workers face alongside the sources where each factor was found to be of importance. Employees often feel a push and pull between internal and external factors that provide workers with feelings of stress, which in turn causes the individual to consider their work options (Rony, 2017; Ramlawati et al., 2021). Ease of finding a new job and the desire to make a job or career change do play a role in decision making and quitting (Al-Suraihi et al., 2021; Rony, 2017; Alshammari et al, 2016; Long & Perumal, 2014; Stanz & Greyling, 2010). Internal factors such as family responsibilities and work-life balance can also be

considered external factors depending on the severity of family needs, such as birth, illness, and death within the familial structure (Stanz & Greyling, 2010).

Table 2

Categorizing Factors that lead to Turnover and Attrition

Factors	Category	Sub-Category	Source
Benefits	Organizational	Environment	Liu-Lastres et al. (2022), Long & Perumal (2014), Stanz & Greyling (2010)
Wages	Organizational	Environment	Cantrell & Sarabakhsh (1991), Khilnani & Nair (2022), Alshammari et al. (2016), Long & Perumal (2014), Stanz & Greyling (2010), Heimerl et al. (2020), Rony (2017), Bebe (2016)
Hours Worked & Schedules	Organizational	Environment	Cantrell & Sarabakhsh (1991), Liu-Lastres et al. (2022), Heimerl et al. (2020)
Actual Work-Job & Physical	Organizational	Environment	Al-Suraihi et al. (2021), Heimerl et al. (2020), Bebe (2016)
Culture & Job Environment	Organizational	Environment	Al-Suraihi et al. (2020), Liu-Lastres et al. (2022), Zeffane (1994), Long & Perumal (2014), Heimerl et al. (2020)
Hiring Process	Organizational	Environment	Khilnani & Nair (2022)
Training on the Job & Development	Organizational	Environment	Long & Perumal (2014), Heimerl et al. (2020), Ramlawati et al (2021), Rony (2017)
On-Boarding & Support	Organizational	Environment	Khilnani & Nair (2022), Tews et al. (2020), Liu-Lastres et al. (2022), Alshammari et al. (2016), Long & Perumal (2014)
Management Practices	Organizational	Environment	Al-Suraihi et al. (2021), Park & Min (2020), Zeffane (1994), Long & Perumal (2014), Stanz & Greyling (2010), Heimerl et al. (2020), Rony (2017), Bebe (2016)
Personality & Fit	Internal	Worker Qualities	Zeffane (1994), Alshammari et al. (2016)
Motivation & Attitude	Internal	Worker Qualities	Rony (2017)

Factors	Category	Sub-Category	Source
Job Satisfaction	Internal	Worker Qualities	Mohsin & Lengler (2015), Huang (2006), DiPietro et al. (2020), Zeffane (1994), Alshammari et al. (2016), Stanz & Greyling (2010), Ramlawati et al. (2021), Bebe (2016)
Performance	Internal	Worker Qualities	Khilnani & Nair (2022), Park & Min (2020)
Gender	Internal	Worker Qualities	Liu-Lastres et al. (2022)
Age	Internal	Worker Qualities	Liu-Lastres et al. (2022), Stanz & Greyling (2010), Rony (2017)
Commitment	Internal	Worker Qualities	DiPietro et al. (2020), Zeffane (1994), Alshammari et al. (2016)
Recognition	Internal	Worker Qualities	Mohsin & Lengler (2015), Cantrell & Sarabakhsh (1991)
Family Issues & Responsibilities	Internal & External	Worker Qualities	Al-Suraihi et al. (2021), Stanz & Greyling (2010)
Feeling Stress	Internal	Worker Qualities	Huang (2006), Park & Min (2020), Liu-Lastres et al. (2022), Stanz & Greyling (2010), Ramlawati et al. (2021)
Labor Market	External		Rony (2017), Ramlawati et al. (2021)
Opportunity Elsewhere	External		Rony (2017), Ramlawati et al. (2021)

Physicality of the Job

"Chefs are not an employee in the common meaning of the word, but a practitioner, an artist, a fabricator" (Aron, 1975, p. 150). A passion for food is simply not enough to succeed in the foodservice industry. The demands of making others happy through food is a task that often goes unappreciated by the layperson. Cooking is the main task in a commercial kitchen; however, the amount of work a chef is responsible for can be overwhelming mentally and

physically (Suhairom et al., 2019). It is not enough to just know about food; it is necessary to use food as an art form to appease guests. Creativity is one key ingredient to the success of a restaurant's menu and chefs painstakingly pour their knowledge into menus for the sole purpose of guest satisfaction.

The physical demands of working in a foodservice establishment, whether front or back-of-the-house, are grueling. Long hours standing upright in hot kitchen environments, the high use of dexterity, taking orders, and running food and drinks from the bars and kitchens to the dining areas can be taxing on all foodservice workers, but those that are in a healthy state manage careers in the industry and complain very little overall (Wills et al., 2013; Markkanen et al., 2021). Foodservice workers show high levels of resistance to fatigue and cite that being physically fit is just part of the job description (Suhairom et al., 2019). A study on physical demands of service staff conducted by Wills et al. (2013) showed that physical work is just part of being employed in the food industry. This study showed that service staff worked long hours and reported higher percentages of discomfort by 30% to 60% at the end of the day; though the job itself poses no immediate danger to workers (Wills et al., 2013). Being tired and achy at the end of the day comes with many different types of work, but physical demands in the foodservice industry are just a common part of the occupation, and those that have serious musculature or endurance issues do not typically choose this occupation.

Lifting, walking, and carrying heavy loads is just one aspect of the physical demands of a job in foodservice. Customers create another burden factor for workers and can be relentless in the search for the best food, the best location and the best prices, and requiring restaurants and chefs to keep prices and menus competitive (Silva et al., 2020). The constant shift in menu options and the more intricate the offerings, the harder chefs and foodservice workers try to

please patrons. Most shifts in the industry are 7 to 8 hours long and offer very little rest time or sitting. A mere 20-to-30-minute break is customary, and this time allows for a quick meal and a restroom break, which hardly seems long enough for a worker that is hot, tired, and often frustrated by customers' behavior, to rest. Workers typically enter the foodservice industry because they want to please people and fast-paced environments are just part of the trade.

While one can argue that work in the foodservice industry is not physically simple or easy, the argument for endurance required is obviously a pertinent requirement for success in the career field. Many occupations require physical work and hard labor, yet these industries such as brick masons, the construction sector, and the automotive industry do not show attrition levels as high as foodservice (Bradshaw, 2023b). Keeping this fact in mind, one must conclude that the physicality of the work is not the only contributing factor for foodservice attrition. There must be more to the job requirements, mental acuity, personal narratives, perceptions, and choice of career that are playing a role in the high percentage of turnover and departure of workers. Referencing Super's Theory of Lifespan could posit a logical reason for attrition in workers over the age of 50 due to physical barriers that arise with age, yet this age group does not account for many of the foodservice workers, only totaling 45% of the workforce (Bennett, 2022).

Fitness of Career Choice and Personality

Looking back at the theories of career choice and using Holland's hexagonal model, one could consider a mishap in career choice at the earliest stages of vocational inquiry might contribute to attrition within the first few years of starting a career. The issue of career fitness lies within the career itself and the skills required to succeed in the chosen industry. An individual who is introverted and has poor people skills that chooses foodservice as a career pathway might find that once immersed in the industry must either change their personality to fit

the career and job or consider a completely different career altogether. For example, a person might watch cooking shows on television and become enamored with the idea of a culinary career; however, they may lack the personality it takes to maintain a lasting career in foodservice because the industry they fell in love with on television does not match the actual workplace. This worker may be more prone to a scientific and investigative personality on Holland's hexagon of career choice, and what is needed in the foodservice industry is a social and artistic personality. Just because a person thinks that a job looks fun and inviting does not necessarily mean they have the right personality fit for the career.

A study in Bangkok, Thailand, conducted by Ariyabuddhiphongs and Marican (2013) highlighted five big personality traits that contribute to hospitality workers leaving the industry. While culinary is a career path under the hospitality career cluster, this study proves useful when predicting reasons for employee departures and could shed light on reasons leading to attrition in the industry. There were 183 included in this study and 75% of the participants were educated at the post-secondary level. A ten-item scale was used to record scores on emotional stability, extroversion, openness to experiences, conscientiousness, and agreeableness. The results showed that the big five personality traits coupled with hospitality competency affected job satisfaction (Ariyabuddhiphongs & Marican, 2013). While the big five personality traits alone did not significantly affect job departure rates, this study indicates that personality is not the only factor that affects employee performance, job decision making, or attrition rates, which is the direction of the research presented in this dissertation.

Most workers do not know their career personality and do not realize that personality and fitness for specific careers is beneficial to creating longevity in the workplace. A study by Mitchell et al. (2001) suggests that "link" and "fit" are good indicators of employee retention.

There are many reasons why people choose careers that are not a good fit, but fitness of career choice coupled with other notions in this literature guides the inquiry of foodservice attrition closer to a substantiated argument and direction of research. Considering personality characteristics to indicate strengths and weaknesses, perhaps the Savickas model of CCT could be administered to pupils during their formative middle school years in the hopes to assist in occupational discovery and planning.

Work Environment, Stress and Quality of Life

Work environments in foodservice vary from job to job, but the fast-paced work and demands for multi-tasking are part of the industry. The factors of stress and burnout ensue as part of the work environment because workers are creating products and providing services hour after hour due to customer demand. “The word stress refers to force or pressure on the individual caused by higher authorities” (Salama et al., 2022, p. 2). Workplace stress is generally caused by internal or external factors. Internal stress is an individual’s mindset and approach to the work at hand and can be just as tiring as external stress (Choudhury, 2013). Long hours, work overload, and style of management can be external stressors for employees. There are psycho-social risks involved in both types of workplace stress: fear of being fired, decreased work hours, and negative peer relationships, just to name a few (Choudhury, 2013; Salama et al., 2022). Stress can also be referred to as conflict in the work environment. Internal conflict could come from pressures placed on oneself to do better, pay more attention to detail, or be more positive about work situations, while external conflict can take the form of an employee being torn between completing two or more tasks at one time and struggling with which needs completed first, second, and so forth. Prolonged periods of time enduring these types of workplace stress can cause many issues. Absences from shifts, animosity toward coworkers, loss of team morale, and

decreased self-confidence are just a few examples of the repercussions of workplace stress (Kohli & Mehta, 2022; Salama et al., 2022).

A study done by Murray-Gibbons and Gibbons in Northern Ireland (2007) polled 40 chefs regarding workplace stress. Of the respondents, sixteen and a half years was the average time spent in a foodservice career and 82.5% of those polled had management job expectations. Out of the total participants, 80% had professional qualifications in the culinary field. When asked about stressors in the workplace, 50% cited excessive workload as the most stressful issue. Of the respondents, 40% claimed that staffing shortages were a factor that caused high stress, 33% cited repetitiveness of work tasks as stressful, and 27.5% mentioned poor communication between staff members as a trigger to on-the-job-stress (Murray-Gibbons & Gibbons, 2007). Many of the chefs in this study were highly trained and educated, yet still cite a legion of factors that cause high levels of stress. How could an untrained, unprepared worker or a worker that is brand new to the industry possibly avoid or overcome workplace stress if those workers that are highly skilled and experienced in the industry are admitting high levels of on-the-job stress? Another study done by Kohli and Mehta (2022) surveyed 30 chefs and asked them to describe the stressors they endure while working. One hundred percent of the chefs stated that extreme temperature was a difficult aspect of the job and 43% stated that noise was an ongoing stressor at work (Kohli & Mehta, 2022). Additionally, 53% of the chefs claimed that low back pain was a result of the job along with 30% admitting skin issues resulting from work due to cracked skin from dry heat and constant handwashing (Kohli & Mehta, 2022). Health issues become a stress in the workplace as these problems may impede the actual work being done. A study conducted by Chuang and Lei (2011) looked at job stress among casino chefs and found that while stress in the hospitality and foodservice industries is commonplace, stress can also take a toll on chefs

psychologically. Role conflicts can often lead to illness, fatigue, absenteeism, turnover, and attrition (Brymer et al., 1991; Chuang & Lei, 2011). This study revealed that chefs who worked longer hours incurred higher levels of stress and reported less job satisfaction (Chuang & Lei, 2011). Coping strategies for reducing stress for foodservice workers are often the key to retaining workers (Murray-Gibbons & Gibbons, 2007, Kesavan & Dhivya, 2022; Chuang & Lei, 2011).

Trained chefs that are in managerial roles have often worked up the ladder from an entry-level position while earning culinary arts certifications. High levels of stress in the industry are real, but there are other factors that cause stress for educated and credentialed culinarians. Repetitiveness of tasks, unsociable hours, time away from family, non-challenging work, and stifled creativity are discussed as causes of stress in the foodservice workplace (Ekincek & Günay, 2023). Chefs are knowledgeable in cooking and presenting food across many cuisines. When creativity is replaced with standardization or technological advancements, chefs feel outsourced, and a conflict of self-worth is imminent (Robinson & Barron, 2006; Robinson & Beesley, 2010). Advancements in technology can offer chefs the option to purchase pre-prepared foods which are more cost effective and less labor intensive, but these products take the artistry out of culinary arts (Ekincek & Günay, 2023; Robinson & Barron, 2006; Robinson & Beesley, 2010). The push and pull of long hours and ease of ordering intricate items from an assembly line can cause stress and even lead to depression because the practice of preparation is removed, leaving highly trained, talented chefs longing for a purpose and creating a job description that is presumably heavily managerial in nature. Over time, this type of stress can cause foodservice workers to contemplate their value in an organization and distrust personal relationships with the industry itself. Prolonged stress can be unhealthy for individuals and disintegrate organizational

culture and morale as well (Robinson & Baron, 2006; Robinson & Beesely, 2010; Hakro et al., 2022).

Workplace stress can be very persistent and cause job burnout. Burnout is a response to stress that typically overtakes a worker's psyche and causes their internal system to overload. This can be due to working too many hours, trying to complete too many tasks at one time, or even being surrounded by unending stimuli. Burnout can cause emotional damage and lead to lower worker productivity, employee turnover, indifference, and attrition (Salama et al., 2022). "Job burnout is, in reality, a type of mental fatigue accompanied by mental stress related to the job and work atmosphere" (Salama et al., 2022, p. 3). The impact of job burnout and problems associated with it can cause workers to question the job satisfaction and benefits of the occupation and contemplate the need for a change. Job burnout certainly takes a physical and psychological toll on workers, but job burnout can also change the personal narrative of what workers tell themselves is important in the career (South, 2021). Those workers that have optimistic outlooks regarding work might take a few days off, recover completely, and then return and continue in the job position (Hayes & Weathington, 2007). On the other hand, those that have a pessimistic outlook or negative internal voice might decide that the work stress has overloaded them to the point of making the decision to leave the job and search for similar work in a new establishment (Hayes & Weathington, 2007). It is those workers that have been pushed by overload to the brink of no return (attrition) that are the most mysterious.

Job stress and overload can cause foodservice workers not only to quit their current position but go in search of an entirely new career. Workplace stress and job burnout might initiate a worker to encounter and act upon happenstance. Work stressors and burnout might be the catalysts that force workers to look for new jobs or careers and take chances with

opportunities that would not have been visible if the workers were complacent in their current positions. Work stress and job burnout have significant effects on employee departure rates; accordingly, stress and burnout are plausible reasons for foodservice attrition in workers that do not have fitness of career or fitting personalities for the industry (Salama et al., 2022). Stakeholders in the industry might consider identifying workplace stressors and causes of job burnout to offer environments conducive to career longevity. Hakro et al. (2022) discuss tactics that managers can put in place to help workers deal with and alleviate stress in the workplace. Employers can offer education and counseling on issues surrounding stress and provide ways to de-escalate situations that lead to worker overload and burnout. Employers can also evaluate leadership practices and revitalize morale by listening to what employees need for a more pleasant workplace, and lastly, management could consider higher compensation for those shifts and positions that are more prone to high stress (Singh & Singh, 2019).

Motivation and Compensation

Kukanja and Planinc (2012) conducted a study about the impact of the economic crisis on motivations to work in foodservice. This study discusses compensation as a large source of motivation for workers in the food and beverage industry, but money is not the only factor that gives workers the drive to complete tasks accurately and efficiently, satisfy customers, and build lasting interpersonal relationships. There are three theories that try to explain employee motivation. First, equity theory describes the balance between input and output (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012). For on-the-job equity, a worker needs to realize that what is given to each employee is accurate to the level of the employee's output. In the case of workplace or job performance motivation, workers must feel that the pay or compensation is equal to the quality and quantity of work for all employees otherwise those that feel slighted may become

unmotivated. A second theory used to investigate workplace motivation is economic motivation theory. Economic theory deals with the idea that people are motivated by earning money but that the money must not be a guarantee. Those workers that earn a monthly salary are not as motivated as hourly employees by money because the money earned is regular regardless of the quality and or quantity of work being done (Kukanja & Planinc, 2012; Wildes, 2008).

Another theory often used to research motivation is attribution theory. This theory is interesting as it explains how people act and react according to their own failures and successes (Graham, 2020). Attribution theory often explains why some workers remain in job positions for a long period of time, while others move from job to job more frequently. Attribution theory has close ties to career personalities and is not much help in predicting the behaviors of workers other than to suggest that certain personalities are more loyal or steadfast than others. One last theory that could explain workplace motivation is relationship theory. Relationship theory is closely related to social exchange theory in that both theories apply to psychological perspectives of relationships based on socialization of humans and provide a foundation for individual cost-benefit considerations (Chernyak-Hai & Rebenu, 2018). This theory is grounded in mutual exchange and realization of promises made between employee and employer. Although there are theories that try to explain motivation, it is difficult to cast one theory for any individual or group of workers due to the differences in individuals' belief systems, workplace environments, and cultures (Wildes, 2005; Wildes, 2008: Kukanja & Planinc, 2012).

Wages have been a motivating factor in the foodservice industry from the dawn of the first cafes and restaurants in the time of Monsieur Boulanger, circa 1765, who opened the first establishment to offer nourishment to travelers. Boulanger, according to culinary legend, was a Parisian entrepreneur that received credit for opening the first restaurant. Boulanger sold

restorative broths to travelers, and many followed his lead and began to sell food and beverages to people along their journeys (NRA, 2018). Selling food, drinks, and sustenance to any passersby initiated an exchange of goods and services for dollars. In the mid 1940s and 50s, the push to create food that could be served fast and economically birthed fast-food and quick-service restaurants across the United States. At the conclusion of World War II, people ate more meals outside of the home; accordingly, the demand for workers in the industry exploded along with the new industrialized economy (NRA, 2018). It is with this push for speed and quantity that workers demanded more money for their labor. The more money food establishments made; the more workers expected to be paid. Economic theory also explains why workers search for new jobs while already employed. These workers are looking for more monetary gains due to lack of funding for living expenses and emergencies. Financial issues are a typical likelihood of job transitions, which can include financial hardships, illnesses, and even loss of a family member. Economic theory explains monetary motivation but does not explain other reasons that motivate workers to stay at a job or vacate their position. Perhaps money coupled with other factors motivates workers to make career decisions (Kukanja & Planinc, 2012).

According to a study about foodservice workers' motivation, Wildes (2008) found that over 60% of restaurant industry participants cited money as the main motivational attribute of the job that promoted complacency. The second attribute of motivation for working in the industry was being and working in a fun environment. This study by Vivienne Wildes discusses the issue that money is a main driving force for staying or leaving a job or company in the foodservice industry, but the environment is also important to workers. A multiple regression study on factors that affect turnover and attrition performed by Bebe (2016) supports the idea that wages are an important factor for workers when considering leaving a job. Based on dissatisfaction

scores regarding salary, the lower the dissatisfaction scores (meaning workers were unhappy) for salaries, the higher the turnover and attrition rates (Bebe, 2016). It is easy to see that some workers place a large value on pay coupled with the vibe and the way they "feel" in the workplace. In an earlier study by Wildes (2005) about the intention for workers to stay on the job, it was found that age played a role in the results. "Forty-seven percent of the participants stated that they intended to leave the foodservice industry within two years. Correspondingly, 70% of the respondents in this study were under the age of 36" (Wildes, 2005, p. 226). The meaning of these statistics is that young people see foodservice work as a gap filler and only a profession to tie them over until better opportunities come along.

There is no doubt that age, atmosphere, peer relationships, stress, company culture, and leadership all play a role in creating a fun environment for restaurant workers. Regardless, researchers must not neglect to affirm that employees leave the industry because overall ideals or perceptions of the industry possibly diminish or decline over time due to lack of pay raises, changes in leadership, or redefined job descriptions that change the work environment itself.

Perceptions of the Industry

The feelings one gets from working in an industry that is fundamentally based on hospitality and service means that employees have one goal and that is to please customers. Customers or guests can behave in unpredictable ways, thus making any job in the hospitality industry very difficult. Foodservice work has a stigma associated with it that long hours and low pay are part of the course and that foodservice workers are a dime a dozen (Wildes, 2005). By insinuating that workers are easily replaceable, the notion is that foodservice workers are unskilled and disposable. The feeling or perception that this idea expresses to not only workers but also the public is a negative one that is not easily erased. This negative reputation provides a

reason why workers contemplate leaving a job or career. While negative perceptions of the restaurant industry have always existed, workers continue to train and enter the profession. Certainly, with the help of Gordon Ramsay and the television show Hell's Kitchen (2005), many can see that work in the foodservice industry is not all sweet and lovely. There are high expectations of service from those that decide to take on a career in hospitality. Customers are always on the prowl for bigger and better experiences, and often want a culinary "show" for one low price.

In the culinary industry, the public expects all chefs to yell like Gordon Ramsay and all foodservice workers to run and hide in a corner when scolded, but these stereotypical labels cause harm to the industry itself (Wildes, 2005). Oftentimes, those that work in the industry are labeled as not good enough for other jobs like working in a bank or becoming a teacher, yet foodservice workers are an intricate part of the economy and are needed to facilitate feeding the world. Foodservice workers provide services for the government: jails, schools, and military bases. Foodservice workers are also plentiful in grocery stores, all different types of restaurants, and lodging establishments. Foodservice workers supply airplanes and trains with meals, and the public should not forget the assembly line workers in factories that prepare and package food for the masses to purchase each day. The idea that foodservice is a job or career for those that are "less than" is absurd. Wildes (2005) states that "this stigma can undermine self-esteem and self-certainty" (p. 217). This mindset only makes it harder for foodservice workers to appreciate the art of cooking because the negative connotation is lurking not only in themselves but also within the guests and customers that are waiting for one wrong order or imperfect steak to ruin the dining experience.

Those that do not work in the restaurant industry have no idea the harm that is done to foodservice workers by stigma. It has already been established that stress is a large factor in how workers view the job, but angry customers and negative perceptions and stigmas make working in foodservice even more difficult. A study conducted by Xiang et al. (2022) showed that workers that dealt with customers most directly as part of their daily job were more likely to perceive negative professional stigma. Workers see themselves as targets of negativity and eventually try to de-identify with the stigma. Over time, workers become numb (dis-identification) to the stigma, and this can lead to less pride in work being done and less job satisfaction. Dis-identification can lead workers to believe that a career in the industry is only a bridge to a better career somewhere else (Wildes, 2005). After prolonged periods of time feeling the negative effects of stigmas, foodservice workers commonly disengage from the work. Disengagement is worse than dis-identification because the workers go to great lengths to disassociate with the role of foodservice worker, eventually causing a fight or flight reaction. Flight away from the stigma, negativity, and reputation means finding a new career path because foodservice is no longer fulfilling or providing job satisfaction. Not only are the stigmas and negative perceptions bad for employees in the restaurant industry, but they also deter others from even considering foodservice as a career option (Wildes, 2005; Xiang et al., 2022).

Students trained in hospitality and restaurant work are exposed to the industry in a CTE program, job shadowing, work-based learning, or apprenticeships. Surely pre-established perceptions and expectations exist when considering becoming a chef (Pavesic & Brymer, 1989; Torpey, 2015; Bilginsoy, 2018). Looking back at a study from 1989 on the hospitality attrition and retention of post-secondary graduates, the reasons for changing or leaving the industry are quite different from more recent studies. The study done by Pavesic and Brymer (1989) shows

the most common response for leaving a job was the lack of challenging work and minimal career advancement opportunities (42.2%). Other reasons for job dissatisfaction were financial or pay related (16.9%), management related issues (15.8%), work hours (12.3%) and work environment (11.9%). There has undoubtedly been a shift in job perception over the decades where the work environment factor moved from the bottom of the list in 1989 to the top of the list in 2008 (Wildes, 2008). Work environment and perception of work surroundings can be the determining factor in whether workers stay or leave the industry.

Recommendations for a more positive imagery of the foodservice industry need to be advertised and schooling institutions should be an integral part of the marketing process. Success stories are needed by the younger generation to put forth a solid image of working in the food industry to draw in new talent. CTE hospitality instructors need to be realistic with their pupils so that perceptions and expectations are based on reality and not fictional television. Real work experiences and apprenticeships can help deliver work-based learning so that students can "try on" the profession before fully committing to it as a career (Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013, Porfeli & Lee, 2012; Torpey, 2015; Bilginsoy, 2018). Honesty and integrity within the hospitality pathway must be realized so that businesses and stakeholders can prosper. While these recommendations might seem simplistic, introducing only a couple of these ideas could drastically change the landscape of foodservice in a few short years.

Negative Events and Circumstances

No matter how much positive publicity and marketing gets pushed to the public to change the stigma surrounding careers in the foodservice industry, there will always be negative events and circumstances that counteract, for some workers, the benefits of a career in foodservice. A negative event can change a worker's job perspective and outlook. A current major event, the

Covid-19 pandemic, derailed businesses across many industries (Ludvigson et al., 2020). Working from home during the pandemic became common, and many restaurants closed their doors for long periods of time, leaving hospitality workers temporarily out of jobs. According to Johnathan Maze (2020) writing for Restaurant Business, the restaurant industry lost over 5.5 million jobs in approximately a six-week span. Nonetheless, restaurateurs are crafty businesspeople and eventually found solutions to the pandemic closures by offering carryout services or in-person service while still maintaining more than six feet between tables (social distancing). While this was not the ideal hospitality situation or overall feeling that customers wanted, businesses reopened with very limited staffing. Oftentimes, restaurants cut staff by more than half. Many part-time foodservice workers found themselves looking for work during this time or had to take on second jobs just to pay the bills each month. The pandemic turned the restaurant industry upside down and for most restaurant patrons, took the joy out of dining away from home. Communities banded together to find ways to maintain social distancing while still trying to support local businesses. The pandemic lasted nearly two years, but during that time foodservice establishments tried to take care of employees and customers in the safest way possible to maintain reputation and profits (Yu et al., 2020).

It is macro-catastrophic events like the pandemic that create a necessity of change for foodservice workers. The universe takes control and workers must decide which path to travel; stay in the industry-wait out the crisis or begin the attrition process-looking for new work in a landscape that presents itself as uncharted territory, realizing that the entire globe had little knowledge on how to react to and recover from the pandemic. Negative events are not a new phenomenon. For example, the bombing of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, had a massive negative impact on the tourism industry and to this day molded airport security

measures and procedures (Ford et al., 2020). The Great Recession was a negative event in 2007 that lasted a year and a half and created financial havoc for many businesses and investors. The crashing economy forced closures, perpetuated emotional stress on millions, and constrained spending across the entire country (Yu et al., 2020). Unplanned and leaving workers bewildered, large events such as these examples destroy confidence in those industries hit hardest and force workers to make decisions for the good of their households. Simply put, major negative events cause stress and high amounts of stress lead to turnover and attrition.

Changing the view to micro-events in the workplace, Tews et al. (2014) conducted a study to find out how positive and negative internal and external events predicted turnover in hospitality workers. Internal events are those brought on by negative acts in the workplace, while external events are realized within the life or home life of the employees (outside of the workplace). Positive events are deemed as good: examples are marriage, birth of a child, or buying a house. Negative events are seen as bad, for instance the death of a loved one, a divorce, or serious illness. For Tew's research, 290 restaurant workers were surveyed about critical internal and external events that influenced their work behaviors and decisions to voluntarily leave the workplace. The findings showed that positive and negative external events were significant predictors of job quit rates. Internal negative events were not a positive predictor of employee departures in this sample (Tews et al., 2014). This study indicates that workers make occupational changes when events outside of the workplace that affect life circumstances create chaos or indicate the need for a change in employment.

Life is unpredictable. Krumboltz's theory of happenstance fits nicely with the idea that negative events and circumstances direct workers to leave a job or profession; workers must decide what is best for their families and act accordingly based on what type of situation arises

(Kim et al., 2018; Rojewski, 1999). Employee departure prediction is helpful in showing patterns in foodservice workers' behaviors and can be a steppingstone toward uncovering reasons for turnover and attrition in the restaurant industry. The findings in Tews' et al. (2014) study is positive regarding negative workplace events. This means that foodservice workers are not running for the exit doors simply because of personality issues and conflicts within the workspace. Certainly, there is more to uncover about turnover and attrition with the next logical place to look for reasons for attrition is in management and company culture within the foodservice workplace.

Leadership and Culture within the Industry

In the foodservice industry, it is not uncommon to hear a worker say that they quit a job because of a bad boss, but is this really the case? Situations that appear to be leadership issues turn out to be company culture factors that push workers to leave the industry. Hence, poor leadership needs to be investigated as a cause of turnover and attrition in foodservice. The environment in which an individual works embodies a feeling, usually specified as an impression, ambiance, or mood in the workplace and is introduced to employees by management or human relations as the way we do it here, this is how we roll, or referred to as a company's aura (Lee & Chuang, 2022). This environment can be considered a company's culture and the foodservice industry, no matter where one works, certainly has an emotional affect that influences the way employees feel and behave while working. Every individually run operation has its own specific culture and can include the diverse outlooks of its employees. It is the responsibility of management and leadership teams to enact this culture not only as model examples themselves, but to encourage employees to "fit in" as well.

Company culture is not always a snug fit for every employee and Sull et al. (2022), writing for the MIT Sloan Management Review, suggest that corporate culture is a more powerful predictor of attrition than compensation issues. Toxic culture in the workplace is a force to be reckoned with and can divide workplaces into battle grounds. Toxic culture includes "failure to promote diversity, equity and inclusion; workers feeling disrespected; and unethical behavior" (Sull et al., 2022, para. 13). There are a few ways that employees view a company's culture. Job security and reorganizations within the company are issues that workers use to weigh prosperity and job outlook. Restructures bring about insecure, negative feelings for employees especially when layoffs loom in the balance. Workers are more likely to voluntarily leave their position before being involuntarily let go from the company. Employees typically look for work where they feel safe, comfortable, liked, understood, and have a small amount of ownership in the company's culture. A few ways that companies can encourage and maintain positive company culture is to provide workers with opportunities for growth and learning, offer social events so that employees can gather, converse and feel part of something bigger than their job duties, and organize schedules that keep employees' needs at the forefront (Sull et al., 2022). Many foodservice workers have schedules that keep them from seeing family during the holidays and on weekends (Chuang & Lei, 2011). A company that promotes a positive work culture might offer mothers the day off on Mother's Day, all employees the day off for one of the more popular holidays and rotate workers and vacation requests to promote equity and equality. Management controls many of the aspects that employees see as occupational justice or fairness, and by offering small benefits such as the ones mentioned here, show employees that they are appreciated and cared for in the workplace (Rusinowitz, 2022). This sets the tone for positive company culture in the most simplistic ways and can deter turnover and attrition.

Management in foodservice is difficult to define. The levels of leadership vary from restaurant to restaurant. In some establishments, general managers might oversee five different locations, thus, not visible or approachable to all employees. Shift managers and store supervisors are more available within an operation and usually work long hours. These supervisors manage many employees at one time and are responsible for scheduling and monitoring employees during their shifts. Crew managers are often young and slightly inexperienced when compared to general managers and shift supervisors, but they have typically worked in the establishment for more than six months and understand the day-to-day operations. The connection between general managers who sometimes visit locations and employees who are unhappy is loose. It is suspected that general managers are not the ones in leadership positions that are setting the tone or culture of the restaurant; they are simply advising and managing resources and store supervisors. The store managers and shift supervisors bear the burden of customer service, team morale, employee retention, hiring, and training new recruits.

Regardless of which management personnel take the lead in an establishment, evidence shows that workers quit because of supervisors. A multiple regression study of turnover and attrition factors for fast-food workers conducted by Bebe (2016) identified a statistical significance regarding workers' supervisor dissatisfaction scores. When dissatisfaction scores were low (meaning workers were unhappy), turnover and attrition rates were high in fast food employees. Considering that restaurants are fast-paced working environments, employee departures are high, and customer satisfaction is of the utmost importance, busy store and shift managers could be the factor that employees indirectly feel are the reason why they leave a job or the industry. It is commonplace to be exhausted and mentally void at the end of the day; therefore, it is easy to see why tensions run high and emotional and personality issues between

employees and leadership might go unresolved. The goal of this research is to uncover reasons for worker turnover and attrition by affording workers a section on the survey to express their views about management and leadership during their work experiences in the hopes of finding out if company culture, leadership, or both are responsible for foodservice turnover and attrition.

Job Satisfaction

Do employees leave fulfilling jobs? William Mobley (1977), who is considered by many scholars as an expert on workplace satisfaction and employee retention, conducted a study relating job satisfaction to employee turnover. Researchers use Mobley's turnover process model to develop studies based on job satisfaction (Gan & Voon, 2021; Hasbiah & Idris, 2023). Mobley and more current researchers have found that employee departures and job satisfaction have a consistent negative relationship (Mobley, 1977; Zopiatis et al., 2018). Mobley also "found a high negative correlation between job satisfaction and thinking of quitting" (Mobley, 1977, p. 239). Although Mobley's study was performed decades ago, it is not hard to envision that quitting a job and job satisfaction are adversely related; it is just logical. To substantiate Mobley's research, a more recent study about the theoretical concept of job satisfaction done in India by Thangaswamy and Thiyagaraj (2017) describes job satisfaction as "an individual's complex attitude toward his job. It is a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving [and] facilitating the achievement of one's job value" (Thangaswamy & Thiyagaraj, 2017, p. 464). These researchers also define satisfaction as "when one gets what he needs, desires, wants, expects, deserves or deems to be his entitlement" (Thangaswamy & Thiyagaraj, 2017, p. 464). When both definitions are combined, the complex experiences of workers in the workplace that provide satisfaction are used to provide an overall picture of job happiness and well-being. Some workers might conclude that promotions and status are factors

of job satisfaction, while others might cite the feeling of belonging, company culture, and job security at the core of job contentment. Still other workers might consider pay, benefits, and rewards as a large part of job complacency.

Heimerl et al. (2020) conducted a study to see what type of role work hours, salary, professional development, management, working atmosphere, and the work itself play in job satisfaction of hospitality workers. The findings were not surprising, but the outcome reiterates the need for quality management. The participants stated that work hours were satisfactory, the pay was fair and equal among employees, the atmosphere was overall pleasant, and opportunities for growth were available along with the time to pursue those professional development experiences (Heimerl et al., 2020). The participants in this study overwhelmingly gave management positive reviews and said that the job itself was meaningful and had clearly defined tasks. After a regression analysis, all the factors were significant influences on job satisfaction. Furthermore, the participants in this study identified management as the most important factor influencing job satisfaction. This study concludes that leadership styles are important to employees and when combined with fair pay, reasonable work hours, and a pleasant atmosphere, workers remain satisfied with their jobs. One last note from the researcher is that companies should not be complacent with these results and should make conscience efforts to gauge workplace needs frequently (Heimerl al., 2020).

An important study performed by DiPietro et al. (2020) compared commitment and workplace well-being to job satisfaction of casual dining employees in the hopes of uncovering effects of each factor on turnover intention. A mediation model was used with statistical control to predict the relationship between well-being and turnover using satisfaction and positive and negative commitment scores. The results showed that well-being alone is not a predictor for

turnover until mediated by positive and negative commitment. This study also showed that job satisfaction played a role (has a relationship) with well-being and turnover. The implications of this study suggest that employees had positive feelings about where they worked and that the workers felt cared for within the organization, which positively affects turnover (DiPietro et al, 2020).

As different as workplace environments, human needs, desires, and expectations are even more diverse. Pinpointing one exact reason for job satisfaction for all employees would be nearly impossible, just as identifying only one reason for why workers leave jobs or careers is equally difficult. The many theories in and facets of the workplace pertaining to human interactions within those spaces create circumstances that foodservice workers must navigate. No two employees think the same, nor do they make the same choices regarding work and career moves. The only idea that seems to hold true is that job satisfaction is a positive feeling one has about their work situation and that voluntary attrition and employee quit rates are negatively related. Workers that are happy or content in their job and career do not leave or switch unless an outside force or action propels them to do so (Gan & Voon, 2021; Hasbiah & Idris, 2023; Heimerl et al., 2020; Mobley, 1977; Zopiatis et al., 2018). Personality, environment, motivation, and many other factors are at play in the lives and careers of foodservice workers, and the question of how all these factors control worker decisions is yet to be unveiled.

Conclusion

Workers quit their jobs and leave their careers for a variety of reasons. Foodservice turnover and attrition are issues that cost business owners billions of dollars each year. The literature on worker turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry shows that there are many factors that influence the way workers feel about jobs in the industry. By considering the most

common issues in the literature surrounding foodservice turnover and attrition, one can attempt to dismantle and investigate each factor to collect and analyze current research on why workers leave their hospitality and culinary careers behind. Work in foodservice is physically demanding, requires employees to move around the workplace in an unforgiving environment, endure heavy loads of stress, constantly present a positive personality, model professional qualities, be self-motivated, brush aside negative perceptions of the industry, and work through catastrophic and life-changing events to succeed in the foodservice industry.

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CHAPTER III

METHODS

The main purpose of this research was to identify and explore factors that contribute to turnover and attrition of workers in the foodservice industry and identify potential solutions. The study used a descriptive research methodology to identify factors that lead to foodservice turnover and attrition as they relate to Career and Technical Education graduates of a high school hospitality program. This methods chapter describes how the study was conducted. First, the design of the study provides an overview of the type of research methods used and explains why these research methods were best for this inquiry project. Second, the chapter describes the population and sample of participants for the study. Third, the data sources and collection procedures that ensure participant information and data were kept secure and confidential was addressed. Fourth, this chapter discusses the validity of the instruments used to collect data. Lastly, the chapter discusses the methods of data analysis.

Research Design

This study utilized non-experimental, descriptive research methods to identify factors that contribute to the turnover and attrition of workers in the foodservice industry. Descriptive research is often referred to as survey research with aims "to provide systematic and accurate descriptions of characteristics for a population of interest" (Dimitrov, 2010, p. 41). Descriptive research answers the who, what, where, and when surrounding the issue. Survey research is a preliminary approach to a study and assesses the positions of a community. Furthermore, survey research provides inquiry into a problem that may unmask clues leading to a cause (Grimes & Schultz, 2002). The surveys used in this study were administered only once to the participants for data collection. Surveys lend themselves well to a mixed methods approach and allow

participants to self-report. Self-reporting surveys are those given to participants, and they respond to questions about themselves or other people with yes and no, Likert scale, rating, ranking, or free responses (Dimitrov, 2010). A concurrent method was utilized because the quantitative and qualitative data were being collected at the same time (Leavy, 2017).

A mixed methods research approach was utilized for this study because using qualitative personal narratives and quantitative scores derived from survey questions allowed for a 360-degree view from the participants' perspectives. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003), mixed methods "is a type of research design where QUAL and QUAN approaches are used in types of questions, research methods, data collection and analysis procedures, and/or inferences" (p. 711). The definition of mixed methods research was updated in 2007 when Tashakkori and Creswell limited the definition "to single studies with multiple strands (QUAL and QUAN) that all address a single general [mixed methods] question" (p. 4). Mixed methods research is guided by integrated questions, which Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) refer to as a dictatorship of the research question because the project's questions should steer the researcher to whichever method best fits the circumstance. This integrated process contrasts with having tunnel vision for only one type of methodology (i.e., quantitative, qualitative). Integrated questions are presented in numerical and narrative forms of data (Tashakkori et al., 2020). When searching for answers to participants' behaviors and drawing inferences for solutions, integrated questioning becomes important to unwrap the layers of contributing factors of worker attrition that lie hidden within the participants and need to be brought to the forefront for deeper investigation and understanding (Tashakkori et al., 2020). For this study, pieces of data were based on Likert scale scores and participants' perceptions and personal narratives. Integration of both qualitative and quantitative data was used to answer the driving question, translate the participants' responses,

and seamlessly move between both types of data to illuminate the full scope of the driving questions and solutions that emerged.

This research study suits a mixed method approach because both background information and viewpoints of the participants were necessary to understand the full picture of the workplace and the career decisions made by participants. Individual perspectives and scores on a Likert scale illuminated workers' reality and captured the perceptions of the individuals being surveyed. Participants' experiences and perceptions were the focus of this research to discover reasons for career fluctuations and mobility. Creswell (2013) states, "you select people or [the] site that can best help you understand the central phenomenon" (p. 206). Participant insights allowed the researcher to discover problematic themes that need to be remedied to create a stronger and more durable hospitality workforce.

The demographic characteristics and experiences of the study's student participants were of interest as these two types of data illuminated the relevance of skills attained in a CTE hospitality program. A mixed methods approach was accomplished by compiling the information gathered from the surveys and interviews (quantitative and qualitative, respectively). From the surveys and interviews the researcher identified common themes and worked to channel efforts toward finding solutions or intervention to solve the negative effects of attrition on the foodservice industry.

Population and Sample

According to Bekele and Ago (2022), a purposive sample is when the researcher selects participants strategically, rather than at random and should be used when the study requires that participants be relevant to the study and able to answer the questions being asked. The objectives of this study and the types of questions and methods used to gather data dictated the type of

participants needed for this research. The target population for this study was defined as those who work or have worked in foodservice occupations. This population was divided into three groups: 1) Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality graduates who currently work or have worked in the foodservice industry after graduation, 2) Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality instructors, and 3) Ohio foodservice managers who have been in management or ownership positions and work with entry-level employees on a continuous basis.

Instructors that use the ProStart curriculum are part of a national organization for hospitality education and are held to high standards by not only by the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation (NRAEF), but also by each state's department of education (Hospitality and Tourism-Ohio Department of Education and Workforce [ODEW], 2020). ProStart instructors strive to employ up-to-date teaching methods and offer opportunities for students to develop skills in a realistic educational setting that translate to the workforce by helping students obtain a ProStart Certificate of Achievement (COA). A ProStart COA is a credential that is nationally recognized, designates that the holder has passed hospitality competencies at an above-average level, and those students who earn this credential can use the COA to pursue articulating credits at approved post-secondary institutions (Hospitality Institute of Ohio, n.d.).

At the time of the study, there were 55 ProStart CTE hospitality programs in the State of Ohio. There were 69 Ohio ProStart instructors employed to teach these 55 programs, and all 69 instructors were contacted about participating in this study. The ProStart instructors were also asked to recommend at least five names of ProStart program graduates with no maximum number of referrals indicated. The number of participants needed for this study was difficult to define because the proposal phase required a specific number for approval before data collection

began. The recommended guidelines for phenomenological research, according to Morse (2000) is at least six participants; therefore, the projected sample size chosen was adequate under Morse's guidelines for the graduates and instructors. Creswell (2013) recommends between three and ten participants in a phenomenological study. Bekele and Ago (2021) further note that Morse (2000) proposes that a study's narrow scope affects the sample size. This study's scope included Ohio ProStart graduates, Ohio ProStart instructors, and foodservice managers, a scope that was not broad compared to the global population of foodservice workers and hospitality instructors.

There were 69 ProStart instructors in the State of Ohio at the start of the study, and the researcher and advisory dissertation committee hoped to receive at least five graduate referrals from each instructor. It was hypothesized that approximately 50% of the instructors would offer graduate referrals. If 34 instructors gave at least five referrals, the number of graduate contacts would be approximately 186. The researcher and advisory dissertation committee expected to contact 100% of the graduates who were referred by ProStart instructors. The researcher received a total of 190 graduate referrals for this study and anticipated that half would participate. The total number of graduates who willingly participated was 108. It was also reasonable to expect approximately 50% of the instructors would participate in the survey themselves. Of the 69 Ohio ProStart instructors, only 25 participated in the study. According to the researcher's advisory dissertation committee, at least three Ohio foodservice managers were needed for the research interviews, and this minimum number was met for this participant subgroup.

The CTE hospitality Ohio ProStart graduates were included in this study because of their role as students in an Ohio ProStart CTE program and their experiences in the foodservice industry as entry-level employees. There is importance to capturing participants' knowledge and perceptions of the industry as they have been in the workforce and can connect their CTE skills

training directly to their on-the-job experiences. Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality instructors were included in this study because of their role in teaching and training CTE students in the State of Ohio. These instructors know the job market, the foodservice industry, the skills needed to be successful on the job, and can offer insight into issues that students face while working (Home-Ohio Department of Education, 2020). Instructors are expected to have relationships with industry members through advisory committees and these relationships continually play an important role in networking and building school-to-work transitions for CTE students (Perkins V State Plan-Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, 2018).

Ohio foodservice managers were included in this study because of their vast knowledge of the inner workings of the industry itself, the issues surrounding hiring, training and retaining employees, and their ability to share first-hand experiences and perceptions of factors that contribute to foodservice turnover and attrition. Foodservice managers can find purpose in divulging areas of concern so that CTE instructors and industry leaders can work together to problem-solve and promote career success and a positive image of the foodservice industry. These partnerships can save businesses time and money and provide students with job opportunities that can lead to career advancement and career longevity. Foodservice managers and business owners are an integral part of CTE hospitality programs, especially those that serve on advisory boards because the relationship between instructors, students, and industry members creates a channel of communication to provide opportunities for growth and improvement within the industry.

For participating graduates of the Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality program, the demographic characteristics that were examined included age, gender, ethnicity, whether they completed a CTE hospitality 2-year program, the length of time worked in the foodservice

industry, earned industry credentials, whether they were still employed in the industry, and the most recent job classification or job held in the foodservice industry. For the CTE hospitality instructors, demographic characteristics that were examined included age, gender, ethnicity, length of time working in the hospitality industry, earned credentials, and the number of years teaching in the CTE hospitality program. Finally, for foodservice managers, demographic characteristics examined included age, gender, ethnicity, length of time working in the hospitality industry, earned credentials, and number of years managing in the foodservice industry.

Of these three participant groups, two (i.e., ProStart graduates and ProStart instructors) were studied using the survey method. The third group (i.e., foodservice managers) was questioned using in-person interviews. The demographic characteristics were recorded during these interviews and added to the data from the student and instructor survey data. Specific information about the sample's selection is presented in the following sections.

Sampling Procedure

The sampling procedure began with the CTE hospitality instructors because they were the pathway to finding Ohio ProStart graduates for the study. Graduates needed to be referred by Ohio ProStart instructors. The Ohio ProStart instructors' information was readily available through the Ohio Restaurant Association Education Foundation (ORAEF). The Ohio ProStart graduates' information was not attainable as the ORAEF does not keep records after students attain their ProStart credentials upon graduation.

CTE Hospitality Instructors

The first step in obtaining a purposive sample of Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality instructors was to contact these instructors. The ORAEF compiles a list of Ohio ProStart CTE

programs across the state and provided the researcher with a list of school districts that have ProStart programs. The ORAEF also included a corresponding list of instructor email addresses. The second step for attaining the Ohio ProStart CTE instructor sample was to send an interest letter to the prospective participants' email addresses (Appendix A). The instructor letter indicated the need for ProStart student and hospitality instructor participation in the study and asked for Ohio ProStart graduate contact information. As part of this letter, consent was initiated by asking instructors to click on a link to Qualtrics that opened the consent form. The Qualtrics survey included the consent form and asked the instructors to indicate whether they wanted to participate or wanted to be removed from the participant list. The third step for attaining participants was to wait for graduate referrals from instructors to create a secure spreadsheet of prospective graduates' email addresses and phone numbers for willing participants. When an instructor indicated their willingness to participate, their name and email address were compiled in a second secure spreadsheet. The fourth step in obtaining study participants was to send the Ohio ProStart CTE instructor survey to the instructors via email. The fifth step was to wait for any instructor responses until the deadline for completion. The last step was to record the CTE instructor responses and protect all data for later analysis.

CTE Student Graduates

The first step of obtaining a purposive sample of Ohio ProStart CTE student graduates was through the initial contact letter sent to the Ohio ProStart CTE instructors. The letter indicated the need for student graduates that were 18 years of age or older, have completed a two-year ProStart CTE hospitality program, that graduated within the past five years, and were referred by Ohio ProStart CTE instructors. The student graduate participants could be current employees in the industry. Participants did not have to be employed in the industry at the time of

the survey to participate; they simply needed to be a completer of an Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality program and have worked in the industry after graduation.

The second step of finding CTE graduate participants was to email the graduates referred by the Ohio ProStart CTE instructors. Once students were emailed an initial explanation of the study and interest letter, they could decline or accept participation by clicking on a link to Qualtrics that directed them to the consent form (Appendix B). Those students that indicated interest opened the Qualtrics link, read the consent letter, and then indicated consent (See Appendix C for Letter of Consent). During the process, students that declined participation in the study were removed from the participant list and their information was deleted. The third step in gathering information from the CTE student graduates was to send each participant the Qualtrics survey via email and then await the responses. Lastly, responses were recorded and kept secure until the time of analysis.

Foodservice Managers

The first step in obtaining a purposive sample of a minimum of at least three foodservice industry managers was to contact the American Culinary Federation (ACF) for recommendations of at least ten Ohio industry members to be contacted for participation in the study (Creswell, 2013; Morse 2000). ACF was used as an expert panel of culinary industry members due to the strict certification process that all members must achieve to become credentialed. ACF is a national professional organization for chefs and cooks established in 1929, includes over 14,000 members and over 170 chapters. ACF is the largest organization for chefs in North America and ACF sets the standards in the culinary and foodservice community (Advanced Solutions International, Inc., n.d.).

The second step was to contact the ACF-recommended industry members one at a time until the recommended sample size of three expressed interest and agreed to participate in the study (Creswell, 2013; Morse, 2000). The method for acquiring participants also included the snowball method where referrals from one manager led to contact information of other managers The snowball or chain method "identifies cases of interest from people who know people who know what cases are information-rich" (Creswell, 2016, p. 111). The contact information for the foodservice managers that decided not to participate was deleted.

The third step was to set up interview dates and times with the industry managers. The letter to the industry managers states general information about the study (See Appendix D for the Letter to Foodservice Managers). If industry members were contacted by phone call and opted to participate, the researcher provided a consent form at the very beginning of the interview for the participant to read and sign (See Appendix C for Letter of Consent). If the participants wanted to withdraw from the study, their information was deleted. The fourth step was to conduct the interviews. The interviews were guided using a researcher-made interview guide (See Appendix E for Interview Guide for Foodservice Managers). The researcher took notes and all interviews were recorded in full to ensure that responses were gathered and available for later review, transcription, and coding.

Descriptive Characteristics of the Participants

Eight demographic variables were measured for the Ohio ProStart graduates. Respondents were asked to indicate their age, gender, ethnicity, completion of a CTE hospitality program, length of time worked in the industry, identify any credentials earned while in a high school CTE program, employment status, and to identify jobs held during employment in the foodservice industry.

There were six demographic characteristics recorded for the Ohio ProStart instructors. This group of participants were asked to indicate their age, gender, ethnicity, completion of a 2-year CTE program in high school, the length of time working in the industry, and the number of years teaching at a CTE hospitality program.

The demographic characteristics of the foodservice managers were derived from their responses during the interviews. Foodservice managers were asked to discuss their completion of a 2-year CTE hospitality program in high school, length of time working in the industry, identify any earned credentials, and indicate the number of years spent managing in the foodservice industry. Specific demographic characteristics were observed and discussed during the interview process, such as age, gender, ethnicity, and job status.

Gender and Group Classification of Respondents

Fifty-four of the Ohio ProStart graduates (50%) were male, fifty-one (47%) were female, and three (3%) were non-binary or preferred not to indicate a gender. Thirteen of the 25 Ohio ProStart instructors (52%) were male and twelve (48%) were female. All three of the foodservice managers were male. The frequencies of gender identity for each group of respondents are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Gender and Group Classification of Respondents

Gender Identity	Ohio ProStart Graduates		Ohio ProStart Instructors		Foodservice Managers	
	N	%	n	%	n	%
Males	54	50	13	52	3	100
Females	51	47	12	48		
Non-Specific	3	3				
Totals	108	100	25	100	3	100

Of the graduate and instructor groups, gender identity was evenly distributed, while the foodservice manager group was entirely male. This could be attributed to random selection, a smaller number of females promoted to management positions in the industry, or that females are not as predominantly associated with the ACF that generated the contact list for foodservice managers in Northeast Ohio.

Age Levels of Participants

Of the respondents in the Ohio ProStart graduate category (n = 77, 71%) the majority were in the 18 to 20 age range. Twenty-six graduates (24%) were in the 21 to 23 age range, and five graduates (5%) were 24 years or older. The age data indicates that more than 70% of the respondents graduated either during the pandemic or shortly after the pandemic concluded from 2019 to 2023. Of the 25 instructor participants, one instructor (4%) was in the 25 to 31 age range, two instructors (8%) were in the 32 to 38 age range, five (20%) were in the 39 to 45 age range, seven (28%) were in the 46 to 52 age range, and ten (40%) were 53 years of age or older. The ages of the three foodservice managers were as follows: Manager #1 was 63 years of age, Manager #2 was 51 years of age, and Manager #3 was 38 years of age.

Ethnicity by Group Classification of Respondents

Of the three different groups of respondents, the graduate group holds more ethnic diversity than the instructor and foodservice manager groups. Table 4 presents the ethnicity data by participation group.

Table 4

Ethnicity by Group Classification of Respondents

Ethnicity	Ohio ProStart Graduates		Ohio ProStart Instructors		Foodservice Managers	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Caucasian	73	68	24	96	3	100
African American	21	19	1	4		
Hispanic	6	6				
Other	6	6				
Asian	1	1				
Native American	1	1				
Totals	108	100	25	100	3	100

Time Working in the Industry by Group

In terms of years working in the foodservice industry, the graduate respondents had the least amount of years' experience, while the foodservice managers (n = 3, 100%) had the highest percentage of years working in the industry under the category range of more than 10 years. To obtain a Certificate of Achievement, Ohio ProStart students must work 200 or more hours outside of the school day while still in high school. Workplace participation can include full or part-time work, paid or volunteer work hours, or internships. These work occurrences could account for up to two years of on-the-job experience for the graduates. Eighty (74%) of the Ohio ProStart graduates indicated working 1 to 3 years in the foodservice industry at the time of the survey. Nineteen (18%) of the graduates have worked in the foodservice industry for 4 to 6 years, seven graduates (6%) have worked in the industry 7 to 9 years, while only two (2%) have worked in the industry for more than 9 years. There were not any instructors that worked less than four years before becoming CTE instructors. Three instructors (12%) indicated having

worked in the foodservice industry for 4 to 6 years before becoming an instructor and four (16%) worked 7 to 9 years before moving to CTE. Many of the instructors (n = 18, 72%) responded that they worked in the foodservice industry for 10 years or more before becoming CTE teachers. The three foodservice managers that were interviewed for this study indicated a combined 78 years of experience: Manager #1 with more than 25 years of experience, Manager #2 with more than 34 years of experience, and Manager #3 with 19 years of experience working in the foodservice industry.

Earned Industry Credentials by Group

One hundred graduates (93%) indicated that they earned at least one industry approved credential in their high school CTE hospitality program. Adversely, only five (20%) of the instructors earned an approved credential in high school, and only one (33%) of the foodservice managers earned one or more industry approved credentials while in high school. The industry approved credentials earned by each group can be found in Table 5. Data shows that many respondents earned more than one industry approved credential while in high school. The graduate group data shows more than 200% attainment of credentials (n = 108).

Table 5

Earned Industry Credential by Group Classification of Respondents

Credential	Ohio ProStart Graduates		Ohio ProStart Instructors		Foodservice Managers	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
ProStart	89	89	1	20	1	33
ServSafe Manager	53	53	5	100	1	33
ServSafe Foodhandler	70	70	2	40		
ACF	3	3				
Other	3	3				
Total # of Credentials	218	200.1	8	32	2	66

Credential	Ohio ProStart Graduates	Ohio ProStart Instructors	Foodservice Managers
Total (n)	108	25	3

Graduate Specific Data

For this study, Ohio ProStart graduates were asked if they completed a 2-year CTE hospitality program while in high school. Ninety-three (86%) of the graduates did complete a CTE hospitality program during their high school years, while fifteen (14%) did not complete a CTE hospitality program. The graduates that indicated that they did not complete a 2-year CTE hospitality program may be considering "non completion" status if they did not earn the ProStart Certificate of Achievement (COA) because instructors only referred graduates of their CTE programs, earning the ProStart COA was not a requirement for referral to this study. When comparing the percent of graduates that selected the earned ProStart credential (89%) to those that did not earn the ProStart credential (11%), the data indicates similar outcomes and may account for "non completion" self-reported indicators.

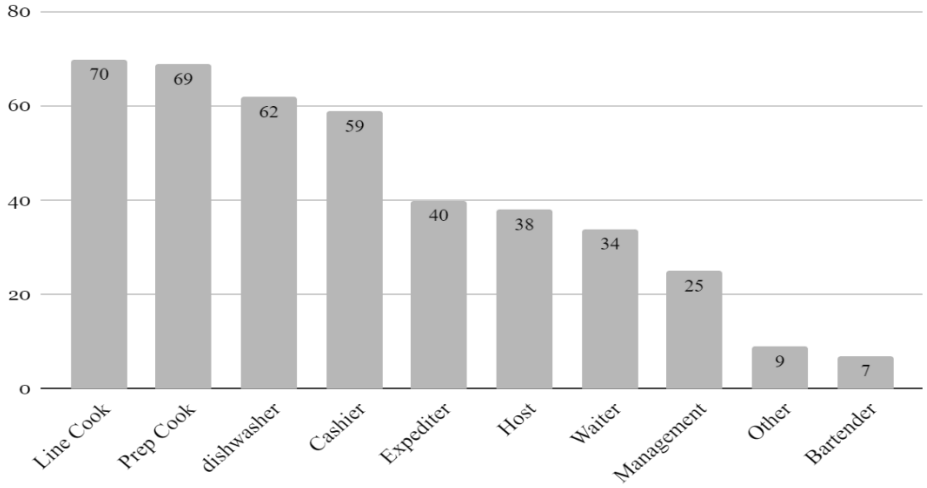
Graduates were asked if they were still employed in the foodservice industry. Out of the 108 graduates surveyed, 66 (61%) are still employed in the foodservice industry and 42 (39%) are no longer employed in the industry. Although graduates are qualified to work in entry level positions in the foodservice industry indicated by the percentage of earned industry credentials (200.1%), the percent of graduates that have left the industry (39%) within eight to ten years after graduation is cause for concern because the industry is losing workers that have knowledge and certifications specific to the foodservice industry.

Graduates indicated job positions held by each during their time working in the foodservice industry. There were ten different job classifications listed in the survey. The data

indicates that on average, the graduates worked about three jobs between graduation and when they took the survey. A list of jobs held by graduate participants and the frequencies of each job can be found in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Job and Frequencies of Graduate Respondents



Note: Ohio ProStart Graduates (n=108); Total # Jobs Held = 413; Mean Total # Jobs Held = 3.82

The last descriptive demographic characteristic on a Likert scale from the graduate group was to distinguish how well the CTE program that they attended in high school prepared them for work in the foodservice industry. If graduates "somewhat disagree" or "strongly disagree" that their program did not prepare them for work in the industry, they were prompted to describe what should be included in CTE hospitality programs for future graduates by writing a short response. Only four graduates (4%) indicated that they felt the CTE hospitality program that they completed in high school did not prepare them for work in the industry. The suggestions given by these four graduates to help improve educational practices for CTE hospitality programs are for instructors to "teach more customer engagement skills," that foodservice is "not for everyone," to offer "real situations" such as working with a "minimal staff," and, to "incorporate more food safety skills" into the coursework. The first three suggestions are quite logical,

however, the request to incorporate more food safety skills into the coursework might indicate that food safety skills are taught to CTE students, such as a curriculum like ServSafe Manager, but that the food safety skills might not necessarily be reinforced in the classroom and utilized in the workplace. A high number of graduates agreed (96%) that their high school CTE program gave them the adequate skills needed for work in the foodservice industry.

Instructor Specific Data

The number of years that instructors spent teaching a CTE hospitality program are as follows: five (20%) have been teaching 1 to 3 years, six (24%) indicated 4 to 6 years teaching a hospitality program, one (4%) indicated they had been teaching 7 to 9 years, and 13 (52%) respondents stated teaching more than 10 years. More than two-thirds of the instructors surveyed (n = 25, 80%) are not novice CTE hospitality instructors, while only 20% are in the beginning of their CTE education careers as instructors. For this study's purposes, instructors that have been teaching for 10 or more years are considered experts in classroom content and pedagogy in hospitality and foodservice. These instructors' experiences and insights are an invaluable segment of this study as they highlight their own involvement working in the industry, but also their interactions and observations of students as they navigate the foodservice industry during and after completing a CTE hospitality program. Knowing that more than half of the instructors in this study are seasoned instructors creates validity during the triangulation analysis of data.

Manager Specific Data

Three foodservice managers were interviewed using an interview guide and were asked how many years of experience they had in the foodservice industry, specifically in a management position. Manager #1 stated having more than 17 years of managing in the industry, Manager #2 discussed having more than 27 years of managing experience, and Manager #3

described having 11 years of management experience. The three foodservice managers that participated in this study hold more than 55 years of combined management experience in the foodservice industry. As experts in their field, the interviews and responses from these individuals further strengthen the results of this study because their experiences offer valuable insight into the higher level management responsibilities in the foodservice industry, and can be triangulated with the instructor and graduate data to yield and compare key factors derived by the respondents' perceptions that contribute to turnover and attrition in the industry.

Instrumentation

Attrition and turnover research across many industries exists, however, the surveys and questionnaires were not fully compatible with the research questions in this study. Surveys from prior research were used for reference when determining design but were not utilized or implemented as the tool for collecting data. The literature review produced many survey instruments that measured job satisfaction, motivation, or turnover intention by using dedicated scales that produced a score which was used for statistical analyses. Examples of such measurement tools include the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), the Turnover Intention Scale (TIS), and the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS; Mobley et al., 1978; Spector, 1994; Van den Broeck et al., 2021). Scales such as these were not appropriate for this study because the aim here was to uncover reasons or factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012; Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018; Graham, 2020; Kukanja & Planinc, 2012; Wildes, 2008).

Researcher designed surveys were the primary data collecting instrument for the Ohio ProStart CTE graduate and Ohio ProStart CTE instructor responses. The survey for the Ohio ProStart CTE student graduate group titled "Survey for Students" and the survey for the Ohio

ProStart CTE instructor group titled “Survey for the Instructors” were developed based on a review of literature related to hospitality and foodservice turnover and attrition (Appendix F, Appendix G).

The process for creating the two surveys and the interview guide began with the researcher determining the project's goals, or the driving purpose of the study. After the research questions were developed, the audience or target groups were identified. Multiple months were spent reviewing the literature on foodservice turnover and attrition. Many topics surfaced in the literature and were referenced during the initial phase of creating the survey questions.

Approximately 10 to 12 factors surrounding turnover and attrition emerged in the readings. Because wages, salaries, hours, schedules, and work-life balance were prominent factors in prior research, these items were included in the development of both surveys and the interview questions moved around citations in alphabetical (Bebe, 2016; Chuang & Lei, 2011; DiPietro et al., 2020; Ekincek & Günay, 2023; Hakro et al., 2022; Robinson & Baron, 2006; Robinson & Beesely, 2010). Job satisfaction within the foodservice industry emerged frequently in the literature review; therefore, factors contributing to job satisfaction, such as physicality of the job, culture, and work environment were included in the discussion while creating the survey questions and the interview guide moved citations in alphabetical (Alshammari et al., 2016; DiPietro et al., 2020; Ekincek & Günay, 2023; Gan & Voon, 2021; Hakro et al., 2022; Hasbiah & Idris, 2023; Kim et al., 2018; Kukanja & Planinc, 2012; Markkanen et al., 2021; Mobley, 1977; Mohsin & Lengler, 2015; Suhairom et al., 2019; Sull et al., 2022; Thangaswamy & Thiyagaraj, 2017; Wills et al., 2018; Zopiatis et al., 2018).

Issues pertaining to stress, stigma, opportunity for growth, and burnout also occurred frequently in the literature and because of that, both were added to the survey and interview

guide development discussion (Bebe, 2016; Chuang & Lei, 2011; Choudhury, 2013; Ekincek & Günay, 2023; Hakro et al., 2022; Kohli & Mehta, 2022; Murray-Gibbons & Gibbons, 2007; Park & Min, 2020; Pavesic & Brymer, 1989; Robinson & Barron, 2006; Robinson & Beesley, 2010; Salama et al., 2022; South, 2021; Wildes, 2005; Xiang et al., 2022). Finally, management and leadership factors were mentioned in the literature, which included management practices, attitudes, support, and training (Bebe, 206; DiPietro et al., 2020; Heimerl et al., 2020; Rusinowitz, 2020; Sull et al., 2022; Tews et al., 2020).

The factors manifested from the literature were presented during discussions and brainstorming sessions between the researcher and an expert in technical education and career development. Using these emerging issues from the literature review, the survey and interview guide questions were fashioned. The number and type of questions for the surveys and interview guide were carefully constructed and edited over two weeks to avoid ambiguity, bias, and generalizations, and refined for wording consistency across the education level of the participant groups (Glasow, 2005). After the survey questions and layout were finalized, two surveys were created using Qualtrics. One survey for the Ohio ProStart graduates, one for the CTE instructors, and interview guide questions for the foodservice managers. Two separate surveys were necessary because each group of participants were asked specific questions regarding their backgrounds, and recently graduated CTE students have very different occupational experience and history compared to CTE hospitality instructors. An interview guide was needed to prompt conversations with the foodservice managers to discuss topics related to the study while still allowing for open dialogue to develop.

After the survey instruments were completed and reviewed by the researcher, they were then tested by sending the survey link to the researcher' Kent State University email address. The

researcher took the survey and ensured responses were being collected correctly. After testing the survey, an accessible link for each survey was given to the respective pilot groups. The two separate pilot groups consisted of 23 high school students and two ProStart educators. Not only did the pilot panels test the survey links, both groups were also instructed to report unclear wording and to check for understanding and logical sequence of the questioning. After pilot-testing was completed, the survey data from both groups was analyzed to ensure accurate collection, and then the data was deleted, not to be used in the study. The interview guide was peer reviewed and edited by five foodservice industry members (more information regarding the pilot testing and peer review procedures can be found in the validity section of this chapter). Once these testing procedures were completed, IRB approval was obtained, and data collection timelines were determined, the survey was activated for use and the interviews were scheduled.

CTE Student Survey

The first section of the student graduate survey collected demographic characteristics, education, training, and job-related information. The second section had participants rate factors that contribute to foodservice attrition and indicate their preparedness using a Likert scale. The third section of the student graduate survey established participant suggestions and recommendations for changes to educational and industry practices to reduce foodservice turnover and attrition.

CTE student participants were asked eight demographic characteristics questions regarding education, training, and job information that required short-answer or one-word responses. There were fifteen questions on the survey based on students' perceived factors that contribute to foodservice attrition. The participants were asked to rank each statement according to importance using the following scale: "1 = strongly disagree," "2 = disagree," "3 = neutral,"

"4 = agree," and "5 = strongly agree" (A list of Survey Questions for Students are listed in Appendix F). The last of the fifteen Likert questions asked students to answer using the previous scale to indicate if they felt their CTE program prepared them for work in the industry. If respondents answered "disagree" or "strongly disagree" they were prompted to describe, in short answer format, what should be included in CTE programming that could help graduates in the future. All the Likert scale responses were analyzed to determine scores on the importance scale for factors contributing to turnover and attrition in the industry based on participants' perceptions and responses. The demographic characteristics were used to describe the sample population. There were two short answer questions where participants were asked to offer factors that contribute to turnover and attrition and then suggest possible recommendations and suggestions for changes to the industry or educational practices that could reduce turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. These responses were analyzed to identify common themes. These themes were used to determine recommendations to help reduce foodservice turnover and attrition in the future.

CTE Instructor Survey

The survey for Ohio ProStart instructors entitled "Survey for Instructors" was used to explore Ohio ProStart CTE instructors' perceptions of issues that workers face in the industry. The first section of the instructor survey gathered demographic characteristic data, education and training, and job-related information. The second section had participants rate factors contributing to foodservice attrition using a Likert scale. The third section of the instructor survey allowed instructors to share their suggestions and recommendations for changes in education and industry practices that could help decrease foodservice turnover and attrition.

The instructor survey consisted of six demographic questions asking for education, training, job and teaching information. There were fourteen questions in the survey based on factors that contribute to foodservice turnover and attrition. The participants were asked to rank each statement according to importance using the following scale: "1 = strongly disagree," "2 = disagree," "3 = neutral," "4 = agree," and "5 = strongly agree" (A list of Survey Questions for Instructors are listed in Appendix G). The Likert scale responses were analyzed to determine the importance of factors that contribute to workers leaving the industry. The demographic characteristics of the instructors were used to describe the participants. There were two short answer questions where responses were coded based on recurring themes to determine possible solutions that might reduce foodservice attrition. Instructors were an important part of the surveying process because they not only have first-hand experience in the industry, but they also work with and train students for foodservice jobs and have relationships with industry members. Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality instructors' knowledge and expertise was a much-needed aspect of this inquiry to determine if educational processes assist or impede student success in the foodservice industry.

Foodservice Manager Interview Guide

Foodservice managers were interviewed using a specifically designed interview guide for foodservice manager interviews titled "Interview Questions for Foodservice Managers" (Appendix E). The first goal of the in-person interview guide was to allow foodservice managers to identify demographic characteristics, education, training, and management-related information. The second goal of the interview guide was to allow managers to discuss factors, in their professional opinion, that lead to worker turnover and attrition. The last goal of the interview guide was to give managers the opportunity to offer suggestions and recommendations

for improvement in the foodservice industry and in CTE hospitality programs to decrease turnover and attrition.

The foodservice manager instrument for in-person interviews was created by the researcher to allow the managers to voice opinions and perceptions based on their "real time" experiences in the industry. This questionnaire consisted of ten open-ended questions regarding length of time working in the industry and jobs held, years of experience managing, interactions and experiences with employees, thoughts on why workers switch jobs or leave the industry, and recommendations and suggestions to decrease turnover and attrition. (See Interview Guide for Foodservice Managers for interview questions in Appendix E). The open-ended questions were important to establish individuals' experiences, relationships, and interactions with employees in the foodservice industry. The final question asked participants to discuss their suggestions for solutions to help reduce foodservice attrition. This last question was important so that managers could share what they think workers, instructors, employers, and business owners should do to combat attrition in the foodservice industry.

Trustworthiness

The researcher established trustworthiness in the presentation of materials and self by honestly and directly posing the aims of the study to the participants (disclosure and exchange), acknowledging the researcher's relationship with the university where a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction is being sought (posturing), and making private information public in an ethical way (Schram, 2006). The researcher also needed to build relationships with the participants in a professional and approachable manner while still setting expectations and boundaries that allowed "respectful negotiation, joint control, and reciprocal learning" (Schwandt et al., 2007, p. 17). The researcher-participant relationship is one of balance, give and take. The process of

research begins with the end in mind, and as a result, the researcher must establish ways to keep the doors of communication open yet conclude the work at hand often with the possibility of acquiring more data down the road. This is a delicate dance, and it is important for the researcher to disclose procedures so that participants realize the full scope of the objectives without confusion (Schram, 2006).

When using data from a survey instrument, the researcher places a vast amount of time and energy into ensuring that the data is credible, dependable, confirmable, and transferable (Forero et al, 2018). Researchers need to justify interpretations of qualitative data and ensure that truthfulness and dependability are supported. In this study, validity of the data, coding, and themes were reinforced by member checks which allowed the interview participants to have ample time to read their transcriptions for content accuracy, authenticity, and consistency, and were given an avenue to correct and restate their responses for clarity. As described by Creswell (2016), "Member checking is when the researcher takes back to the participants their themes . . . and asks the participants whether the themes are an accurate representation of what they said" (p. 192). The three foodservice managers received their transcripts via email with instructions to read and make any necessary corrections and send the documents back to the researcher with their indicated notes. If further clarification was needed beyond reading and adding notes, the foodservice managers were to call and discuss the transcripts on the phone or in person with the researcher.

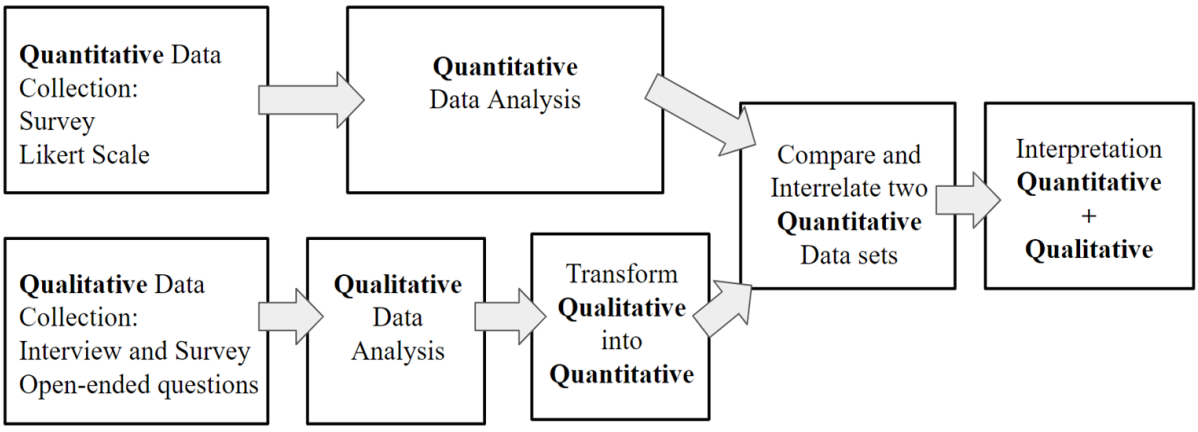
The researcher used peer debriefing (exposing the transcripts and coding to a disinterested, neutral professional in an external audit) to establish that themes and codes from the interviews and short answer survey questions were identified correctly and to ensure that values associated with the qualitative data were accurately recorded (Creswell, 2016). In this

study, peer debriefing was utilized more than once throughout the data analysis process (Schwandt et al., 2007).

Creswell (2016) states that triangulation "refers to building evidence from different sources to establish the themes in a study" (p. 191). Creswell's overall steps of data analysis, including triangulation, are as follows: have text available (transcriptions), read the texts multiple times, take notes, determine code labels, group similar codes to build evidence for broader categories (themes), use software to organize findings, inter code (peer debriefing), triangulation, and finally, consider reflexivity (researcher's experiential influence) when interpreting the findings (Creswell, 2016). Triangulation of data for this study was accomplished by recording and comparing data from the Ohio ProStart graduates' survey, the Ohio ProStart instructors' survey, and the foodservice managers' interviews. All three data sets were collected and analyzed so that comparisons and inferences could be established between groups. The triangulation data transformation design was used. A visual representation of the data transformation model can be found in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Triangulation Design



Note: Figure adapted from Creswell (2013)

Instrument Validity

The validity of the two survey instruments was established through a review by two different panels. The CTE student graduate survey was reviewed by 23 Northeast Ohio CTE hospitality students that have participated in a CTE hospitality program and have worked in the foodservice industry. The survey review was held on December 4, 2023. Of the CTE students who reviewed the student survey, 12 were male and 11 were female. The students were asked to indicate if the questions on the Qualtrics survey were easy to understand, easy to execute, and showed importance for data collection purposes. Students were also asked to indicate if questions regarding attrition were relevant to what they witness in the workplace during their time of employment in the industry. The review panel found that the survey was easy to read, required no preparation in advance to take, and offered a straightforward line of questioning. The responses from the survey panel were collected and analyzed. Upon retrieval of the trial Qualtrics student survey panel responses, the researcher determined that the survey links were in working order and accurate data was generated from the surveys. The trial responses were only used for testing purposes and were deleted after completion.

The CTE instructor survey was reviewed by two CTE hospitality instructors in Northeast Ohio on November 27, 2023. The two CTE instructors were emailed the sample survey questions and directed to make note of items that were not clear and then asked to add items that they felt would assist in data collection. Both CTE instructors hold impeccable records as instructors and have a combined 45 years of experience in the foodservice industry. Both instructors on the review panel were asked to indicate if the survey asked the correct questions to develop a clear understanding of instructors' roles and responsibilities in training CTE hospitality students. The

panel was also asked to indicate if they would be interested in learning more about the results of the survey upon its completion.

The validity of the industry member interview guide instrument was confirmed through review by a CTE hospitality advisory panel of five industry members (stakeholders). During a yearly meeting held on November 29, 2023, the advisory members indicated that the interview materials were pertinent to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. Panel members were also asked to indicate if any additional questions or information needed to enhance the study interview guide (Appendix G).

Data Collection

The format for gathering data in this study was survey method and in-person interviews. The surveys collected demographic statistics, Likert scale, and short answer responses from both the graduate and instructor participants. The foodservice manager interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. According to Batterton and Hale (2017), "Surveys focus on measuring attitudes and these attitudes are almost universally measured using Likert scales. The results of these surveys often drive policy decisions" (p. 32). Attitudes about the subject matter are important to collect, but it must be acknowledged that Likert scales pose an issue with ordinal values. There are responses between the suggested scale options are not recorded numerically, and the participant must choose between the survey response options given even though they may feel "between" two choices on the Likert scale (Sullivan & Artino, 2013). For this study, inferences will be made based on the respondents' choices on the Likert scale and used to show agreement, prevalence, or importance pertaining to factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. Averages are not appropriate analyses for this study because there is no average accumulation within each set of responses; however, the frequency and

percentage of each choice shows a better representation of importance and prevalence according to the respondents' perceptions.

Participants were not harmed during the study and the study posed no physical risk. If a participant had a bad experience in the industry, they may have felt uncomfortable discussing negative situations. Participants could leave the study at any time. Student participants answered closed and open-ended questions on a Qualtrics survey. The link to the student survey was provided to students through email. It was expected that participants would spend less than 15 minutes completing the survey. The online Qualtrics student survey assured anonymity and that the participants did not have to report their participation to any management, leadership, or their past instructor entities. The Qualtrics survey was sent via email after Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and occurred as early in the study as possible to ensure enough time for data collection and analysis.

Names of participants were not used in data collection. The participants' information was kept confidential, and every participant was de-identified from their responses. The de-identifying of each participant was done to protect anonymity and personal information. Participants were not able to begin the survey without reading and providing consent via the Qualtrics link. The data collection period for Ohio ProStart CTE graduate responses was approximately three weeks. The entire process from initial contact to data analysis took no more than six weeks. The initial Qualtrics survey was sent via email after Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and occurred as early in the study as possible to ensure enough time for data collection and analysis. Of the 186 graduates referred by instructors for the study, 108 (58%) responded. All 108 of the graduates who proceeded to the Qualtrics survey provided full consent to participate.

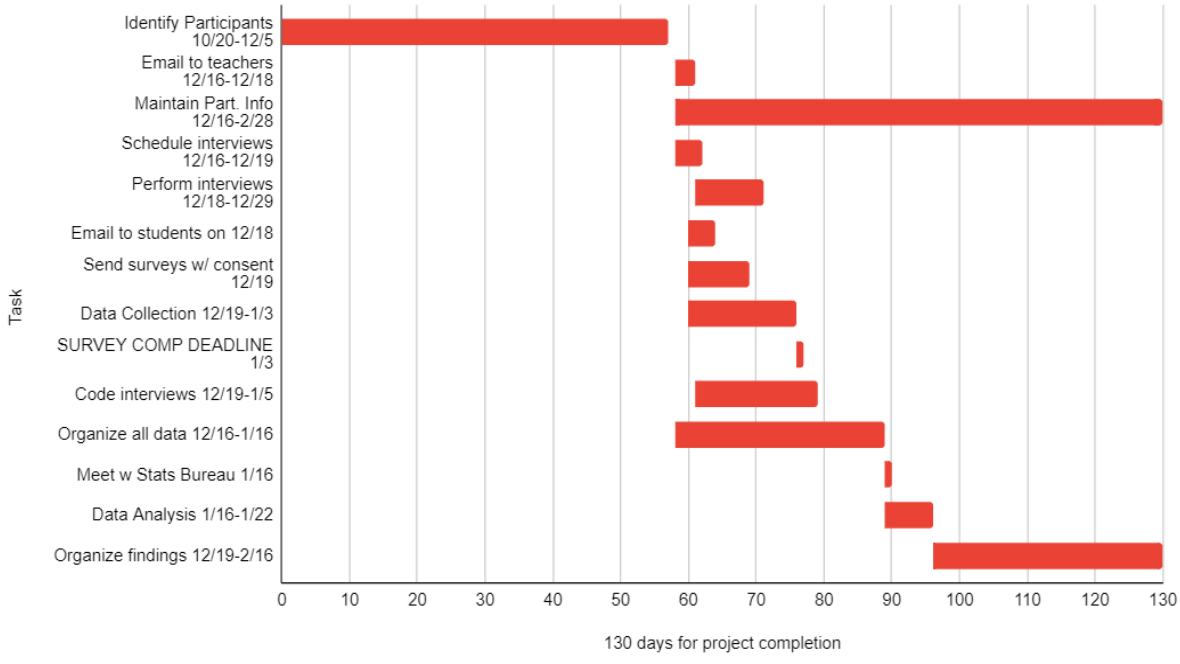
Instructor surveys were conducted via Qualtrics. Names were not collected or used for CTE instructors. Anonymity was maintained for the Ohio ProStart CTE instructors by de-identifying responses for each participant. As with the graduate survey, the instructor Qualtrics survey was sent via email after Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and occurred as early in the study as possible to ensure enough time for data collection and analysis. The data collection period for instructor responses was about two weeks. The entire process from initial contact to data analysis took no more than six weeks. There were 69 Ohio ProStart instructors. Of the 69 instructors on the list, 25 (36%) agreed to participate in the study by completing the consent. All 25 of the instructors who proceeded to the Qualtrics survey provided full consent to participate.

Letters discussing the study were either emailed or hand-delivered to foodservice managers. Foodservice manager interviews were scheduled after this initial contact. This process was used to ensure managers' interest and participation in the study. Participating foodservice managers chose a time and location that was best for them for the interview. In-person interviews were recorded, and notes were taken during the interview to highlight key ideas and words that would help clarify (and code) the participants' initial responses. The interviews took no more than one hour each to complete. Foodservice managers were given the researchers email address if they wanted to share more information or touch on any points they might have missed during the interview. To protect identities, names of foodservice managers nor names of businesses were used. Manager participants were referred to as "Manager #1", "Manager #2," and so forth. The data collection period for foodservice managers' responses was about two weeks. The entire process from initial contact to data analysis took no more than four weeks. There was a total of three foodservice managers interviewed.

For all participants, there was no time limit to complete the survey, but surveys had a due date to ensure that responses were available for processing and analysis at the end of the collection period. Participant responses were not changed once recorded to fit any narrative; responses were solely the ideas and opinions of the participants and were not modified. Ohio ProStart CTE instructors and foodservice managers were not part of the student graduate interviewing process. For this study, all three groups were independent of each other. Each participant within a group had the same survey or interview questions as the rest of the participants in their group. The researcher had no responsibilities or loyalties to any individual or group of participants. The researcher earned no financial gain from this study. Transferability and replication of the findings are important for the future of CTE hospitality program curriculum and teaching practices. A Gantt chart is provided in Figure 7 as a visual timeline for the research project's duration. The complete project required 130 days (about 4 and a half months) of research and editing starting on October 20, 2023, and ending on February 28, 2024.

Figure 6

Project Gantt Timeline



Data Analysis

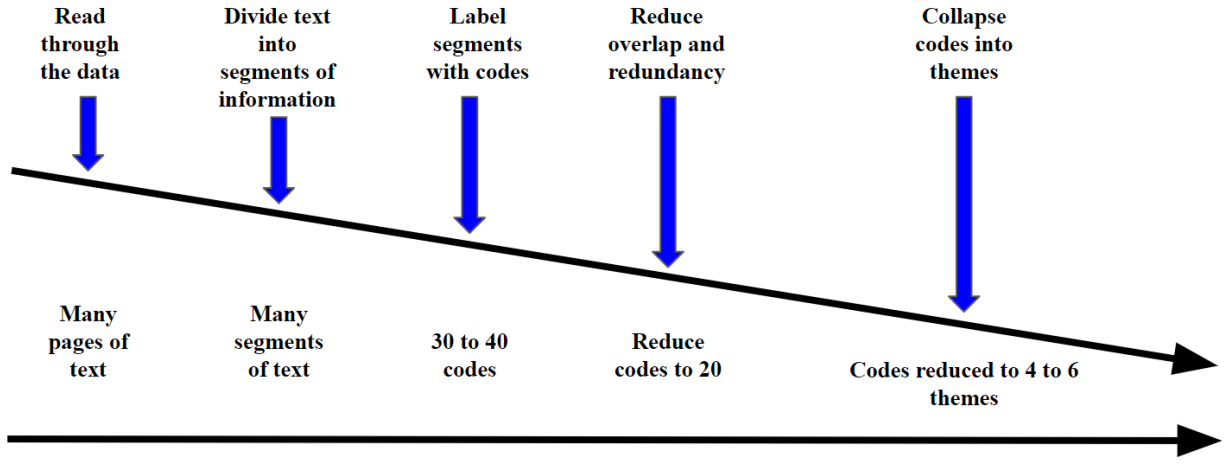
A mixed methods approach was used for this research study. Structured survey questions allowed the researcher to collect prior CTE student data and to ask open and closed-ended questions about participants' work experiences and perceptions of factors that contribute to foodservice worker turnover and attrition in one instrument. Foodservice managers were interviewed in person by the researcher and asked open and closed questions about their work experiences and perceptions of factors that contribute to turnover and attrition. Narrative content and thematic analysis (TA), the active process of searching for patterns in qualitative data were used in tandem to break down the information gathered in the surveys and interviews while always using participant identifiers for concealment of identity. According to Guest et al. (2011), "Thematic analyses move beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focus on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, that is, themes" (p. 10). Codes were developed in TA to represent themes, compare code frequencies, and display relationships between codes with the use of graphics. By using inductive analysis through the TA approach, codes were not predetermined, a purposive sample was common, and data initiated the codes (Terry et al., 2017). The researcher needed to carefully read and re-read the data to look for keywords, trends, and ideas before any actual analysis took place (Guest et al., 2011).

Demographic characteristics were collected from the Ohio ProStart graduates and instructors using a Qualtrics survey which produced solely quantitative data. This quantitative data was compiled in a spreadsheet and analyzed using a statistical application to be used as descriptive statistics of the sample. Qualitative data was gathered from all three groups of participants. The Ohio ProStart graduates and instructors were given short answer questions on their respective surveys which allowed for multiple short answer responses. The foodservice

managers' qualitative data was collected during recorded, in-person interviews using a researcher designed interview guide. The foodservice manager interview recordings were then transcribed using Trint. Thematic coding was used for the short answer responses from the graduates and instructors, and the interview dialogues from the foodservice manager interviews. Codes and themes were then established and compiled in a spreadsheet according to the survey question, group, and participants' responses. These qualitative codes were then transformed into quantitative data based on the number of times these words or phrases were encountered in the responses. The findings and representations of each qualitative data set can be found in Chapter 4 of this study. The data sets were then compared looking for interrelations. Creswell (2016) offers a useful coding process that condenses many pages of text to themes by utilizing a series of five steps. Creswell's five-step coding process is depicted in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Creswell's Coding Process



Note: Adapted from Creswell (2016)

Truth and correctness in coding participant responses was completed by the researcher and a neutral, disinterested professional to maintain that the coding process was the same for each completed set of survey responses. For interpretation of the data and reliability of the

coding process, a four-category scheme was used during informal intercoder comparisons (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020). The four categories used for coding were: 1) Compensatory, 2) Environment, 3) Management, and 4) Worker Feelings and Qualities. Merriam-Webster (2024) defines compensatory as payment for a thing of value, or a service rendered. Because wages are payments to workers, hours and schedules are connected to wages, and benefits are closely related to hours, schedules, and wages; these items were grouped together as Compensatory. Environment is best defined as objects, conditions, or circumstances by which one is surrounded and may include conditions that influence behaviors (Merriam-Webster, 2024). The Environment category included workers, customers, atmosphere, and opportunity growth. According to Merriam-Webster (2024), management is described as a collective body of those who manage or direct. The Management category incorporated not only the person known as the supervisor, but also the behaviors, attitudes, and actions of the person in charge. Many participants used words like "bad boss" and "unfair boss" to describe reasons why workers quit. During the coding process, these types of responses were placed in the Management category. Feelings are considered an emotional state or background of one's awareness, and qualities are considered distinguishing attributes (Merriam-Webster, 2024). The many differences among workers, including work ethic, feelings of stress and appreciation, the need for rewards, and personality traits were classified in the Worker Feelings and Qualities category. The data determined supplied the codes, meaning and context determined the pattern and group the code fell under, then broad words, like "Management" and "Environment" were used for the themes. The themes were officially named once the codes were identified and collapsed.

The coding process was methodical and labor intensive. The Qualtrics surveys provided participant responses from the two open-ended questions. The Ohio ProStart graduate survey

qualitative data was kept separate from the Ohio ProStart instructor qualitative data. Both sets of responses for each of the two questions were printed from the Qualtrics link once the data collection period ended and the survey links were disabled. The researcher read through each set of responses a minimum of three times to allow for an understanding of the varied responses of each sub-group. The researcher took two days away from the printed responses to ensure, upon return, a fresh look at the responses one last time before beginning the coding process.

Using the printed responses for the Ohio ProStart graduates and instructors, the researcher highlighted repetitive words in the same color marker. An example would be the words pay, salary, wages, or money; these words were all highlighted in green. A few samples of graduate responses are: 1) “Better hours, Higher pay, Nicer bosses,” 2) “Consistency with scheduling, Not abusing the workers that are most reliable, Better pay,” 3) “Have patience, Trust yourself, Love what you do.” In sample number one, “Higher pay” would be highlighted green. In sample number two, “Better pay was highlighted green. In sample number three, nothing was highlighted green because the statement did not apply to pay, salary, wages, or money. Any words associated with money in both sets of responses were highlighted green. The number of green highlighted words were counted and recorded in a spreadsheet under the heading “Wages.” A separate spreadsheet was used for each group's responses. Many marker colors were needed to highlight commonly grouped repetitive words throughout the responses. One process that remained the same for both the Ohio ProStart graduates and the Ohio ProStart instructors was that if pay was highlighted green for one group, it was automatically highlighted green for the other groups to maintain consistency. A sample of highlighted code words, the number of times they were used by graduates and instructors and text examples of each can be found in Table 6.

Table 6

Sample of Respondent Codes from Contributing Factor Survey Question

Highlighted Word	Number Times used by Graduates	Examples of Graduate Responses	Number Times used by Instructors	Examples of Instructor Responses
Pay	36	Pay more	12	Limited Pay
Wages	9	Higher wages	1	Low wages
Money	19	Give us more money	2	Pay that money
Paycheck	1	Paychecks are too little	0	
Benefits	19	Benefits like Health Insurance	3	
Salary	1	Grant higher salaries	0	
Balance	0		2	Work/life balance
Hours	45	Too many hours	10	Long hours
Schedules	14	Horrible schedules	3	Miss out on events because of schedules
Management	3	Bad management	7	Bad management
Boss	28	Bosses don’t help	0	
Unfair	9	Unfair practices	0	
Training	8	Training is not enough	3	Poor training
Trained	5	Not trained correctly	0	
More Workers	2	Definitely need more workers	0	
More Employees	1	Hire more employees	0	
Skills	5	Skills don’t match job	0	
Customers	19	Customer behaviors	2	Lack of appreciation from customers
Appreciated	6	Not feeling appreciated	1	Unappreciated work
Stress	16	Stress when busy	3	On-call is stressful
Drama	2	Drama while working	0	
Attitudes-managers	0		1	Managers attitudes
Attitudes-workers	4	Attitudes are horrible	0	
Attitudes-customers	1	Attitudes of customers	0	

Highlighted Word	Number Times used by Graduates	Examples of Graduate Responses	Number Times used by Instructors	Examples of Instructor Responses
Opportunity	3	Opportunities to move up	5	Lack of opportunity for growth
Culture	0		1	Cultural shift
Workplace	3	Unfair workplace	1	Not a supportive workplace
Poor	1	Treated poorly	6	Poor leadership
Bully	0		1	Bully type environment
Harassment	0		1	Sexual harassment
Family	0		9	Balance family
Social	0		1	Not good social life
Burnout	0		1	Leading people to burn out
Mean	6	Treating people mean	0	

Once the set of responses for each of the two questions from the surveys for both the graduate and instructor groups were highlighted, the researcher counted the number of each highlighted word and recorded that number in the respective spreadsheet under the correct survey question heading, also known as transforming the data from a unit of language into numerical data (Creswell, 2013). Once the number of highlighted responses were recorded, the researcher set up a meeting with a disinterested professional (reader) for peer debriefing to verify there were not any missed words that needed to be added to the highlighted ones (Creswell, 2016). The professional reader was given time to do a word count independently and report the color and number count of each highlighted word. A code count was discussed and verified during this time, then recorded on the appropriate spreadsheet for each group and question number. There were over 40 different codes found throughout the graduate and instructor responses for both open-ended survey questions. Once the researcher and the neutral reader were satisfied with the first phase of coding, the next phase entailed grouping or narrowing down the different codes to less than 20 codes to reduce overlap and redundancy (Creswell, 2016). Table 6

gives a sample of codes found in the graduate and instructor responses corresponding to the factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in foodservice. Redundancy was found within the first column of codes. An example of the reduction of the codes from Table 6 can be found in Table 7.

Table 7

Example of Reduction of Codes and Collapsing Process

Highlighted Word	Collapsed to or Named	Further Collapse
Pay	Wages and Pay	Compensatory
Wages	Wages and Pay	Compensatory
Money	Wages and Pay	Compensatory
Paycheck	Wages and Pay	Compensatory
Benefits	Benefits	Compensatory
Salary	Wages and Pay	Compensatory
Balance	Work Life Balance	Compensatory
Hours	Hours	Compensatory
Schedules	Schedule	Compensatory
Family	Work Life Balance	Compensatory

The final phase of coding included the researcher and the neutral, disinterested professional logically grouping words, or collapsing the codes into themes initiated by the literature review topics. Using the identified factors from Table 2 in Chapter 2 and the process of coding provided by Creswell (2016; Figure 6), the codes were grouped according to the overarching aspect where the code was housed. Money, wages, pay, benefits, and paychecks all deal with monetary and payment issues that employees obtain from working. The scheduling,

hours, work/life balance all affect the money that workers earn. Collapsing these main ideas into a theme that pertained to compensation was logical based on where the code fit into workplace situations. Table 8 shows the theme classification and examples of codes below each identified theme. A comprehensive dictionary of codes and themes derived from the text produced in this study can be found in Appendix H.

Table 8

Criteria Chart used for Themes and Coding of Participants Responses

Compensatory	Environment	Management	Worker Feelings & Qualities
Wages & Pay	Consistency	Poor Practices	Workers not Serious
Benefits	Customer Relations	Bad Boss	Rewards
Hours	Growth Opportunities	Mean Boss	Stress
Schedule	Lack of Workers	Unfair Practices	Burnout
Work Life Balance	Training	Re-branding	Work Ethic
	Skilled for the Job	Recuriting	Appreciated
	On-boarding	Communication	Morale
	Mentoring	Empathy	Poor Personality Fit
	Negative Workplace		Teamwork
	Supportive		
	Unions		
	Creativity		

Creswell's (2016) process for coding was also used to analyze the data from the foodservice managers' interviews. The only difference between the survey response coding process and the interview coding process was the added step of transcription. Transcription was completed using the Trint program. The interviews supplied over three hours of conversations that were analyzed. The transcription converted voice recordings to text. The texts for all three

interviews were then downloaded as .pdf documents. These documents were shared through email with the foodservice managers so that they could read over the transcriptions and ensure accuracy of the conversations (member checking) (Creswell, 2016). Each foodservice manager sent an email or text stating that the transcriptions were correct except for a couple jumbled or misspelled words, which posed no issue with the context and understanding of their responses and viewpoints. The researcher read the transcribed interviews in full three times. The same process as mentioned earlier during the survey coding was used with the transcription pages of all three interviews. Repetitive words were highlighted using colored markers. When possible, the same color of marker identified similar codes found in the survey responses. For example, if a foodservice manager mentioned wages and pay, these words were highlighted green, just as they were for the graduate and instructor responses.

Table 9

Sample of Foodservice Manager Transcription Codes

Highlighted Word	*Manager #1* Number of Times Used	Examples of *Manager #1* Responses
Pay	11	You can only pay so much
Money	5	Expect to make a bunch of money
Hours	7	More working hours today
Schedules	2	Schedule is the same every week
Wages	3	It could be wages
Balance	5	That’s a fine balance
Family	4	Family life aspect
Benefits	4	Offer benefits
Salaries	1	Full time salary-40 hours
Work Life	3	Poor work life
Management	12	Ultimately it falls down on management

Highlighted Word	*Manager #1* Number of Times Used	Examples of *Manager #1* Responses
Customers	7	Customers are always looking for the next newest thing
Boss	7	It's how the bosses make them not feel welcomed
Cares	1	I feel like my boss cares
Consistency	2	Consistency from one shift to the next
Fair	1	It kind of is fair. If you treat everybody how they need to be treated
Training	8	Put in a position and never given the training
Skills	3	Fine technical skills they can do to offer something
Mean	5	I don't want to sound mean, or rude, or disrespectful
Opportunity	3	Not enough opportunity for growth
Trained	1	More independence from workers once they are trained
Work Ethic	3	The whole work ethic of employees
Attitudes	2	You have an attitude towards me
Motivation	2	Lack of motivation
Stress	3	Handling mistakes and stress
Burnout	2	The other big thing is burnout in general
Organization	1	Multi-tasking and time management, organization I think are the biggest things
Communicate	1	Teaching good communication
Time Management	1	Multi-tasking and time management, organization I think are the biggest things
Multi-Task	1	Multi-tasking and time management, organization I think are the biggest things

The neutral, disinterested professional (reader) was employed again to read the transcriptions, look at the identified codes, count and verify with the researcher for accuracy before the totals were tallied on a separate spreadsheet. Collapsing the many codes and initiating themes was agreed upon by the researcher and reader. Data files were shared with the

dissertation advisor for review. When the reader and researcher looked at the codes produced by the manager interviews, paring down of the codes became necessary to organize the data into manageable pieces. Redundancy was found within the first column of codes in Table 9. An example of the reduction of the codes from Table 9 can be seen in Table 10.

Table 10

Example of Reduction of Codes and Collapsing Process for Manager Transcriptions

Highlighted Word	Collapsed to or Named	Further Collapse
Pay	Pay	Compensatory
Money	Pay	Compensatory
Hours	Hours	Compensatory
Schedules	Hours	Compensatory
Wages	Pay	Compensatory
Balance	Work Life Balance	Compensatory
Family	Work Life Balance	Compensatory
Benefits	Work Life Balance	Compensatory
Salaries	Pay	Compensatory
Work Life	Work Life Balance	Compensatory

The researcher and the professional reader discussed the themes for the manager transcriptions and agreed that the Compensatory theme incorporated parts of the workplace that had a relationship with money, work hours, and actions that are affected by money and work hours.

After the survey and interview data were collapsed and organized in a spreadsheet, the researcher used Excel to create visual representations of the findings based on themes as they

pertained to the research questions. Please see Figure 8 for an illustration of an Excel spreadsheet page with collected data for instructor factor responses.

Figure 8

Excel Spreadsheet Screenshot

#	Hours	wages/pay	schedule-work li	benefits	opp for growth	job itself-expecta	lack of interest	harrassment
1	1							
2	1		1					
3		1		1				
4			1					
5	1		1					
6					1			
7								1
8	1		1	1				
9		1	1				1	
10	1					1		
11		1		1	1			
12	non answer							
13	1	1				1		
14					1			
15		1						
16		1	1					
17	1		1					
18		1				1		
19	1	1	1	1				
20	1	1	1					
21		1			1		1	
22		1			1			
23		1						
24	1		1					

	Hours	Higher wages/pa	schedule	benefits	opp for advance	customer behavi	hire more ppl	team morale
Totals	10	12	10	4	5	3	2	1

46.2	36	Hours, Schedules, Pay, # of workers
24.6	19	Environment
19.2	15	Management
10.3	8	Worker Feelings & Qualities

Quantitative data analysis software, such as SPSS, was used to compute descriptive statistics. The data derived from the surveys and interviews were triangulated to showcase factors that contribute to turnover and attrition from the perspective of Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality graduates, Ohio ProStart CTE instructors, and foodservice managers. The researcher used Excel spreadsheets to analyze the data for each group of participants, transforming the results into figures that visually describe the data. It was important to capture the perspectives of all three participant groups in one graph so that the differences between groups can be defined.

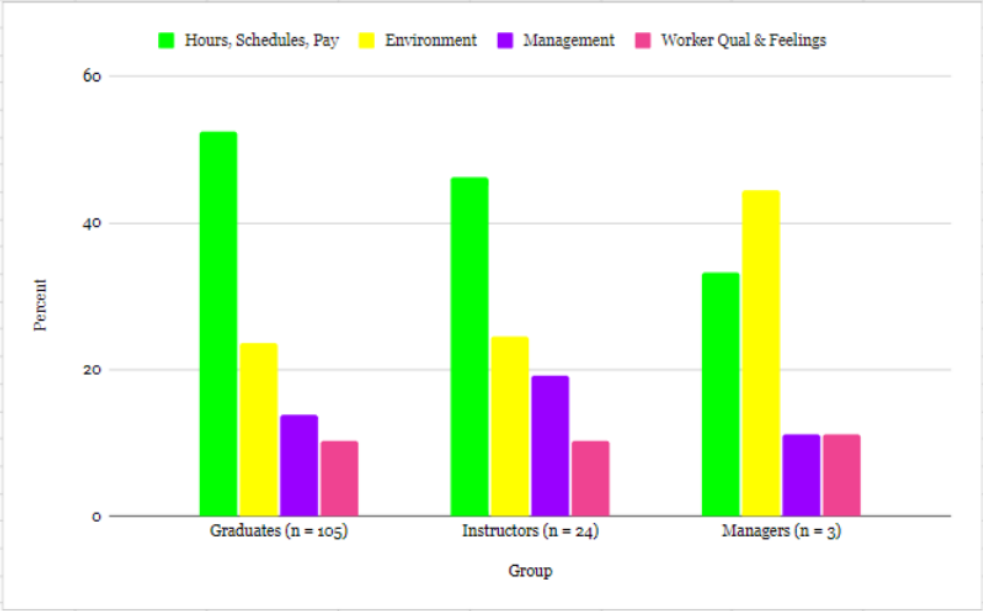
An illustration of the triangulated data from all three participant groups for their responses for factors that contribute to turnover and attrition can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Excel Spreadsheet of Triangulation

Factors Chart

Group	Hours, Schedule	Environment	Management	Worker Qual & Feelings
Graduates (n = 105)	52.5	23.6	13.8	10.2
Instructors (n = 24)	46.2	24.6	19.2	10.3
Managers (n = 3)	33.3	44.4	11.1	11.1



CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This study's purpose was to determine factors contributing to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. Data for this study was collected from 108 ProStart graduates, 25 ProStart instructors that responded to the survey instruments, and three foodservice managers that participated in recorded interviews. The data for this study was gathered by using two specifically designed Qualtrics surveys and one interview guide. The survey data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The qualitative data were transcribed using Trint, Thematic Analysis, and then coded using manual thematic coding.

In this chapter, the study results are presented according to the research questions. The first goal of the study presents the perceived factors, according to the respondents, that most contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. The second goal of the study was to establish suggestions and recommendations for the foodservice industry. These suggestions and recommendations are compared among all three groups of participants.

> What are the perceived factors (as Indicated by graduates of CTE hospitality programs, CTE hospitality instructors, and foodservice managers) that most contribute to workers leaving the industry?

Addressing the first research question involved the identification of perceived factors that most contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry among all three groups of participants.

The Ohio ProStart graduates, and Ohio ProStart instructors were asked to respond to the same fourteen survey questions regarding perceived reasons why workers leave the industry using a Likert scale. Responses from the graduates and instructors from these fourteen questions

can be found in Table 11 and Table 12. There are a few interesting comparisons between these two groups regarding perceived reasons why workers leave the foodservice industry. Data from graduates (n = 101, 84%) and instructors (n = 24, 86%) alike indicated “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that management and leadership issues play a role in why workers are leaving the foodservice industry. Ninety-six percent of instructors indicated that hours and scheduling are not conducive to family life, while only 68% of the graduates “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement. Both groups of respondents “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that wages are not high enough for the cost of living and wages are a contributing factor to why workers leave the foodservice industry, with graduates indicating approximately 84% and instructors 78%, respectively. The data from the final question on the survey shows that 46% of graduates, and 66% of instructors “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that the industry does not provide opportunities for growth. The difference between both groups could be a product of time and experience in the industry as instructors are more likely to have stayed in the industry, moved up the ladder of success, and consider teaching hospitality or culinary as a final steppingstone in the industry. It is possible that graduates have not worked in the industry long enough to reap the benefits of opportunities for growth and longevity at this stage of their career.

When responding to the survey questions on the Likert scale, graduates indicated the following five questions as most important. The items are shown in ranked order according to the percentage of “strongly agree” responses regarding the statements below.

Workers are leaving the foodservice industry because . . .

- Wages are not high enough for the cost of living. (52.5%)
- Places of unemployment are understaffed. (51.5%)
- Management and leadership issues in the workplace. (34.7%)

- Hours and scheduling are not conducive to family life. (33.7%)
- Workers do not feel appreciated by customers. (31.7%)

The Likert scale questions answered by the graduates indicate that wages are of the utmost importance, and this supports research by Cantrell & Sarabakhsh (1991) and Kesavan & Dhivya (2022). Although these two studies were done three decades apart, both studies identified salary and wages as the largest contributor to turnover and attrition within their samples (Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991; Kesavan & Dhivya, 2022).

Additionally, more than 60% of the graduates were "neutral" or "disagreed" that growth opportunities in the industry were a reason for turnover and attrition. Discovering that growth opportunity within the foodservice industry is not a factor for workers leaving provides a positive outlook for those that wish to seek longevity in a foodservice career. The top five reasons are ranked in Table 11 and Table 12. Although the order of rank differs between the graduates and instructors, both groups "strongly agreed" for the same four reasons why workers are leaving the foodservice industry. The two items where the groups of respondents differ are the graduates ranked being appreciated by customers in the top five and instructors ranked a hostile work environment in the top five reasons why workers leave the industry.

Table 11

Percentages of Graduate Contributing Factors on Likert Scale

Question #	Rank Order of Strong Agree	Strong Agree	SW Agree	Neutral	SW Dis	Strong Dis
Workers are leaving the foodservice industry because . . .						
Q1-Management and leadership issues in the workplace	3	34.7	49.5	8.9	3.0	3.9
Q2-Hours and scheduling are not conducive to family life	4	33.7	34.7	19.8	9.9	1.9

Question #	Rank Order of Strong Agree	Strong Agree	SW Agree	Neutral	SW Dis	Strong Dis
Q3-Tasks and responsibilities are too stressful		9.0	25.7	26.7	27.7	10.9
Q4-Places of employment are understaffed	2	51.5	33.6	9.0	2.0	3.9
Q5-Creativity is minimized while on the job		21.8	22.8	27.7	19.8	7.9
Q6-A hostile or unwelcoming work environment		17.8	32.7	21.8	16.8	10.9
Q7-Workers do not feel appreciated by customers	5	31.7	33.7	20.8	5.9	7.9
Q8-Workers do not feel appreciated by co-workers		22.8	37.6	22.8	10.9	5.9
Q9-Wages are not high enough for cost of living	1	52.5	31.7	11.9	2.0	2.0
Q 10-Physical demands of the work are too difficult		18.8	31.7	19.8	18.8	10.9
Q 11-Negative events outside of workplace		26.7	39.6	20.8	7.9	5.0
Q 12-Workers are not trained properly for work demands		14.8	32.7	21.8	19.8	10.9
Q13-Employees endure unfair treatment on the job		19.8	41.6	22.8	12.9	2.9
Q14-Work in industry does not offer growth		6.9	21.8	24.8	28.7	17.8

Note: N = 101; 7 graduates did not respond

When responding to the survey questions on the Likert scale, instructors indicated the following five questions as most important. The items are shown in ranked order according to the percentage of "strongly agree" responses regarding the statements below.

Workers are leaving the foodservice industry because . . .

- Places of employment are understaffed. (54.2%)
- Hours and scheduling are not conducive to family life. (41.7%)
- Wages are not high enough for the cost of living. (34.8%)
- Management and leadership issues in the workplace. (26.1%)
- A hostile or unwelcoming work environment. (20.8%)

The results of the instructor Likert rankings defined understaffing as an issue of concern in hospitality occupations. Understaffing in foodservice is an issue that is important to employees. A recent study by Ntwakumba (2022) highlighted that understaffing in foodservice causes increased workload, health concerns, and eventual turnover for employees that wish to remain at an establishment.

Additionally, more than 60% of the instructors were "neutral" or "disagreed" that minimized creativity and opportunity for growth were reasons for quitting. It is interesting that instructors that educate the youth on the skills needed in the industry find that creativity is not stifled while on the job. This is a positive result for workers who enjoy the art aspect of culinary arts, and that educators feel art continues to be an integral part of the foodservice industry. This finding contradicts studies by Robinson and Barron (2007) and Robinson and Beesley (2010) that found that chefs have less work motivation because of limited creativity on the job, which in this study was stated as a more important factor than wages. This study relied on input from a sample of chefs and not from the other types of participants found in entry-level positions within foodservice establishments (Robinson & Barron, 2007; Robinson & Beesley, 2010). Prior research does indicate that lack of creative license can lead to on-the-job stress for chefs which can increase turnover and attrition (Salama et al., 2022; Kohli & Mehta, 2022). Conversely, the participants in this study did not rank stressfulness of the job as one of the top five reasons why workers leave the foodservice industry.

Table 12

Percentages of Instructor Contributing Factors on Likert Scale

Question #	Rank Order of Strong Agree	Strong Agree	SW Agree	Neutral	SW Dis	Strong Dis
Workers are leaving the foodservice industry because . . .						

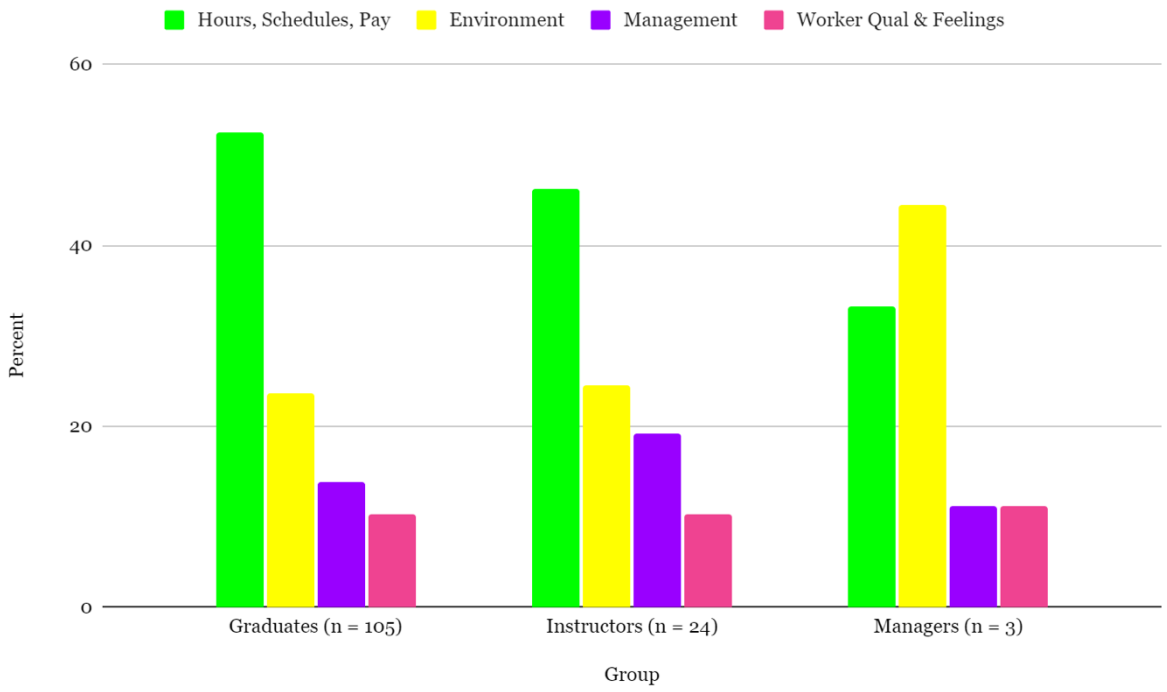
Question #	Rank Order of Strong Agree	Strong Agree	SW Agree	Neutral	SW Dis	Strong Dis
Q1-Management and leadership issues in the workplace	4	26.1	60.1	8.7	4.3	-
Q2-Hours and scheduling are not conducive to family life	2	41.7	54.2	-	4.2	-
Q3-Tasks and responsibilities are too stressful		12.5	37.5	16.7	25	8.3
Q4-Places of employment are understaffed	1	54.2	33.3	8.3	4.2	-
Q5-Creativity is minimized while on the job		4.2	33.3	20.8	29.2	12.5
Q6-A hostile or unwelcoming work environment	5	20.8	33.3	20.8	25	-
Q7-Workers do not feel appreciated by customers		8.3	58.3	25	4.2	4.2
Q8-Workers do not feel appreciated by co-workers		12.5	50	16.7	16.7	4.2
Q9-Wages are not high enough for cost of living	3	34.8	43.5	4.3	17.4	-
Q 10-Physical demands of the work are too difficult		1.3	34.8	30.4	17.4	4.3
Q 11-Negative events outside of workplace		4.3	43.5	43.5	8.7	-
Q 12-Workers are not trained properly for work demands		17.4	34.8	8.7	30.4	8.7
Q13-Employees endure unfair treatment on the job		8.7	30.4	34.8	17.4	8.7
Q14-Work in industry does not offer growth		-	12.5	20.8	29.2	37.5

Note: N=24; 1 instructor did not respond

The third part of the graduate and instructor survey asked participants to briefly describe three main factors that they feel contribute to foodservice turnover, and to offer suggestions and recommendations for changes in education and industry practices to reduce turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. The responses regarding contributing factors for the graduates (n = 106) and instructors (n = 24) can be found in Figure 10 and are organized by theme and frequency. A criteria chart used to detect codes and themes in the short answer responses on the graduate and instructor surveys and used throughout the transcriptions from the foodservice managers.

Figure 10

Contributing Factors by Participant Group (%)



Note: 105 graduates, 24 instructors, and 3 managers responded

The following themes were detected in the participant responses for factors contributing to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry: Compensatory, Environment, Management, and Worker Feelings and Qualities. Compensatory, Management, and Environment issues are organizational themes, meaning they are part of the work environment. Worker Feelings and Qualities are internal themes and are a part of the employee personal structure. (See Table 1 in Chapter 2 for more information on categorization of factors that lead to turnover and attrition). The Compensatory theme includes code words that pertain to wages, payment, benefits, hours worked, scheduling issues, flexibility of time, and issues with work-life balance that equate to time working and not participating in activities outside of the workplace. The Environment theme houses codes concerning many issues in the workplace, such as consistency among establishments, customer relations and behaviors, opportunities for growth in the organization,

understaffing issues, lack of skills need to perform jobs, training issues, on-boarding, mentoring and support, negative workplace, unionizing, and creativity. The Management theme is composed of codes that deal with leadership practices, management behaviors and attitudes (empathy), recruiting issues, leadership communication, marketing and re branding, and inequality (fairness) in the establishment. The Worker Feelings and Qualities theme encompasses issues that pertain to the workers and are internal to a person. Examples of Worker Feelings and Qualities codes identified in the participant responses are needing to be rewarded, seriousness of worker, stress, burnout, being appreciated, work ethic, personality, fitness of career choice, and belief in concept of teamwork. A more comprehensive table of codes and themes can be found in Appendix H.

Graduates and instructors alike identified Hours, Schedules, and Pay as the factor that most contributes to turnover and attrition. There are a vast number of studies that align with this response (Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991; Heimerl et al., 2020; Kesavan & Dhivya, 2022; Long & Perumal, 2014). Alshammari et al. (2016) discuss that monetary issues are important but that not all employees are motivated by money. The implied suggestion is that workers are motivated by money to get paid, but lack of passion decreases performance (Alshammari et al., 2016). Scheduling and hours propose a work-life imbalance that employees struggle with, yet without financial means, workers show an increase in stress levels no matter how dissatisfied they are with the pay and working hours (Kesavan & Dhivya, 2022).

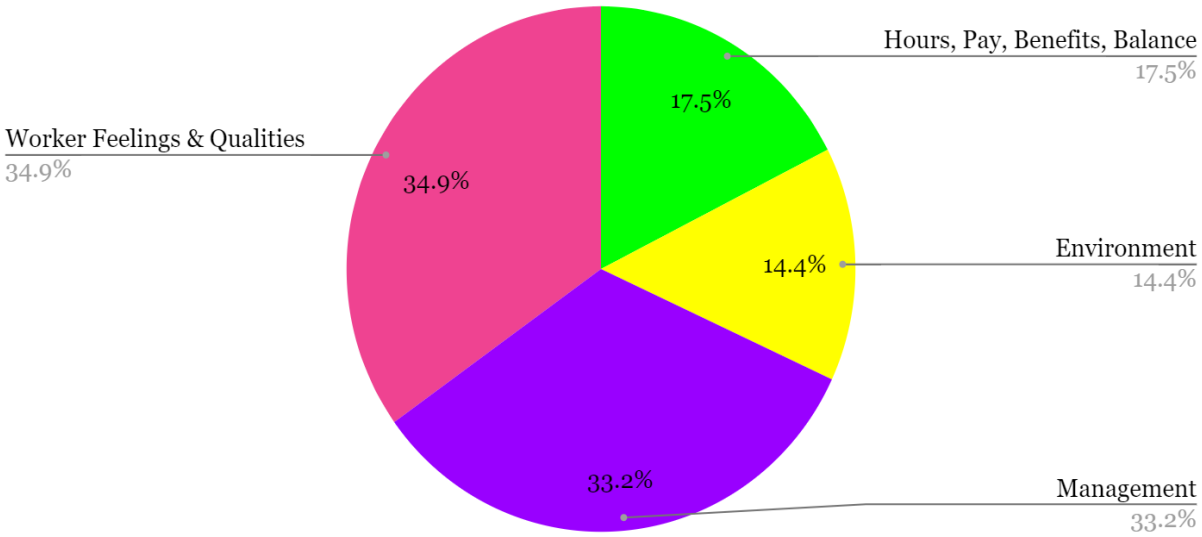
In addition to the graduate and instructors' responses to the factors contributing to turnover and attrition in Figure 10, the foodservice managers' responses are also included on the chart for comparative purposes. During their interviews, the foodservice managers (n = 3) were specifically asked to indicate three main factors that they felt contributed to turnover and attrition

in the industry. Manager #1 stated that “scheduling and work hours, culture of specific establishments, and stigma of the industry” were three main contributing factors to turnover and attrition. Manager #2 discussed “poor fit of personality of workers, overall organization of the establishment, and management issues” as three main factors contributing to turnover and attrition in the industry. Manager #3 stated that “long hours leading to poor work-life balance, lack of pay and benefits, and not enough opportunity for growth” as three factors that contribute to foodservice turnover and attrition. Of the responses given by the foodservice managers, 100% of the responses mirror the factors identified by the graduates and instructors. While all three foodservice managers indicated varied factors within their own group that lead to turnover and attrition, Environment being the most pronounced, their responses corresponded with previously identified themes. Factors in the workplace that are encompassed by the Environment theme support the idea that employee satisfaction is linked to the work environment and employee perceptions and feelings (DiPietro et al., 2020; Mohsin & Lengler, 2015; Tews et al., 2014).

The foodservice manager interviews addressed specific topics multiple times throughout the conversations, which indicated the importance of these issues and then these topics indicated codes. The more frequently a code appeared in the transcribed text, the higher the percentage of importance. An example of an Hours, Schedules, and Pay code comes from Manager #1 as he stated, “they [workers] want to work less and less hours, less weekends.” Another example of an Hours, Schedule, and Pay code can be found when Manager #3 stated that “long hours and poor work-life balance” are factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the industry. The frequencies of these codes and themes identified during the interviews can be found in Figure 11.

Figure 11

Foodservice Manager Overall Perceptions of Contributing Factors



The three foodservice managers indicated that Worker Feelings and Qualities (34.9%) were the most important contributing factors to the issues of turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. The managers also indicated that Management holds adequate responsibility (33.2%) when compared to all four themes. The fact that foodservice managers specify that a high percentage of the responsibility lies on their shoulders shows an understanding of the industry and the role that each workplace member plays in the delicate relationships between principals and subordinates. This data aligns with a study by Khilnani and Nair (2022) regarding worker intentions to leave. Multiple factors play a role in how workers feel while on the job and managers are at the forefront of employee development. Managers play an important role in fostering relationships with employees, and supervisors must look at the occupation through the eyes of the worker and provide flexibility, inclusivity, better training, and

offer regular performance feedback to keep employees motivated and committed (Khilnani & Nair, 2022).

As demonstrated here, multiple factors contribute to workers quitting or leaving the foodservice industry. Furthermore, suggestions and recommendations for solutions to the problem of turnover and attrition are equally important to identify so that positive changes can be initiated in the classroom and workplace.

> What does each stakeholder (graduates of CTE hospitality programs, CTE hospitality instructors, and foodservice managers) identify as needing to change in education and industry practices to reduce attrition and turnover in the foodservice industry and how Do these recommendations compare to one another?

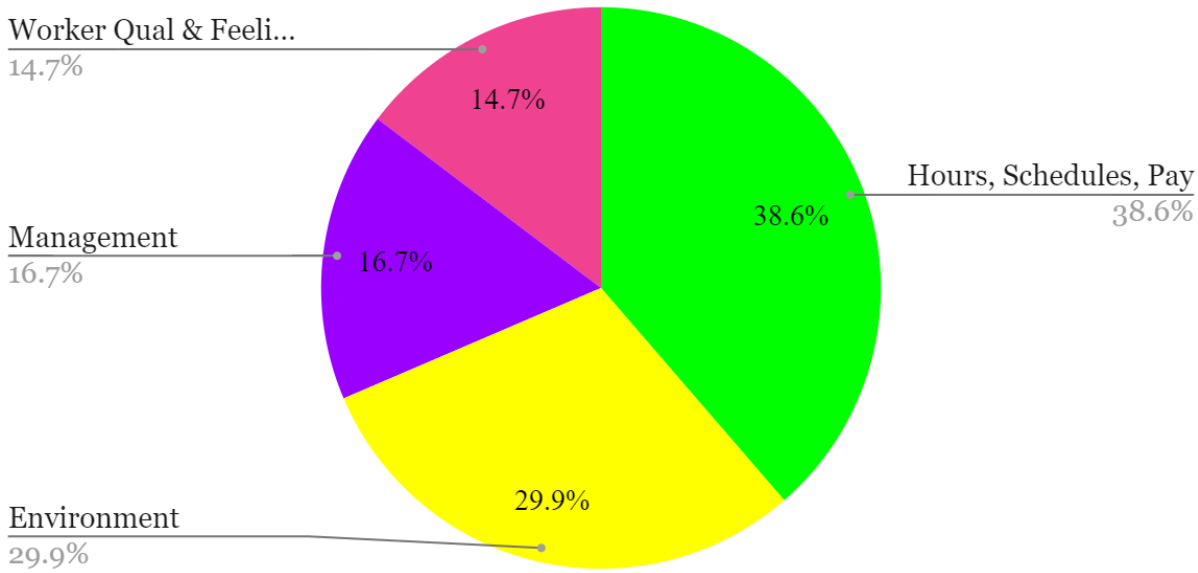
The second research question was designed to establish and compare suggestions and recommendations for changes in education and industry practices to reduce turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry from all participant groups. The graduates offered many insightful recommendations to decrease turnover and attrition.

The following codes and themes were detected in the participant contributing factor responses: Hours, Pay, Benefits, and Scheduling, organized under the Compensatory theme, were supplied by 38.6% of the graduates regarding higher wages, better schedules, benefits, pay reflects the work done, change work hours, and get rid of tipping. Codes found in the graduate responses for the Environment theme, 29.9% of the responses included: more positive workplace, more effective training, more opportunities for growth, cross-training, better safety procedures, less drama, more organized workplaces, more strict rules, reduce the locations of restaurants, and offer quiet break zones. Codes supplied by graduates categorized in the Management theme, 16.7% of the responses included: better trained managers, appreciation

shown more often by bosses, manager accountability, nicer bosses, allow more worker input, fairness, equality, and better placement of staff according to skills. Under the last theme, Worker Feelings and Qualities, 14.7% of the graduates indicated the following codes: all staff empathy, job respect and appreciation, offer rewards, less overload and work stress, and personality fitness for the job. Figure 12 summarizes percentages based on the themes derived from the recommendations provided by the graduates. The percentages shown for each theme incorporate areas where graduates feel solutions can be found to decrease turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry.

Figure 12

Short Answer Recommendations from Graduates



Note: 96 graduates responded to this survey question.

A few survey responses stood out. One graduate stated that “Closing some of the locations would help with the under-staffing issues.” This is a recommendation that would force some business owners to close their establishments but would be a rather fast solution to under staffing at most franchises like McDonald’s or Wendy’s. Another graduate said that “managers

need to quit abusing the workers that are most reliable." The context of abuse in the foodservice industry is harsh, yet it shows exactly how workers feel when asked to work multiple job stations and take on added hours due to lack of employees. One last suggestion was "to train everyone on each thing so everyone can lend a hand to help so [that] employees aren't burned out." Management and Environment themes combined play as large a role as Hours, Pay, Benefits, and Schedule. Graduates shared many thoughts surrounding management issues. They posed that if management would take care of executive issues such as better training for supervisors, show more appreciation toward workers, provide fairness to all workers, and couple that with work environment issues such as less drama, more positive workplace, and opportunities for growth in the workplace, nearly one-third of the factors affecting turnover and attrition could be circumvented. This data derived from the graduates in this study supports Fabrizio (2022) and Collins (2022) in their notions that leadership plays an important role in the happiness of workers, and care should be taken to nurture these relationships to decrease turnover and attrition.

Hours, pay, and scheduling (38.6%) continue to be a source of contention with workers, however, minimum wage increases and worker incentives like educational credits and scholarships could help workers create pathways for career growth. The workplace Environment (29.9%) also plays a large role, from the perspective of the graduates, as to why workers are leaving jobs and the industry. The way an establishment feels, whether it is the culture, the vibe, or the general atmosphere dictates if employees stay, which aligns with ideas from Sull et al. (2022) and suggest that an environment where workers feel disrespected, insecure, or uncomfortable is a powerful predictor of attrition.

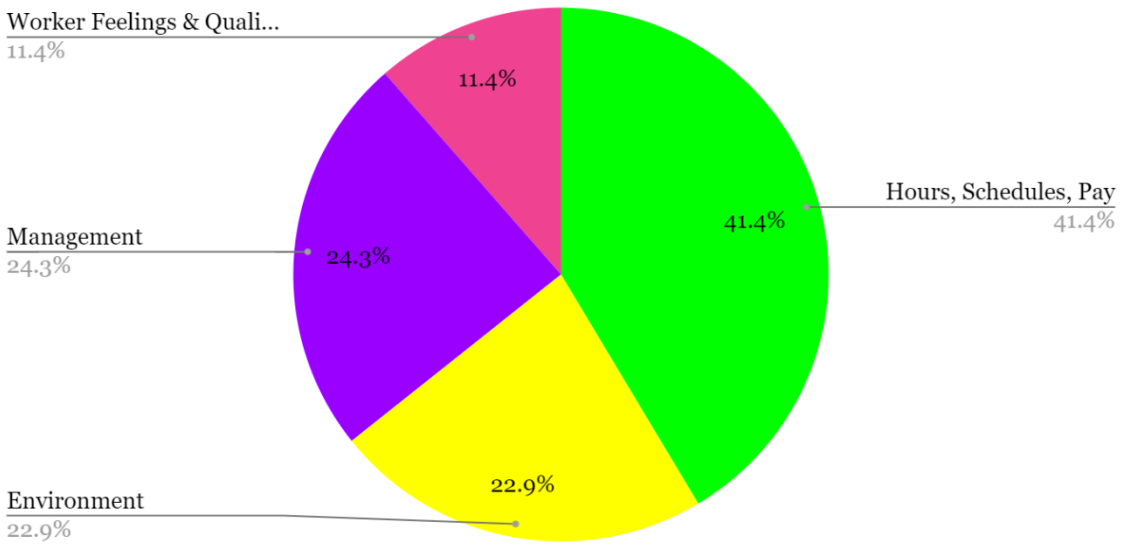
Instructors were given the same task as the graduates on the survey. They were asked to provide recommendations in education or industry practice to help reduce foodservice turnover and attrition rates. Figure 11 summarizes the overall percentage of themes acquired by the instructor short answer responses. Instructor themes were similar to those in the graduate responses; however, there were some differences in the coding. The theme of Hours, Pay, Schedules incorporated codes such as: better hours, higher pay and wages, and add in benefits. The Environment theme included codes like customer behavior, opportunity for advancement, hiring more people, team morale, increasing creativity, unionizing, and offering more support for new employees. For the Management theme, instructors provided code words such as: train workers better, utilize recruiting, re brand the industry, communicate expectations better, and more manager training practices. The codes supplied by the instructors for the Worker Feelings and Qualities theme included work ethics, rewards, reduced worker stress, and showing more worker appreciation. The instructors' percentages are comparable to that of the graduates. Both groups, 38.6% of the graduates and 41% of the instructors, stated that higher pay and better schedules would reduce turnover and attrition. Wages, scheduling, and work hours continuously appear as not only factors that contribute to turnover and attrition, but also as solutions to the issue which are viewed as avoidable cause of turnover and attrition in the workplace (Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991; Kesavan & Dhivya, 2022; Khilnani & Nair, 2022). Instructors put approximately 7% more emphasis on the managers' role in the workplace compared to the graduates, and approximately 3% less implication on Workers' Feelings and Qualities pertaining to turnover and attrition.

Instructors had many references to increasing wages and pay, reducing schedules and the number of hours worked, and adding benefits as incentives to retain workers. One instructor said,

"Use scheduling procedures that create more reliable time off." The idea that time off is not reliable indicates that workers feel that they can be called into work on their days off due to staffing shortages. With little time off, burnout and stress ensue, which can lead to turnover and attrition (Choudhury, 2013; Salama et al., 2022). Another instructor suggested "increasing wages is a good start, kitchen crews turn into family, so long hours can be overlooked and tolerable, when you have a kitchen family that works well together coinciding with a livable wage-it breeds higher morale." While management may be the solution to creating better schedules, offering higher wages, and improving training for workers, graduates and instructors alike vow that wages, hours, and benefits are key factors to creating environments where workers want to be for long periods of time. Figure 13 summarizes percentages based on the themes derived from the recommendations provided by the instructors. The percentages shown for each theme incorporate areas where instructors feel solutions can be found to decrease turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry.

Figure 13

Short Answer Recommendations from Instructors



Note: 24 instructors responded to this survey question

Once again, the most important recommendation response from the graduates (38.6%) and instructors (41.4%) was the Compensatory theme. Hours, scheduling, and pay weigh heavily in the solution to turnover and attrition as seen from the perspective of these two groups. Perceptions that higher wages and more conducive work hours could combat turnover and attrition are common. This data supports recommendations from Kesavan & Dhivya (2022), Cantrell & Sarabakhsh (1991), and Huang (2006) or increasing benefits and pay, providing more opportunities for advancement, and considering "tying managers' bonuses to employee retention" (Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991, p. 58).

During their in-person interviews, foodservice managers were asked to provide three recommendations for education and industry practice that might decrease foodservice worker turnover and attrition. Manager #1 said that teaching people skills and soft skills to CTE students could lead to workers that can deal with customers and co-workers more effectively. Manager # 1 also stated that "understanding the processes of servicing customers" is an important facet of the industry that is often the most difficult because customer behaviors are unpredictable, but their needs are usually straightforward. Teaching hospitality students the needed and desired communication skills supports a study by Cheng and Hitt (2018) highlighting what the foodservice managers in this study see in the industry. Aligning these insights with evidence that CTE programs do provide students with soft skills that enable more positive work interactions, students become more valuable workers (Cheng & Hitt, 2018; Engelhart & Mupinga, 2020). Manager #1 concluded by saying that managers that teach or model proper work ethic could have better relationships with their employees, which in turn, creates an environment or culture that is nurturing and more balanced (Tews et al., 2020). Manager #2 discussed that appropriate work behaviors need to be reinforced in CTE programs and in the workplace. Cell phones are an

issue that managers are having a challenging time adjusting to regardless of society's value or need for them. Manager #2 said that "communication skills are a lost art" and that "work skills, such as punctuality, focus and being open minded to the job" are areas of focus for instructors and managers if the industry desires to see change in workforce habits. This further supports the study by Cheng and Hitt (2018) with two out of the three foodservice managers in this study indicating that soft skills are a necessary characteristic of valued workers (Deba et al., 2014; Engelhart & Mupinga, 2020). Manager #3, the foodservice manager with the least number of years of experience mentioned that there needs to be an educational focus on common kitchen skills and communication. Manager #3 also discussed that entry level employees' "expectations are not on par with what is realistic in the industry," workers expect to advance quickly and reap financial rewards in a brief period. This could be due to television cooking shows publicizing careers as a chef to celebrity status, which gives young workers false assumptions about their own career path. Lui-Lastres et al. (2022) emphasizes that career opportunities are available instead of just filling empty positions. When employers tackle new employee orientation as a positive experience and offer reality of expectations of and potential gains to enhance worker well-being (Liu-Lastres et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2005). Lastly, Manager #3 said that entry level workers have a tough time handling mistakes and the stress associated with making mistakes so these workers "walk away" from viable jobs that in time could provide lasting career opportunities.

Foodservice managers play a key role in modeling appropriate work behaviors, treating employees with kindness and respect, and offering an environment where workers thrive (Zeffane, 1994; Stanz & Greyling, 2010). Manager #2 referenced a banking analogy when thinking about the worker-manager relationships in the workplace. Manager #2 said "everyone

has a bank deposit, you know, you're depositing stuff into there. And I'm not saying monetary, I'm saying rewards, or hey, you did this for me, so I'm going to do this for you. When it's time to take a withdrawal, you can pay me back." Manager #2 shows great insight into the worker-manager balance and said that how a boss treats their employees can make or break an establishment. This response supports research by Tews et al., 2020) that the climate or culture of a workplace are significant predictors of turnover and attrition. Employees expect to be paid for their work, regarded with empathy, and treated with respect. Managers expect their employees to respect coworkers and customers with that same amount of respect. Without either partner holding up their end of the bargain (or depositing into the account) the establishment ceases to exist (the bank account is empty).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Overview of Study

This study was designed to identify the factors contributing to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. There were three groups of participants: Ohio ProStart graduates, Ohio ProStart instructors, and foodservice managers. A survey was conducted and distributed to 108 Ohio ProStart graduates and 25 Ohio ProStart educators. The survey provided the demographic characteristics and qualitative data by requiring graduates and instructors to rank items on a Likert scale and respond to short answer questions. There were three foodservice managers interviewed for this study. The researcher used an interview guide which provided demographic information and qualitative data for the study. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Data from all three groups was coded using Thematic Analysis. The participants, through the surveys or interviews, shared their perceptions about the foodservice industry to help identify factors that contribute to foodservice turnover and attrition. Finally, the participants were asked to provide recommendations and solutions that could help decrease turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry.

This mixed methods study differs from many other turnover and attrition studies in three ways. First, scales that produce intention, motivation, and relationship scores were not used. A narrative approach was employed to capture the real experiences of the three groups of participants. The use of correlational analyses was not a procedure employed in this study. This study simply captured the words and experiences of the participants to find commonalities within the responses among the three groups so that factors could be identified and discussed to suggest solutions to decrease turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. Second, this study did not

focus on one type of foodservice establishment worker. The participants are or were employed in various types of establishments (fast-food, quick-casual, casual, and fine-dining). The type of work establishment was not a pre-requisite to participate in the study (Bebe, 2016). Lastly, the participants were chosen because of their connection to Ohio ProStart CTE programming (graduates), Ohio CTE hospitality education (ProStart instructors), and experiences in the industry with entry-level foodservice workers (foodservice managers). There exists a dearth of research on the topic that includes ProStart graduates and their perceptions of the workforce and reasons for quitting jobs in the industry after graduation. Through triangulation of the data of the three groups, a 360-degree view from the issue of turnover and attrition in foodservice was revealed.

Bebe (2016) performed a study using multiple regression of factors that correlate with turnover and attrition in fast-food workers, concluded by recommending further research on the issue of turnover and attrition in foodservice. Bebe (2016) states:

> The survey questionnaire was a Likert-type scale where participants could choose the answer based on their understanding, which limited participants to expand or express their opinions about the phenomenon. Therefore, using personal interview with semi structured design may help improve the situation. Using the design, the participants could explain their experiences in a more meaningful way than just answering the questions by using ordinal scale. A better explanation of the phenomenon can provide a better understanding. Having a broad understanding about the phenomenon can lead to better solutions to the problems. (p. 160)

The findings of this study indicate that graduates (workers), CTE hospitality instructors, and managers have varied perceptions regarding factors in the foodservice industry that

contribute to turnover and attrition. When participants were asked to offer three reasons that they felt contributed to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry, four main themes emerged from the qualitative data: Compensatory, Environment, Management, and Worker Feelings and Qualities. From the responses from all three groups of participants, multiple codes were identified as contributors to the main themes that reinforce reasons why foodservice workers leave their jobs in the industry. The Ohio ProStart graduates indicated that the Compensatory theme (n = 108, 52.5%) was the most prevalent reason why workers quit hours, schedules, and lack of benefits as the most cited reasons.

The Ohio ProStart instructors also indicated the Compensatory theme (n = 25, 46.2%) was the most important factor of why for foodservice workers. When specifically asked to give three factors that contribute to turnover and attrition, the foodservice managers cited the Environment theme (n = 3, 44.4%) as the most important issue contributing to foodservice turnover and attrition. Foodservice managers further cited training and communication, workplace culture, and lack of opportunity for growth as examples. However, because the foodservice managers were interviewed, their narratives provided richer data for this study. During the interviews with foodservice managers, four themes emerged. The overall perceptions from the foodservice managers indicated that Worker Feelings and Qualities (n = 3, 34.9%) play the largest role in why workers quit or leave the foodservice industry, and cited stress, personality, and lack of work ethic as perpetuating factors. According to prior research, these factors can be linked to motivation and overall job satisfaction (DiPietro et al., 2020; Huang, 2006; Mohsin & Lengler, 2015; Park & Min, 2019).

When all three groups of participants were asked to offer suggestions and solutions that might help decrease foodservice turnover and attrition, again, four themes emerged from their

responses: Compensatory, Environment, Management, and Worker Feelings and Qualities. The Ohio ProStart graduates (n = 108, 38.6%) suggested that the Compensatory theme could make a difference in employee retention, specifically raising wages, reducing work hours, and offering better schedules. The Ohio ProStart instructors (n = 25, 41.4%) suggested the same Compensatory theme contingencies as the graduates; higher wages, increased benefits, reduced work hours, and more conducive scheduling for work-life balance. Higher wages were consistently discussed not only as a factor that contributes to turnover and attrition, but also as a solution to the problem. This has been supported by multiple studies showing that pay and benefits can lead to employee satisfaction, which leads to decreased quitting (Alshammari et al., 2016; Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991; Herimerl et al., 2020; Khilnani & Nair, 2022; Liu-Lastres, 2022; Long & Perumal, 2014; Rony, 2017; Stanz & Greyling, 2010).

Although there were only three foodservice managers, each offered three specific responses regarding suggestions for the industry to help decrease turnover and attrition. The foodservice managers offered balanced answers between Management and Worker Feelings and Qualities themes. The managers concluded that management must provide ample modeling of appropriate work behaviors, initiate more on-the-job training, and communicate expectations while workers need to be open and responsive to the managers' efforts to offer more growth opportunities and create a more positive work environment (Kim et al., 2005). Such opportunities need to be communicated to employees early in the hiring and on-boarding processes to call attention to the longevity potential of the career (Tews et al., 2020; Beer et al., 1984). One interesting aspect of the solutions offered by the foodservice managers was that none of the three managers stated that wages, hours, benefits, or scheduling would be viable solutions

to the issue of turnover and attrition, which was a noticeable contrast to the views of graduates and instructors.

Discussion

The main purpose of this research was to identify and explore factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry so that recommendations for change can be given to those who work in the industry, such as CTE hospitality instructors, foodservice managers, business owners, and industry stakeholders to decrease turnover and attrition rates and promote career longevity.

Many factors contributing to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry surfaced in the reviewed literature and the results of this study. These factors can be connected to show that while quitting issues persist in the industry, practical solutions are hiding in the data. The first piece to the puzzle of turnover and attrition in foodservice is employee motivation and compensation. In this study, participants indicated that stigma, stifled creativity, morale, company culture, and staffing shortages were reasons why workers quit jobs in the industry, but these were not the most influential factors that contribute to turnover and attrition according to the participants' responses. The Ohio ProStart graduates, and the Ohio ProStart instructors cited wages, hours, schedules, and lack of benefits as the most important factors that contribute to turnover and attrition. Motivation of workers relies on balance between input and output, how other workers are performing, relationships within the workplace, and personal beliefs (Chernayak-Hai & Rebenu, 2018; Kukanja & Planinc, 2012; Wildes, 2005, Wildes, 2008). Workers expect to be paid for their time and effort (Wildes, 2008). The data in this study indicated that the perceptions of the foodservice workers surveyed feel that they are underpaid, overworked, and they desire benefit options as enticements to remain at a job for longer lengths

of time. Foodservice managers and business owners can weigh the benefits of paying a worker more money per hour in the hopes that they will remain loyal to the establishment, but the data also indicated that the workplace environment must undergo some changes to create a space where employees want to continue to work.

By looking at environmental factors in the workplace, we find the second piece of the foodservice turnover and attrition puzzle. The employee life cycle affects the workplace environment, therefore, understanding this process is a key to solving the effects it has on foodservice workers' decisions to leave jobs. Beer et al. (1984) divided the employee life cycle into three stages. The first stage, the inflow stage, was found to be of importance to the ProStart instructor participants in this study as they stated that better recruitment of employees would benefit the industry. The instructors suggested that managers need to make sure that the workers who fill vacant positions are interested in the foodservice industry and ensure that these new workers have the desired skills needed to handle the pace of work. It is enlightening that Ohio ProStart instructors see the first stage of the employee life cycle as a place to begin transforming the issue of quitting in the foodservice industry. Instructors and educators tend to tackle tasks at the very beginning and problem-solve with forward momentum (Timperley et al., 2008). Methodical and thorough recruiting procedures befit every establishment; new workers need to be carefully selected at the onset of the hiring process. Nevertheless, there is an issue with this train of thought because fast food is a rapid and dynamic industry. Establishments are desperate for workers to fill open positions, and it takes too long to recruit, assess, and select entry-level employees in this careful and deliberate manner.

Suggestions from both the Ohio ProStart graduates and the CTE instructors that can renew the workplace environment were to create a more organized and positive workplace, offer

more opportunity for growth, find a way to curb customers' negative behaviors, and offer more support and training for newly hired staff. These are reasonable requests that are supported by the literature about workplace environment, opportunity, and support and training (Al-Suraihi et al., 2021; Alshammari et al., 2016; Beer et al., 1984; Heimerl et al., 2020; Khilnani & Nair, 2022; Mohsin & Lengler, 2015; Liu-Lastres et al., 2022; Long & Perumal, 2014; Tews et al., 2020; Zeffane, 1994). These requests need to be considered by managers, business owners, and stakeholders. While increased positivity and organization cost practically zero dollars to prescribe, actions that support these ideas are more difficult to initiate due to the amount of responsibilities that managers and supervisors already have on their shoulders.

Management is the third piece of the turnover and attrition puzzle and plays an important role in the recruitment process, yet in this study, the three foodservice managers did not indicate that they were choosing the wrong employees during the recruitment phase. However, there is one concept regarding the last phase of the employee life cycle that is highly overlooked in the foodservice industry; talking with employees that quit to gain valuable information about why they are leaving (Verlinden, 2023). Exit information takes time to collect and evaluate, but neglecting to gather this important information could mean the cycle of turnover and attrition will continue. Managers and business owners should take note of this simple and inexpensive way to have conversations with workers that quit to collect worker feedback in the hopes of transforming workplaces by utilizing the concerns and suggestions from those workers that vacate their positions and making positive adjustments that benefit the present and future workers (Kesavan & Dhivya, 2022).

Managers and business owners essentially hold all the cards in their hands. Managers are responsible for recruiting, hiring, training, and nurturing employees. Managers play a role in all

the phases of the employee cycle (Beer et al., 1984; Gladka et al., 2022; Kesavan & Dhivya, 2022; Smithers, 2003). Considering the vast number of hours that managers in this study spend working in foodservice, surely, they can acknowledge that changes need to be made in the workplace to create a more tolerable and sustainable environment for those employees looking for lasting careers in foodservice. Managers need to take the time to screen newcomers, model appropriate work behaviors, implement better on-boarding and training routines, and mentor those workers that desire opportunities for growth in the industry (Beer et al., 1984; Collins, 2022; NRA, 2018). By looking into the indicated factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in this study, managers and business owners can find a place to begin the rebirth of the foodservice industry; one that offers support, flexibility, diversity, and opportunities for career longevity to those that desire work in the hospitality and foodservice industries (Bebe, 2016; DiPietro et al., 2020; Heimerl et al., 2020; Rusinowitz, 2020; Sull et al., 2022; Tews et al., 2020).

Management practices are an issue that came up repeatedly on the Ohio ProStart graduate and CTE ProStart instructor surveys. During their interviews, the foodservice managers declared much of the responsibility for how employees feel, behave, and communicate while on the job. Managers understand that they are coaches, role models, and sometimes parents to their staff. The graduates stated that empathy from management, better on-boarding practices, and fairness were all things that needed to be improved upon in the workplace. According to Bradshaw (2023a), ten percent of employees admit to leaving their jobs due to poor on-boarding practices. On-boarding is often one of the first experiences an employee has with their immediate manager or supervisor (Pendell, 2023). If this training is not organized with purpose, introduced with importance for the sake of the company, and put into practice for all employees, then the time and money spent on training is wasted (Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013). If managers (trainers and

coaches) do not take the appropriate amount of time to develop and apply training strategies with new employees, workers feel unsatisfied and unprepared for the work that lies ahead of them, and they will seek out other employment opportunities (McFeely & Wigart, 2023; Patrick & Sundaram, 2023). Workers that feel valued, have purpose, and are nurtured tend to be more loyal (Verlinden, 2023).

Managers also need to be clear about expectations during the on-boarding phase so that workers have a clear picture of the job (Kim et al., 2005). This idea could decrease turnover and attrition because workers acquire more job satisfaction when they feel they are given reasonable work demands (Kim et al., 2005). With technology at our fingertips, on-boarding software programs are readily available for business owners, but if a company wants to engage new foodservice employees, hands-on, interpersonal training might be a worthwhile approach and is relatively inexpensive to facilitate. According to the graduates surveyed in this study, managers and supervisors that perform on-boarding need to be empathetic, engaged, patient, and intuitive. New employees need to feel wanted, important, and invested in the time spent on them while learning company policies and procedures. Managers and business owners alike need to consider that the amount of effort spent grooming new employees could produce, in the long run, a happy staff that sticks around for lengthier periods of time (De Smet et al., 2022).

On-the-job fairness is an issue that highlights structural imbalances and can lead to turnover and attrition (De Smet et al., 2022). Fairness in the workplace came up over twenty-five times in the graduates' survey responses. The graduates referred to fairness about scheduling, but overall, the context of the responses pertained to how management treats workers. A sample of these graduate responses were "bosses are not fair, fairness on the job, bosses have favorites," and "unfair practices." Clearly the graduates indicated that managers and bosses pick and choose

which employees get better treatment while working. The foodservice managers did not deny playing a role in workers' feelings, but there were not any references in the manager interviews regarding "favorites" or liking one employee over another. The managers interviewed in this study discussed that "all" employees need to be treated like family and with respect and fairness. Manager #2 discussed that the relationship between worker and boss is a delicate one and said that employees are like a banking system. Manager #2 stated:

> It's those relationships that you're building along the way that's rewarding [for] everybody. I mean, everyone has a bank deposit. You're putting your depositing stuff into there. And I'm not saying monetary, I'm saying reward or, hey, you did this for me, so I'm going to do this for you. When it's time to take a withdrawal, hey, I need you. Can you do this for me? You know, you have some credit for that.

Managers interviewed in this study understand there is a give and take process regarding employee and supervisor relationships. Employees, especially less experienced ones, need time to learn this banking process, gain trust with their bosses, and ask for help or clarification when needed. Not one time in this study did the graduates mention asking for help at work and being turned down by their managers.

The fourth piece to the puzzle of turnover and attrition is how workers feel. Overall, the foodservice managers in this study discussed that Worker Feelings and Qualities were the most important factors that contribute to turnover and attrition. The ProStart graduates in this study had many thoughts about how they felt while working. Graduate survey responses frequently stated that they felt unappreciated by managers and customers, that rewards could make working in the industry more tolerable, and that on-the-job stress needed to be addressed so that workers do not feel abused or burned out. These perceptions are fully supported by research done by

Huang (2006) that investigated motivation within individual workers (locus of control); consequently, finding that management must embrace factors that employees find valuable, and offer these as incentive to decrease quitting. The instructors mirror the graduates' ideas about rewards, reducing stress, and finding ways to increase feelings of appreciation for all employees. In contradiction to this finding, Cantrell & Sarabakhsh (1991) found that lack of recognition for good work performances was not a major issue contributing to turnover or attrition. This disagreement may be due to the general attitudes, motivation factors, and satisfaction standards of millennial workers or that this sample of workers need more nurturing in the workplace due to feelings of insecurity due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Pandey, 2019; Ludvigson et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2020). The foodservice managers also touched on this topic. In his interview, Manager #3 discussed that "growing a staff" is an important part of keeping workers happy. Workers feeling underappreciated can cause turnover and attrition (Fabrizio, 2022; Collins, 2020). Workers' feelings are important not only to managers, but also to fellow employees. Simple rewards, such as a five-dollar meal credit or one free milkshake per shift, could affect employees in a positive way and the results from this study concur this notion. Managers and business owners should listen to what employees have to say about how they feel in the workplace and compromise when finding solutions (Huang, 2006). Continuously replacing employees can cost companies 1.5 to 2 times an employee's annal salary, and a milkshake or five-dollar meal ticket seems like an insignificant price to pay to retain workers (Patrick & Sundaram, 2023). The bottom line is that employers need to create workspaces where employees feel comfortable and happy so that they want to remain working in the establishment (Pendell, 2023).

Even though 13.8% of the graduates' indicated factors for quitting refer to management issues and 11.1% of the managers' factors for turnover and attrition refer to worker feelings and

qualities, the relationship between these two groups needs nurturing. Using the factor responses with the lowest percentages regarding quitting among both the graduates and managers might be the simplest contention to chip away at to fix the persistent turnover and attrition issues. Narrowing the relationship gap between these groups could be as easy as developing better channels of communication in the workplace. Most employees do not want to appear weak and ask for help, and this study indicates that not all managers are not fully aware their employees are struggling. Business owners and CTE hospitality programs might benefit from investing in soft skills training software or spending time discovering free options that are readily available. Edapp by Safety Culture offers over 15 free training modules that focus on workplace diversity and inclusion, maintaining positive work culture, developing proper work attitudes, problem solving and listening skills, initiating teamwork, learning about ethics and conduct, building confidence, expanding customer relations, and enhancing performance management (Nettleton, 2023).

Nurturing employee-supervisor relationships may be as easy as providing time for both parties to work on training modules together so that interpersonal interactions can be maximized during the on-boarding process (Beer et al., 1984; Collins, 2022; Tews et al., 2020; Verlinden, 2023). Business owners can find many electronic resources (often free of charge) that can be incorporated into company training procedures. On-boarding, mentoring, and orientation periods take time to develop, initiate, and execute. Everything moves quickly in the hospitality and foodservice industries, but managers, owners, and stakeholders would be wise to slow down the processes used to find, hire, and train new staff. The difference between a company that invests time in their employees and one that rushes these processes is acute; one that will thrive while one washes money and talent down the drain through turnover and attrition.

There is one last piece to the puzzle that needs to be put in place. Through triangulation of the three groups' data, the full picture of connectivity becomes clear. Scott & Hatalla (1990) previously discussed their thoughts on career counseling, "the thought of including chance factors such as unexpected personal events into the theory and practice of career counseling are disconcerting because it is, by its very definition, unpredictable and untidy" (p.28). Regardless of how untidy careers and work life can be, one final facet of the literature review that combines the findings of this study together with theory is the idea of constructing career awareness. The one career theory that offers the best theoretical framework with which to adjust current educational and training practices so that the future of the foodservice industry can transform and grow with the needs of society is CCT (Savickas, 2005). Career Construction Theory compartmentalizes the aspects of life span spaces, career discovery, personal narrative, and employment. CCT requires an individual to discover the direction of their vocational behavior by allowing a career to unfold based on experiences (Savickas, 2005). Career discussions and interventions with students younger than high school age could help facilitate discovery of vocational talents at an early age, allow students to listen to their own personal narrative as a guiding beacon, provide them with the tools to explore different kinds of occupational options based on their desires and experiences, and then develop vocational strengths that lead to a more sustaining career (Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013).

Finally, CCT would look like an action plan when applied to a young pupil that shows interest in hospitality or foodservice careers. First, counselors would focus on youth as inexperience and then apply education over three or four years to allow for career discovery. Second, during this discovery period, the student would create narratives that fit their newfound ideas surrounding occupational options. Third, the student would then narrow their career focus

through education and mentoring (enrolling in a CTE program). The third step would be the nurturing phase where the student develops pertinent skills to be competent in the career path (time spent in a CTE program). Next, the student, with guidance, moves into the career field (possibly an internship, apprenticeship, or work-based learning), gains confidence, realizes success, and is provided opportunities for growth within the industry (Bilginsoy, 2018; Ertelt et al., 2021; Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013; Porfeli & Lee, 2012; Torpey, 2015). The final phase of the process would be for the student to be promoted to upper management. CCT, if applied to the foodservice industry, could create a cycle of career discovery, awareness, and positivity when prescribed as part of career development courses in middle schools across the country.

The thought that there is a solution on the horizon that quite possibly changes the way foodservice workers are recruited, pre-trained, hired, on-boarded, mentored, and nurtured for success is not only promising, but very possible and extremely exciting.

Implications

The implications section of this chapter will describe how the study's findings can be interpreted based on the literature review, how insights gleaned from this study can be used to decrease turnover and attrition, discuss to whom and why these findings are important, and offer a conclusion for the future of the foodservice industry.

The data from this study shows that ProStart graduates working in the foodservice industry have clearly stated their desires. They want higher pay, better schedules, access to benefits, and to work with managers that are willing to listen, help, and mentor them in foodservice careers. Regardless of their demands, this population of workers must also take responsibility for their role in workplace issues. This study called to attention the fact that the ProStart graduates (workers), overall, do not take responsibility for their part in the turnover and

attrition problem. This could be because this group is young and mostly inexperienced, but there is a silver lining hiding in the data. Sixty percent of the Ohio ProStart graduates surveyed in this study have remained in the foodservice industry since high school graduation. This is one promising aspect that gives hope to the industry. Although the Ohio ProStart graduates that participated in this study are requesting increased pay, benefits, and better schedules, Ohio ProStart instructors and foodservice managers need to do a better job at indicating the expectations that go hand in hand with higher compensation and take seriously those workers that desire promotions and management opportunities (ACTE, 2018; Kim et al., 2005; Liu-Lastres et al., 2022).

One of the most insightful implications from this study is that the information gained can be used as a communication tool between foodservice workers, educators, and managers. Ohio ProStart graduates offered their views of the foodservice industry while considering factors that contribute to workers quitting in high numbers. The graduates offered a glimpse into workplace issues that make working foodservice jobs difficult. By utilizing the information gathered from the graduate participants and highlighting areas that they perceive as problems in the workplace, foodservice managers, industry members, and business owners can work together to find solutions that decrease turnover and attrition in the industry.

CTE Ohio ProStart instructors are doing the industry a disservice if they are not portraying the career accurately. Improving understanding of the industry can foster positive and genuine interest in the career field (Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013). In this study, Manager #3 mentioned that setting realistic expectations early in career development of culinarians would improve the worker-manager relationship when job opportunities arise. Also, instructors need to work with foodservice managers and industry members to develop plans for proper and adequate

training. If students are not taught the proper skills needed to succeed in the industry, the implication is that the CTE program is not fulfilling the obligation set forth in the funding provided to enhance the workforce (Hospitality and Tourism-Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, 2020; Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013). Instructors also need to work with the foodservice managers to reinforce proper training and skills, encourage work-based learning, and promote on-the-job work experiences so that students are made aware of the "real" hospitality and foodservice career pathway (ACTE, 2018; Liu-Lastres et al., 2022; Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013). One way to foster relationships with business owners and managers is for the instructors to invite these stakeholders to advisory meetings. These meetings can bridge the gap between education and industry and provide a platform for discussion, problem-solving, and team building. These partnerships can foster mentorships, apprenticeships, and career exploration in the hopes of rejuvenating the workforce with young, viable, and energetic workers (Bilginsoy, 2018; Ertelt et al., 2021; Mupinga & O'Connor, 2013; Porfeli & Lee, 2012).

Managers interact with employees in almost every aspect of foodservice and can guide workers to career longevity by engaging in several tasks. First, managers need to recruit workers that have an interest in the job and career itself (Liu-Lastres et al, 2022). Managers should avoid hiring new employees just to fill a position because turnover and attrition can be a vicious cycle if employees are just working for a paycheck and not for the personal satisfaction of the positive aspects that a career in foodservice can offer. Second, managers must listen to employees and show empathy, respect, and flexibility so that workers feel valued and appreciated (Bradshaw, 2023a; Tews et al., 2020; Khilnani & Nair, 2022). Third, managers need to engage workers in active training programs that promote workplace safety, job skills, and empowerment. Lastly, managers need to model appropriate behaviors, offer opportunities for career growth when

employees show interest in promotions, and reinforce a positive culture and work environment (Al-Suraihi et al, 2021; Sull et al., 2022; Tews et al, 2020). Employees need to feel that they are more than a warm body and that management cares about their well-being. Workers that feel good about their relationships with managers and co-workers have greater job satisfaction (Khilnani & Nair, 2022; Mobley, 1977; Mohsin & Lengler, 2015; Rusinowitz, 2022; Zopiatis et al., 2018). Higher levels of job satisfaction, especially in new hires, can lead to career longevity and less turnover and attrition (Huang, 2006; Sull et al., 2022; Tews et al., 2020). A study by DiPietro et al. (2020) showed that a high level of job satisfaction alone was not a predictor for turnover until mediated by positive or negative commitment. This suggests that workers that feel cared for within an organization stay for longer periods of time (DiPietro et al., 2020).

There are three aspects to decreasing turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry: funding, workplace support, and education. Stakeholders and business owners play a role in funding and offering educational and workplace support and opportunities for CTE instructors and students. In turn, stakeholders and business owners are rewarded with engaged workers from their investments in CTE programs. Stakeholders and business owners need to continue to facilitate learning experiences by providing funding and petition government agencies to continue to value the trades and technical training across the United States (Perkins V State Plan-Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, 2018).

Limitations

Since the sample was exclusively from the State of Ohio, and not randomly from the entire population, the researcher cannot claim representativeness of her sample. Consequently, the results of this study are limited to Ohio ProStart graduates, Ohio ProStart instructors, and the three Ohio foodservice managers that were interviewed. However, the demographic data derived

from the participants in this study was an accurate representation of the 2021 foodservice worker population as compiled by Data USA demographic statistics for the foodservice industry. In 2021, Caucasian restaurant workers totaled 62.8%, and African American workers totaled 12.6% (Data USA, n.d.). Both ethnicity percentages are comparable to that of this study, 68% Caucasian and 19% African American, respectively, as the sample for this study is substantially smaller than all the foodservice workers across the United States.

Compared to the most up-to-date statistics by the National Restaurant Association Restaurant Employee Demographics (2024), gender identity of the sample represents accurate percentages of male graduates (50%), female graduates (47%), male instructors (52%), and female instructors (48%), compared to that of the U.S. foodservice worker population; females working in foodservice account for 54.1% and males at 45.9%, respectively. All three foodservice managers were male; however, this is due to the small sample size.

One limitation to this study is that not all Ohio ProStart CTE students graduated from the same high school or career center. The differences in instructor teaching strategies and knowledge might vary between programs (Sivan et al., 1991; Hsu, 1997). Although each ProStart CTE program in Ohio is bound by the State of Ohio Department of Education and the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (the foundation that oversees the ProStart curriculum) standards, instructors may structure their courses and programs differently. Ohio ProStart CTE instructors also have differing backgrounds, work experiences, and educational credentials which could lead to different student learning outcomes even though a prescribed curriculum is used. Instructors do not use the same emphasis on worker training or skills; consequently, student outcomes from each ProStart CTE program could vary. For instance, hospitality instructors teach the required standards, but some might focus more closely on

individual skills competitions instead of fostering teamwork in the workplace by operating a student-run restaurant.

Another limitation to this study is that former Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality student graduates were referred by their Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality instructors. The CTE hospitality instructor list was derived from a list generated by the Ohio Restaurant Educational Foundation (ORAEF). The ORAEF is an Ohio-based educational foundation that oversees school districts that participate in the Ohio ProStart curriculum. This list may not be complete or up to date with the most current ProStart hospitality instructors as some school districts add the ProStart curriculum mid-school year. The list of instructors generated by Ohio ProStart was current at the start of the 2023-2024 school year. Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality instructors on the list were contacted via their working email associated with ORAEF.

The issue that only ProStart graduates were contacted as foodservice employees for this study presented an unforeseen limitation. There are many types of foodservice workers in Ohio and targeting only ProStart graduates for this study was one way to focus the direction of the research, consequently, all other types of Ohio foodservice workers were excluded.

The geographical connection of the participants presents a boundary in this study. The subjects were drawn from Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality graduates; however, there was no guarantee that the results would be applicable to every city or state in the country. Interpreting the results of this study could benefit the State of Ohio and prompt a broader turnover and attrition research project that might include states that surround Ohio in the future.

A further limitation to this study is the fact that once students complete an Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality program, there is no boundary for where the participants might have encountered their work experiences prior to graduation. Some may have been gainfully

employed outside of Ohio or moved out of the United States. Work experiences outside of the United States vary greatly due to language barriers, economic and cultural differences, compensation, and employment benefits; therefore, out of the country jobs are not easily comparable to foodservice jobs within the United States.

The use of descriptive statistics to describe the sample is a limitation because we simply discussed the demographics and perceptions of the participants in this study. Descriptive statistics do not focus on the phenomenon (why) of turnover and attrition (Nick, 2007; Kaliyadan, 2019). A more in-depth statistical analysis was not needed to answer the two research questions, nevertheless, a more comprehensive statistical analysis of the data could be performed in the future to compare relationships of specific group variables, such as age, gender, ethnicity, and credentials to years worked in the industry and stated contributing factors. Bebe (2016) conducted a correlational study that compared workplace variables with job satisfactions scores to understand how relationships between the variables affected turnover and attrition. While the research study by Bebe (2016) highlighted relationships among factors relating to turnover and attrition in foodservice, the study focused solely on fast-food workers.

Suggestions for Future Research

Turnover and attrition in the hospitality and foodservice industries continue to pose many challenges and questions for workers, instructors, managers, business owners, and stakeholders in the industry. This study merely scratched the surface of the many factors that influence workers to remain in the workplace, leave for a different job, or exit the industry altogether. Suggestions for future research regarding the topic of turnover and attrition in foodservice are numerous.

Similar research studies need to be conducted in states with a high number of CTE hospitality programs to gauge the effectiveness of the ProStart Curriculum by surveying graduates, instructors, managers, and stakeholders' perceptions of the curriculum's overall effectiveness in educational and work settings. A study conducted by Yang (2016) offers a qualitative methodologic framework to better understand the effect ProStart has on student experiences and perceptions after graduation.

A study comparing educational and training differences between CTE hospitality programs that use the ProStart curriculum and those CTE hospitality programs that do not use the ProStart curriculum would highlight the effectiveness of the ProStart curriculum nationwide. Do ProStart graduates remain in the industry longer than those students not trained using the ProStart Curriculum? This type of study would show data trends by state and offer insight into the number of workers that utilize earned ProStart credentials long-term and identify how the credential translates into earning potential. A study conducted by Knight (2016) analyzed two groups of post-secondary culinary arts students. One group participated in a ProStart CTE program in high school, and the other group did not. The results indicated that students who completed a CTE ProStart program had higher GPAs, but ProStart showed no significant difference in time that it took to finish the college program (Knight, 2016). The implications are that ProStart can boost GPA scores in post-secondary culinary students, yet more needs to be done to define how this difference translates to long-term careers in the industry. Furthermore, research is needed to conclude that the ProStart curriculum, overall, creates better learners.

The ProStart Curriculum is not utilized outside of the U.S. International research pertaining to hospitality curriculum and training procedures of vocational students varies greatly, and comparative studies are rare on the subject. The Bahamas is known for travel and tourism,

and these services contribute approximately 50% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the nation. Travel and tourism employ over half of the workforce in the Bahamas (Thompson, 2023). One would consider that travel and tourism is a valued career field when more than 50% of the population is employed within the travel and tourism sector (Thompson, 2023). Research on turnover and attrition, training, and perceptions of the industry in the Bahamas when compared to data from the U.S. might offer insight on value of services and highlight effective educational approaches to hospitality education.

Lastly, aside from researching the effectiveness of the ProStart curriculum and the effects it has on foodservice turnover and attrition, one area of little investigation shows promise for future research on workplace behavior. Do unions promote foodservice career longevity? Is there a difference in on-the-job perceptions of union and non-union workers? The unionization of the hospitality industry has been in the news recently with workers going on strike due to demands for higher wages and more conducive work hours (Puckett, 2023). Investigating the differences in job satisfaction and turnover factors between hospitality union workers and non-union workers would allow for a deeper understanding of the role that fixed wages (union) play in motivation, skill attainment, and quality of services provided in the hospitality and foodservice industries. The implications of this type of study would allow better insight into career planning, training programs, and career longevity in the hospitality industry and add to the sparce research on the topic (Jung, 2020; Walker, 2016; Zientara et al., 2024).

Conclusion

Globally, organizations are experiencing workforce and employee shortages, and the hospitality industry is among the worst affected. The main purpose of this study was to identify and explore factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry and

determine probable solutions. A sample of Ohio ProStart graduates and Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality instructors were surveyed to collect data on their perceived factors that contribute turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. In addition, graduates and instructors' surveys provided them with the opportunity to offer opinions on solutions to the issue of workers leaving the industry. Three foodservice managers were included in this study's sample. The foodservice managers were interviewed and asked to identify perceived factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry and offer recommendations for decreasing the problem.

A review of the literature on turnover and attrition provided insight into past and current studies on the topics of turnover and attrition. Much of the literature focused on motivation and job satisfaction relationships with intentions to quit. The literature allowed discovery of multiple factors that supplied areas of focus for this study. These factors were management and leadership practices, on-the-job stress, training and on-boarding procedures, wages, scheduling, and work-life balance, and included environmental influences, such as workplace culture, stigma of the industry, physicality of the job, and creativity, which all lead to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry.

A mixed methodology was used for this study. Surveys and interviews were the primary modes of data collection. The factors discussed in the literature review were used to create the survey and interview questions for all three groups. Participants included 108 Ohio ProStart graduates, 25 Ohio CTE ProStart hospitality instructors, and three foodservice managers. The surveys collected demographic characteristics, Likert scale rankings, and open-ended questions (Dimitrov, 2010). The demographic characteristics were used to describe the purposive sample. The surveys allowed the graduate and instructor participants to offer perceived factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry and provide suggestions and

recommendations for solutions to the problem of quitting in the industry. The survey responses from the graduate and the instructors' open-ended questions were coded using Thematic Analysis (TA) and transformed into numerical data for analysis (Creswell, 2013). The foodservice managers were interviewed to allow dialogue that incorporated insight into issues currently found in foodservice establishments, to discuss perceived factors that contribute to turnover and attrition and to offer recommendations to decrease turnover and attrition in the future. The interviews were first transcribed, then coded using TA, and finally transformed into numerical data for analysis (Creswell, 2013).

Data derived from the Ohio ProStart graduate and Ohio ProStart CTE hospitality instructors' surveys indicated that wages, scheduling, and work hours were the most important perceived factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in foodservice. Both groups agreed that increasing wages and benefits, reducing work hours, and offering more friendly work schedules would decrease turnover and attrition issues in the workplace. The data compiled from the foodservice managers' interviews indicated that worker feelings and qualities were the most important factors that contribute to turnover and attrition in the foodservice industry. Additionally, the foodservice managers indicated that teaching workers proper communication skills, soft skills, and customer service skills would be important areas of focus for decreasing quitting. The foodservice managers also indicated that managers need to model appropriate on-the-job behaviors, nurture workplace relationships with employees, and look for ways to create a positive workplace culture.

Findings from this study link with the literature and research regarding turnover and attrition in the workplace. Triangulation of data highlights a 360-degree view of the issue. Conclusively, wages, hours, and scheduling were heavily cited as factors that contribute to

workplace turnover and attrition (Bebe, 2016; Cantrell & Sarabakhsh, 1991; DiPietro et al., 2020; Khilnani & Nair, 2022; Liu-Lastres et al., 2022; Stanz & Greyling, 2010). Management and leadership issues play a large role in employee job satisfaction (DiPietro et al., 2020; Heimerl et al., 2020; Khilnanai & Nair, 2022; Rusinowitz, 2022; Sull et al., 2022). Job satisfaction is a contributing factor to turnover and attrition; however, the data in this study does not state "job satisfaction" as a specific perceived factor from the participants, yet job satisfaction is undoubtedly linked with wages, relationships in the workplace, and worker motivations, commitment, and feelings (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012; Alshammari et al., 2016; Bebe, 2016; Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018; Chuang & Lei, 2011; Gan & Voon, 2021; Graham, 2020; Kim et al., 2018; Hakro et al, 2022; Markkanen et al., 2021; Wildes, 2008; Zeffane, 1994).

In conclusion, the foodservice industry is a fast-paced work environment that needs workers. Career and Technical Education programs foster skill development and knowledge that is pertinent for success in the industry. Turnover and attrition in the workplace are multi-faceted issues that are ever-changing. Viable solutions can be discovered, such as Career Construction Theory which promotes a more informed and prepared workforce after high school graduation. Data from this study and future studies on turnover and attrition can be utilized to better the occupational environment by prompting students, instructors, and managers to work together to build relationships, foster positive communication and workplace culture, and develop an understanding of worker motivations with regards to wages, hours, and work-life balance. Acknowledging these workplace factors that lead to job satisfaction can be discussed and remediated to decrease quitting, strengthen the workforce, and assure that the foodservice industry thrives in the future.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER: INSTRUCTORS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Appendix A

Letter: Instructors for Participants

December XX, 20XX

Re: Foodservice Attrition and Turnover

Dear Fellow ProStart Instructor,

We are writing to let you know about an opportunity to participate in a voluntary research study about the foodservice industry. This study is being conducted by Dr. Joanne Caniglia and Stephanie Kunkel at Kent State University. We are writing to see if you might know of any former ProStart students that would like to participate in a research study. We have received your contact information through Ohio ProStart. We are trying to discover the reasons why CTE students leave the foodservice industry within a few short years after graduation. It is important to instructors and industry members to investigate this dilemma in the hopes of changing the current hospitality curriculum to provide more relevant skills and attitudes desired in the industry.

What do we need from you? Each of you has a culinary or hospitality program with a wonderful reputation where numerous students complete the 2-year program, earn credentials and graduate as highly skilled workers in the hospitality field. We would like to survey these students about their experiences in the food industry workplace to discern reasons why students stay in the industry, change jobs (turnover), or leave the industry completely (attrition). It is important to find out why the foodservice industry loses such a high number of highly qualified workers.

We are asking for contact information for at least five former graduates (2019-2023) that completed the ProStart program and worked or still work in foodservice. The graduates will be contacted via email to fill out a survey. The participants' contact information will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any other entity.

There is also an Instructor Survey if you would like to share your thoughts and experiences regarding student behaviors, foodservice curriculum, and issues in the industry. The survey will take less than ten minutes to complete. If you are interested in participating in the Instructor Survey, please click on the Qualtrics link to view and initiate consent for participation. Once consent has been given, the survey will be emailed to you. If you are not interested in

participating in this study, please click on the Qualtrics link below and indicate that you do not want to participate, and we will remove your name from the list we have compiled of Ohio ProStart instructors.

Dr. Joanne Caniglia-Principal Investigator jcanigl1@kent.edu

Stephanie Kunkel-Secondary Researcher skunkel1@kent.edu

Kent State University

QUALTRICS CONSENT LINK HERE

Contact Information needed for each student

- Name
- Email Address
- Cell Phone Number

This information can be sent via email. We are asking for five graduates of your program, but please send as many contacts as possible to ensure a large and diverse sample for this study.

Once again, thank you for your consideration and effort regarding this research study on discovering reasons for foodservice attrition. If you would like additional information about this Institutional Review Board-approved project, please contact us at 330-672-2656.

APPENDIX B

LETTER: STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Appendix B

Letter: Student Participants

December XX, 20XX

Re: Foodservice Attrition and Turnover

Dear _____,

We are writing to let you know about an opportunity to participate in a voluntary research study about the foodservice industry. This study is being conducted by Dr. Joanne Caniglia and Stephanie Kunkel at Kent State University. We have received your name from your former high school ProStart instructor, and they forwarded your email address to me in the hopes that you might want to participate in a survey. We are investigating reasons why Career and Tech hospitality students find jobs working in the industry but switch jobs frequently or leave foodservice work within a few short years of graduation.

The study consists of a Qualtrics Survey asking questions about your demographics and background. There will be yes and no questions, rating questions, and written response questions. All information collected in this study will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purpose other than this research project. For most individuals, the survey should not take more than 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

You have been considered for this study because you were referred by your ProStart teacher and you graduated from an Ohio ProStart program within the last five years. If you are interested in participating, you will need to fill out the "Yes, I am Interested" Qualtrics Form-link found below. Once you have read the consent form and completed the interest form with your intent to participate, this will serve as your consent to be a participant in the study. This survey will be sent to your email and can be completed before December XX, 2023. You will complete the survey and answer the written response questions about your experiences in the foodservice industry.

If you would like additional information about this Institutional Review Board-approved project, please contact us at 330-672-3246.

Dr. Joanne Caniglia-Principal Investigator jcanigl1@kent.edu

Stephanie Kunkel-Secondary Researcher skunkel1@kent.edu

Kent State University

QUALTRICS CONSENT LINK HERE

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM

Appendix C

Consent Form

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Study Title: Factors Contributing to Employee Attrition and Turnover in the Foodservice Industry

Principal Investigator: Dr. Joanne Caniglia **Co-Investigator:** Stephanie Kunkel

You are being invited to participate in a research study. This consent form will provide you with information on the research project, what you will need to do, and the associated risks and benefits of the research. Your participation is voluntary. Please read this form carefully. It is important that you ask questions and fully understand the research to make an informed decision. You will receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Purpose:

This research is a survey for former Ohio ProStart hospitality graduates that have worked in the foodservice industry for at least 6 months after graduating high school. Those taking the survey can either work in the industry or have left the foodservice industry and are working in a different career field. The purpose of this research is to find factors that contribute to why foodservice workers stay or leave the restaurant industry and to determine probable solutions.

Procedures:

Participants must be a graduate of a two-year hospitality ProStart program in Ohio within the past five years, be 18 years old or older, and have worked in the foodservice industry for any period after high school. Participants will be emailed a researcher designed Qualtrics survey containing questions about demographic characteristics (age, ethnicity, completion of hospitality program, industry credentials earned, years worked in the industry, classification of most recent job held in the industry, geographic location of most recent job, and indicate if still working in the industry). As part of the Qualtrics survey, participants will be asked to respond to Likert scale questions and be asked to provide one short answer response. The survey, on average, should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. There will be no personally identifying information collected on the survey such as name, birth date, addresses, or phone numbers. The data generated by the demographic characteristics will be used for descriptive purposes to describe the sample. The Likert scale and short answer questions will be de-identified from the descriptive statistics and used in a mixed methods approach to identify themes surrounding participants perceptions of factors that contribute to attrition and turnover in the foodservice industry. Once the survey is completed, there will not be any follow-up procedures needed.

Benefits:
This research will not benefit you directly. However, your participation in this study will help to better understand reasons for culinary and foodservice worker attrition and turnover.

Risks and Discomforts:
There are no risks beyond those found in everyday life.

Privacy and Confidentiality:
Email addresses for program graduates will be collected from current Ohio ProStart instructors. As a participant, you never enter your name in the survey. Your signed consent form will be kept separate from your study data, and responses on the survey will not be linked to you. The data collected will be linked to the email address used to complete the survey. Once the survey is completed, the email address associated with the submission will be removed and, in its place, we will use a participant code such as Graduate #1, Graduate #2, and so forth. The email addresses will then be deleted and will not be used for any other purpose in this study. If you choose to decline participation in the study at any time, your email address will be deleted from the list of participants. Responses for each participant will be collected and stored in a spreadsheet and used for statistical description and analysis. Short answer questions will be coded using frequently used words and themes. Demographics will be coded in a statistical software package and analyzed as needed without identifying information-further maintaining confidentiality. Records of all data will be kept secure on a password protected laptop and only the researchers conducting this study will have access to the participants' email addresses until the data is collected and the email addresses are deleted after code names are administered in the spreadsheet.

Future Research:
The information you share in this research will not be used or shared with other researchers.

Compensation:
There is not any compensation linked with this study.

Voluntary Participation:
Taking part in this research study is entirely up to you. You may choose not to participate, or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You will be informed of any new, relevant information that may affect your health, welfare, or willingness to continue your study participation.

Contact Information:
If you have any questions or concerns about this research, you may contact Dr. Joanne Caniglia at Kent State University, 330-672-0615. This project has been approved by the Kent State University Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or complaints about the research, you may call the IRB at 330-672-2704.

Consent Statement and Signature:

I have read this consent form and had the chance to answer my questions to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this study. My completion and return of this survey will be indicative of my consent to participate in this research study. I may print a copy of this consent statement for future reference.

_____ _____

Participant Signature **Date**

APPENDIX D

LETTER: FOODSERVICE MANAGERS

Appendix D

Letter: Foodservice Managers

Dear Foodservice Manager,

My name is Stephanie Kunkel and I am working on a research project for Kent State University. Your contact information was derived from a list of industry members generated by the Cleveland chapter of ACF. I am trying to discover reasons why CTE students leave the hospitality industry within a few short years after graduation. It is important to industry members to investigate this dilemma to assess the current training programs and school-to-work transitions of hospitality students.

I am looking for your insights from a leadership standpoint and want to gather information about issues that you think might lead to foodservice worker attrition. It is your experiences in the industry paired with your interaction with entry-level employees that might indicate reasons why students stay in the industry (retention), change jobs (turnover), or leave the industry completely (attrition). It is important to find out why the foodservice industry loses such a high number of highly qualified workers each year.

The format for the study will be an interview. We can set up this interview at your convenience. We will have a recorded conversation following an interview guide and you will be allowed to respond and discuss your responses openly with me. Your contact information will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any other entity.

This research is important to the foodservice industry. It is imperative that we find and address reasons for foodservice attrition to keep the workforce strong and to ensure that CTE hospitality programs fulfill the objectives set forth by the state of Ohio. By addressing issues and evaluating your firsthand experiences in the industry, steps can be taken to alleviate high turnover and attrition in the industry to promote foodservice career longevity. Your consideration of participation is much appreciated.

Professionally,

Stephanie Kunkel

Kent State Adjunct Professor
Curriculum and Instruction Ph.D. Candidate
Phone- (330) 837-3501 skunkel1@kent.edu

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE: FOODSERVICE MANAGERS

Appendix E

Interview Guide: Foodservice Managers

During this interview, you will be able to talk candidly about your perceptions and experiences in the foodservice industry. As a professional foodservice manager, your thoughts on attrition and turnover are important because you work with and manage employees and are a direct witness to issues found in the workplace. This interview will be recorded and should only take about 60 minutes. I will use a couple of questions as prompts so that by the end of this interview, we will have discussed factors that contribute to foodservice attrition and turnover. I also want to ensure you can offer suggestions and recommendations that might help with foodservice employee attrition and turnover.

- Start by telling me a little bit about your background and how you got started in the hospitality and foodservice industry-
  Highlight the age when you started in the industry
  How long have you been working in the industry?
  What initially drew you to the industry?
  What is your favorite aspect of working in the industry?
- What job positions have you held in the industry-from the onset of your career until the present time?
- What types of businesses or establishments have you worked at throughout your career?
- Have you encountered any situations throughout your career that made you consider leaving the industry at any time? Or did you leave and return to the industry?
- What do you find most rewarding about working in the foodservice industry?
- What are three of the biggest challenges that the foodservice industry faces today?
- When thinking about the reasons why people leave the foodservice industry, what are the three biggest factors that contribute to foodservice attrition and turnover?
- Can you provide three suggestions for instructors that train high school students in a CTE program that might help them better prepare workers for the industry?
- Have you, at any time in your career, been a member of a CTE advisory committee?

What are three recommendations you have that might help solve the issue of attrition and turnover in the industry?

APPENDIX F

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Appendix F

Survey Questions for Students

Directions:
This survey consists of three parts: A.) Demographics, B.) Factors Influencing Turnover and Attrition, and C.) Personal Experience. Answer the questions based on your experiences in a CTE program and as an employee in the foodservice industry. If you are not currently working in the industry, please base your answers on the time that you spent working in the foodservice industry.

Part One: Demographics and work status.
Please answer each of the questions about yourself to the best of your ability.

1. What is your current age range?
   (18 to 20) (21 to 23) (24 to 26) (27 and older)
2. What is your gender?
   Female, Male, Non-binary, or prefer not to answer
3. What is your ethnicity?
   African American, Asian, Caucasian, Hispanic or Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander, Other, or Prefer not to answer
4. Did you complete a Career and Technical Education hospitality program in high school?
   Yes or No
5. How many years have you worked full or part-time in the foodservice industry?
   (1 to 3 years) (4 to 6 years) (7 to 9 years) (more than 9 years)
6. Are you still currently employed in the foodservice industry?
   Yes or No
7. Did you earn an industry approved credential in high school?
   Yes or No
   If yes, please check all that apply: ACF, ProStart, ServSafe Manager, ServSafe Food Handler, or Other?
   - ➔ If Other, please write in the name of the earned credential

1. What jobs have you held in the industry? Please mark all answers that apply.
   Bartender, Cashier, Dishwasher, Expediter, Host/Hostess, Line Cook, Management Position, Prep Cook, Waiter/Waitress, Others, please specify _____.

Part Two: Factors Influencing Turnover and Attrition
Please read the following statements and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree regarding factors that contribute to workers leaving the foodservice industry. Please indicate only one answer for each of the following statements.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Workers are leaving the foodservice industry because …

1. Of management and leadership issues in the workplace
2. The hours and scheduling are not conducive to family life

3. The tasks and responsibilities are too stressful
4. Places of employment are understaffed leaving those that work to take on more tasks
5. Creativity is minimized while on the job
6. A hostile or unwelcoming environment
7. Workers do not feel appreciated by customers while providing services
8. Workers do not feel appreciated by co-workers (which can include managers)
9. The wages are not high enough to sustain the cost of living
10. The physical demands of the work are too difficult to sustain for a lengthy career in the industry
11. Negative events outside of workplace dictate a change of job or career (e.g., personal health, divorce, death in family, having a child, moving to a new area, pandemic)
12. Workers are not trained properly for the demands of work in the foodservice industry
13. Employees endure unfair treatment while on the job
14. Work in the foodservice industry does not offer personal growth or advancement

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

15. The CTE program that you attended in high school prepared you for work in the foodservice industry after high school.
    - ➔ If you answered Disagree or Strongly Disagree, please describe what should be included in the CTE program that would help future graduates become better prepared for work in the industry.

Part Three: Personal Experiences
This section of the survey will ask you to briefly answer the following question based on your experiences in the foodservice industry.

1. Briefly describe three main factors that you feel contribute to foodservice workers leaving the industry. Note: Factors that you suggest may or may not be listed in the above statements.

Provide suggestions that you have that might improve or solve the issue of workers leaving the foodservice industry.

APPENDIX G

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS

Appendix G

Survey Questions for Instructors

Directions:
This survey consists of three parts: A.) Demographics, B.) Factors Influencing Turnover and Attrition, and C.) Personal Experiences. Answer the questions based on your experiences as a CTE program instructor and as an employee in the foodservice industry. If you are not currently working in the industry, please base your answers on the time you spent working in foodservice.

Part One: Demographics
Please answer each of the questions about yourself to the best of your ability.

1. What is your current age range?
   (18 to 24) (25 to 31) (32 to 38) (39 to 45) (46 to 52) (53 and older)
2. What is your gender?
   Female, Male, Non-binary, or prefer not to answer
3. What is your ethnicity?
   African American, Asian, Caucasian, Hispanic or Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander, Other, or Prefer not to answer
4. How many years did you work in the foodservice industry before teaching?
   (1 to 3 years) (4 to 6 years) (7 to 9 years) (10 or more years)
5. How many years have you been teaching a CTE hospitality program?
6. Did you earn an industry approved credential in high school?
   Yes or No
   If yes, please check all that apply: ACF, ProStart, ServSafe Manager, ServSafe Food Handler, or Other?
   - ➔ If Other, please write in the name of the earned credential

Part Two: Factors Influencing Turnover and Attrition
Read the following statements and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each factor that contributes to workers leaving the foodservice industry. Please indicate only one answer for each of the following statements.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Workers are leaving the foodservice industry because …

1. Of management and leadership issues in the workplace
2. The hours and scheduling are not conducive to family life
3. The tasks and responsibilities are too stressful
4. Places of employment are understaffed leaving those that work to take on more tasks

5. Creativity is minimized while on the job
6. Co-workers (which can include managers) create a hostile or unwelcoming environment
7. Workers do not feel appreciated by customers while providing services
8. Workers do not feel appreciated by co-workers (which can include managers)
9. The wages are not high enough to sustain the cost of living
10. The physical demands of the work are too difficult to sustain for a lengthy career in the industry
11. Negative events outside of workplace dictate a change of job or career (personal health, divorce, death in family, having a child, moving to a new area, pandemic)
12. Workers are not trained properly for the demands of work in the foodservice industry
13. Employees endure unfair treatment while on the job
14. Work in the foodservice industry does not offer personal growth or advancement

Part Three: Personal Experiences

Answer the following question based on your experiences in the foodservice industry.

1. Briefly describe three main factors that you feel contribute to foodservice workers leaving the industry. Note: Factors that you suggest may or may not be listed in the above statements.

2. Provide three suggestions that you have that might improve or solve the issue of workers leaving the foodservice industry.

APPENDIX H

TABLE OF CODES AND THEMES

Appendix H

Table of Codes and Themes

Color coding key is as follows:

Hours, Pay, and Schedule Environment Issues

Management Issues Worker Feelings and Qualities

Examples of factor responses: Briefly describe three main factors that you feel contribute to foodservice workers leaving the industry.

Graduate- "Wages per hour, terrible schedule every week, treated bad by people coming into restaurant" The codes associated with this response are wages, schedule, customers

Instructor- "Work/life balance, low pay, lack of benefits or sick leave" The codes associated with this response are work-life balance, pay, benefits

Foodservice Manager- "I would say one of the biggest is probably the long hours and a poor work life balance. Yeah, most kitchen jobs are going to be longer shifts and restaurants in general will be working nights and weekends, which a lot of people don't want." The codes associated with this response are hours, work-life balance

Examples of suggestion responses: Provide three suggestions that you have that might improve or solve the issue of workers leaving the foodservice industry.

Graduate- "Hire more people to share the workload train middle managers better so they can handle workplace issues use talents of workers accordingly"

The codes associated with this response are not enough workers, responsibilities and practices, use talents appropriately

Instructor- "Better training for shift supervisors and bosses. Better recruitment of trained workers from culinary programs. Offer some rewards for hard workers." The codes associated with this response are responsibilities and practices, better recruiting, rewards

Foodservice Manager- "People skills, work ethic. Those are things that are hard to teach. It's almost innate within somebody. And maybe understand the importance of some of the process, you know? From ordering to delivery. Start to finish with customers." The codes associated with this response are soft skills, work ethic, understand customer service

		Graduates		Instructors		Managers	
Theme	**Code**	Factors	Suggest	Factors	Suggest	Factors	Suggest
Hours, Pay & Schedule							
	Higher Wages or Pay	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	More Benefits	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Better Schedules	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Better Hours	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Work-Life Balance			✓		✓	
	Get Rid of Tipping		✓				
Environment Issues							
	Consistent/Org Workplace	✓	✓			✓	
	Neg Customer Relations	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	No Opportunity for Growth	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Not Enough Workers	✓	✓		✓		
	The Job Itself Expectations	✓		✓			
	Less Abuse of Workers		✓				
	Skills Don't	✓					

Theme	Code	Factors	Suggest	Factors	Suggest	Factors	Suggest
	Match the Job						
	Need Better Training	✔	✔	✔			✔
	Mentoring & On Boarding	✔	✔				
	Additional Cross-Training		✔				
	Unionized				✔		
	Use Talents Appropriately		✔				
	Not a Positive Workplace	✔	✔				
	Better Team Morale				✔		
	Less Drama in Workplace		✔				
	Workplace Safety		✔				
	Harassment Issues			✔			
	Culture in Wkplc/Stigma			✔		✔	
	Increase Creativity				✔		
	Pandemic Issues			✔			
	Support of New Hires			✔	✔		
	Lack Interest from New Hires			✔			
Management Issues							

Theme	Code	Factors	Suggest	Factors	Suggest	Factors	Suggest
	Responsibilities and Practices	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
	Fairness in the Workplace	✔					
	Better Communication			✔	✔		
	Re Brand Job to get New Hires			✔	✔		
	Better Recruiting			✔	✔		
	Teach or Show Expected Skills				✔		✔
	Model Work Ethic						✔
	Set Realistic Expectations				✔		✔
	Allow for Worker Input		✔				
Worker Feelings & Qualities							
	Seriousness of Worker	✔					
	Staff Rewards	✔	✔		✔		
	Stress the Worker Feels	✔		✔	✔		✔
	Feelings of Appreciation	✔	✔	✔	✔		
	Work Ethic	✔	✔	✔	✔		
	Mentality of the Worker			✔			

Theme	Code	Factors	Suggest	Factors	Suggest	Factors	Suggest
	Poor Fit of Personality		✔			✔	
	Understand Customer Serv						✔
	Appropriate Work Behaviors						✔
	Worker Comm Skills		✔				✔
	Knowledge of Soft Skills		✔				✔
	Knowledge of Job Skills						✔
	Develop Coping Skills						
	Feel Creative while at Work		✔				

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