Executive Summary

*Understanding Turnover Decisions in Child and Youth Program Assistants at Minot Air Force Base*

By Racquel Labadie

Turnover in the childcare industry is a prevalent and well-studied phenomenon that can be disruptive to the organization and especially to the youth in care. The David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base faces regular turnover of caregiver staff. Existing research notes several factors that influence turnover decisions for childcare workers to include: issues pertaining to pay, pursuit of other employment, family constraints, teacher burnout, and low job satisfaction. As the David C. Jones Youth Center is located on a military installation, additional turnover decisions related specifically to the military affect this program, including deployments, unusual duty hours, and frequent moving. As a means to reduce hiring and training costs and to increase childcare quality, turnover at the youth center must be researched.

What factors influence turnover decisions by child and youth program assistants at the David C. Jones Youth Center? In defining the turnover factors, research can suggest turnover deterrents and retention practices to curb the current turnover trend at the youth center. It was expected that a combination of turnover factors and individual demographic information, such as educational attainment, would conjointly influence turnover decisions. Additionally, it was expected that military specific reasons for termination would have a weighty influence upon turnover at the youth center.
Those in the research pool were contacted using social media and data was collected by way of survey. A list of 30 past employees of the David C. Jones Youth Center was constructed based upon employment experience with the researcher and accessibility through social media as the organization was not authorized to assist in research. The individuals were sent surveys and returned them via email to the researcher who anonymously maintained the data. Data from the given surveys is primarily quantitative and represented in units that offer the most concise and direct representation of information. Qualitative responses to open ended questions are presented as quotes and are used as anecdotal evidence of the quantitative data presented.

Research found various factors for termination of employment and various responses to given retention practices. The strongest, singular predictor for termination is the pursuit of new employment. Issues with pay are not a sole predictor for turnover, but when combined with other factors it can have an influence in turnover decisions. Staff with longer tenure in childcare are more likely to voluntarily separate from employment. Overall, retention practices were regarded with positive responses. Analyzing retention practices in regards to specific groups found similarities in responses that may indicate trends within the studied population.

In hiring new staff, management should consider experience and dedication. Applicants with more experience may have more professional opportunities and be less likely to stay employed as they pursue other, more lucrative options. Applicants with less experience may have less professional options and face lessened teacher burnout and therefore are more likely to remain employed. Retention practices must be utilized in order to retain current staff. Despite other factors, retention practices offer a means to support staff, increase job satisfaction, avoid burnout and retain quality staff members.
Understanding Turnover Decisions in

Child and Youth Program Assistants at Minot Air Force Base

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by
Racquel Labadie

Project Instructor
Dr. Dee Andrews

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my family for their support in my educational endeavors. To my mother, Janice, who has done too much to summarize in a simple sentence, thank you. To my father and my four sisters who encouraged me when my confidence waned. To my husband, Alex, who made sure I found time to relax. To my son, Connor, for his precious smile that calmed me in the most stressful moments. It is especially dedicated to my late brother, Jovan, who was the first person to ignite within me a desire to pursue knowledge and who always challenged my way of thinking, encouraging me to never accept the status quo.
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Chapter I: Problem Definition

Background

The David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base is one of the largest youth centers in the Air Force (Knutson, 2015). The center caters to the Air Force community on base and provides three separate programs within one facility: school-age, open recreation and teen, and sports and instructional classes (Larson, 2010). These programs sponsor youth as young as three years of age and as old as eighteen years of age who are still enrolled in high school (Schmalzried, 2000). All youth enrolled at the David C. Jones Youth Center must have at least one parent or guardian who is affiliated to the base, whether active duty military, Department of Defense (DOD) contractor, or DOD employee (Buckley, 1998).

The school-age program maintains an average enrollment of 200 youth each year with an average daily attendance of 130 youth (Knutson, 2015). Youth enrolled in the school-age program must be at least five years of age and enrolled in kindergarten and cannot exceed twelve years of age (Buckley, 1998). This program is open for all out-of-school needs, except for weekend care (Knutson, 2015). During the school year the program is open before school at 0630 and after school until 1730 (Larson, 2010). During no-school days and during the summer the program is open full days from 0630 to 1730 (Larson, 2010). Additionally, the school-age program caters to specific base needs including base wide training days that may require the program to open early or close later (Larson, 2010). Minimal Manning for the school-age program requires two coordinators and at least thirteen child and youth program assistants, based upon current enrollment (Larson, 2010).

The open recreation and teen program accepts all base youth three years of age to eighteen years of age who are still in high school (Schmalzried, 2000). This program is split by
age groups to accommodate youth; child and youth program staff are directly responsible for the care of youth nine years and older during operating hours (Knutson, 2015). Youth aged three to eight must be accompanied by a parent at all times and only have access to the general activity area and gyms; youth aged nine to twelve are authorized to use the facility without a parent and have access to the general activity area and gyms; teenaged youth are also authorized to use the facility without a parent and have access to the general activity area, gyms and the teen center (Larson, 2010). The open recreation and teen program is open every afternoon Monday through Saturday (Larson, 2010). This program maintains an average enrollment each year of 400 youth, average daily attendance for youth aged nine and up is approximately 60 participants (Knutson, 2015). Minimal manning for the open recreation and teen program is two coordinators and at least four child and youth program assistants based upon current enrollment (Larson, 2010).

The sports and instructional program offers recreational sports and classes to youth aged three to eighteen who are still enrolled in high school (Schmalzried, 2000). Recreational sports are offered seasonally while instructional classes, including karate, dance and tumbling, are offered year-round. Seasonal participation depends on the sport being offered but averages around 50 youth (Knutson, 2015). Instructional courses also vary throughout the year, but average daily attendance is about ten youth per class (Knutson, 2015). The operation of the sports and instructional program requires one coordinator, one instructor for each type of class offered, and on average three volunteers per sports team (Larson, 2010).

All child and youth program assistants follow policies and regulations created by the Department of Defense, the Air Force, the Council of Accreditation, and those locally augmented for Minot Air Force Base (Larson, 2010). The professional responsibilities of childcare staff are widely ranged to include topics of youth safety and health, emotional well-being, social
development, cognitive development and factors pertaining specifically to military life (Shannon et al., 2006). Child and youth program assistants are required to complete the Air Force created and mandated Child and Youth Module Training Program and attend professional trainings at least twice per month (Buckley, 1998). Staff are hired in one of four ranks: *entry level* who are employees with no education and no experience working with children; *intermediate level* who are employees that have at least six months experience working with children and have completed three sections of the Air Force Child and Youth Module Training Program; *target level* who are employees that have at least an associate’s degree in education or have completed the Air Force Child and Youth Module Training Program and one year experience working with children; and finally the *lead level* who are employees with a bachelor’s degree in education and at least one year experience working with children (Murrie, 2013).

**Research Problem**

Program coordinators are the direct managers for the child and youth program assistants and are responsible for the administrative duties related to the program (Murrie, 2013). However, the child and youth program assistants are those staff members who work directly with youth. Like other childcare facilities, the core programs of the youth center, school-age, open recreation and teens, require a well-trained staff of child and youth program assistants to ensure program regulations and youth needs are met. The success or failure of the program depends upon the skills and characteristics of the program staff. Characteristics that professionals bring to the workplace such as education and motivation positively impact program quality (Torquati et al., 2007). These factors hold true for the staff of the David C. Jones Youth Center. Similar to other childcare facility managers, the program coordinators at the youth center have the responsibility to recruit and hire child and youth program assistants and strive to retain those employees
already hired in an effort to maintain program consistency and reduce new employee training costs. Attracting and retaining highly qualified professionals into the early care and education field is a challenge (Olson, 2002). This challenge has been noted among the management staff at the youth center; management has worked to ensure that skilled staff members are selected in the hiring process and that skilled caregivers are retained on staff.

The program coordinators at the David C. Jones Youth Center face regular turnover of child and youth program assistants. Torquati et al. (2007) stated estimates to be as high as 26% to 46% for annual turnover of childcare staff. High turnover unduly burdens childcare program administrators with recruiting and training new staff and is a noteworthy barrier to childcare quality (Gable et al., 2007). Quality childcare is one of the tenants for all of youth programs at Minot Air Force Base (Knutson, 2015). Management is concerned that high turnover is affecting the quality of care provided by caregiver staff.

In regards to the David C. Jones Youth Center the question arose, what factors influence turnover decisions by child and youth program assistants? The goal of the given research problem was to first define those factors that affect turnover decisions as a means to lessen turnover at the center. By reducing turnover at the David C. Jones Youth Center quality of childcare is expected to increase. As these turnover factors can be varied, research looked to key sub-topics related to past employee demographics and experience to include:

- What was the educational background of recently terminated child and youth program assistants while employed at the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base?
- How long did recently terminated child and youth program assistants from the David C. Jones Youth Center work in childcare?
• What was the average pay of recently terminated child and youth program assistants while employed the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base?
• What benefits, if any, did recently terminated child and youth program assistants receive from the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base?
• Did recently terminated child and youth program assistants from the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base actively search for other job opportunities while employed?
• Did recently terminated child and youth program assistants from the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base face military specific issues that affected work?
• What program practices can be used to increase retention of child and youth program assistants at Minot Air Force Base?

In order to understand the turnover decisions of child and youth program assistants at Minot Air Force Base, recently terminated staff were surveyed to compare the stated questions with the staff’s own defined intention to leave employment from the youth center.

Research Objective

This research topic was intended for the coordinator staff at David C. Jones Youth Center of Minot Air Force Base and is specifically available for the Director of Youth Programs and Fifth Force Support Flight Chief. As child and youth program assistants are used in childcare at all youth centers and child development centers in the Air Force, other directors, coordinators, and flight chiefs may be able to utilize the information for their own programs.
In defining the factors that lead to staff turnover at the David C. Jones Youth Center, coordinators may be able to refine their hiring process and training methods to reduce the existence of these turnover related factors in new and current staff. Current staff may be more likely to be retained, which reduces training costs and creates consistency for the program and for the youth.

**Scope/Delimitations**

The focus of the project was child and youth program assistants at the David C. Jones Youth Center, as these staff members work directly with the youth each day. The project did not research the turnover decisions of administrative staff to include coordinators, directors, and the training & curriculum specialist. The sports and instructional program was included in the study as no child and youth program assistants are hired into this aspect of programming. Volunteer staff was not included in the project, only paid child and youth program assistants were considered.
Chapter II: Literature Review

Introduction to the Literature

Turnover in the field of childcare has been a greatly researched topic, especially in the past forty years. The documented high turnover rate has been cited as the basis for much research. As noted by Gable et al. (2007), every year approximately 30% of workforce members change jobs or leave the childcare field (p. 363). Turnover in childcare centers far exceeds that of other teaching settings (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). As existing research shows, this high rate of turnover can have lasting effects upon the childcare program and the youth enrolled in the program. The focus of the presented research problem was to further define the causes of childcare staff turnover, specific to staff who have worked on an Air Force installation.

There is extensive literature on the topic of childcare turnover that diverts in many directions. For the presented research problem several factors and demographic data points were the focus of review; these include: childcare staff educational background, tenure, pay and benefits, job satisfaction, and opportunities for advancement. These listed factors have all been repeatedly identified and researched by previous studies. Additionally, as the present research problem inquires upon turnover factors on a military base, research on military spouse employment will also be reviewed. Finally, documented research about childcare staff retention was evaluated as to offer suggestions for reduced turnover and to support postulations made regarding termination factors.

Machado (2008) noted that childcare centers today are having a difficult time finding caregivers who are willing to stay. Turnover affects all professional fields; turnover in childcare is especially problematic. Before reviewing existing research for trends in childcare staff turnover, it is valuable to establish why turnover is problematic for the industry. The affects of
childcare staff turnover on the quality of care provided to youth is a connected and equally important topic. Background information in regards to childcare staff turnover and its extenuating effects will be briefed as to develop a better understanding as to why childcare centers aim to retain their effective staff members. Ultimately, the goal for childcare programs is to reduce both negative turnover, that is losing effective staff members, and negative stability which is retaining ineffective staff members (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003).

**Presentation of the Literature**

*Turnover and quality of childcare.* If not for having such far reaching effects upon young lives, turnover in the childcare industry may have been neglected in research. Turnover is not unique to childcare; all industries face turnover, each defining their own rate as to what is acceptable. Whitebook and Sakai (2003) noted that fast-food businesses are one of the few employers that report higher levels of annual turnover than childcare centers, a sobering fact when looking at the far reaching effects of caregiver departure. “It is problematic to tolerate high turnover in a human services business such as childcare, where it has been associated with compromised development of children and lower-quality service (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003, p. 274).”

Caregiver turnover affects the quality of the care provided to children, which in turn effects youth development. Centers with higher turnover rates show lower levels of quality and less appropriate teacher-child interactions (Cassidy et al., 2009). There is extensive evidence that children’s cognitive and social-emotional development are influenced by the quality of childcare they receive (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). These developmental differences can turn into behavioral indicators. Evidence for these behavioral indicators come from several studies suggesting that programs with higher staff turnover rates have children who are more aggressive
with peers, more withdrawn and spend more time unoccupied (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Retained staff have the opportunity to develop relationships with children; job turnover discourages the development and maintenance of consistent relationships between children and their caregivers (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Reducing childcare staff turnover can therefore afford positive effects upon the development of children and youths, especially in regards to the relationships between youth and caregiver.

Employee turnover also causes effects upon the childcare facility as whole, affecting the staff and the program in general. Centers with higher turnover were characterized by classrooms with less developmentally appropriate environments and activities and reported having programs where teaching staff interacted less sensitively to children (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Again, these classroom environments of reduced quality can effect youth, depriving them of appropriate materials and meaningful lessons. High levels of turnover among staff can also place the continued operation of a childcare center in jeopardy and impedes centers’ efforts to improve quality (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). The quality of childcare centers includes not only staff and child interactions, but also environments, lesson plans, interactions with parents, coworker relationships and a litany of other factors. Ultimately, for all these factors, one of the greatest threats to quality is the high turnover rate among childcare staff (Manlove & Guzell, 1997).

Repeated research shows that higher job turnover rates among staff were linked to lower-quality services (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Again, the concern with this issue falls upon its effects on children. Frequent changes in staffing interfere with children’s adjustment; a stable childcare workforce is essential to the health and well-being of the youngest individuals (Gable, 2007). Existing research and the presented research problem aimed to define the causes and factors influencing childcare staff turnover decisions. The force that guides such research stems
from the desire to ensure quality childcare for youth as a means of ensuring appropriate development for children. What factors can improve retention and lessen turnover? Cassidy et al (2009) found that employees are more likely to remain in their current positions when they have adequate pay and benefits, good work environments with professional development opportunities and satisfactory relationships with coworkers and a good match between their work responsibilities and the job expectation and training. These factors and others were examined in regards to existing research as a means of defining the factors that influence turnover decisions. Childcare staff demographic data points will be defined first.

*Childcare staff education.* Educational attainment is a demographic data point that will help to profile the given group of childcare staff and may offer insight into decisions regarding intention to leave. It was not expected that the educational attainment level of a staff member would be a singular factor in turnover decisions, it was expected however, that educational attainment coupled with other factors such as benefits would have an effect upon turnover decisions. For example, Whitebook and Sakai (2003) found that highly trained teaching staff were more likely to leave their jobs if they earned lower wages, worked in a climate with less stability of highly trained co-workers, and worked with a greater percentage of teaching staff who did not have a bachelor’s degree. Figure 2.1: *Discriminate function analysis of variables identified with stability and turnover among interviewed teachers* further defines this statement; some of the listed predictor variables were expected to be highlighted in the given research proposal in regards to their possible correlation to educational attainment and their effects upon turnover decisions.
Figure 2.1 Discriminate function analysis of variables identified with stability and turnover among interviewed teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor variable</th>
<th>Correlations of predictor variables with discriminant functions</th>
<th>Highly trained stay, mean (SD)</th>
<th>Low trained stay, mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Function 1</td>
<td>Function 2</td>
<td>Univ. F^*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewed teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background climate</td>
<td>.88^b</td>
<td>-.31</td>
<td>22.28***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher wages</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>13.86***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover climate</td>
<td>.70^b</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>16.36***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional affiliation</td>
<td>.32^b</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>2.82*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>2.69*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in child care</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>2.74*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Function 1 eigenvalue = .45; Function 2 eigenvalue = .13. Function 1 accounts for 68% of the variance, Function 2 accounts for an additional 19% of the variance.

^a For interviewed teachers, df = 3, 184.

^b Denotes largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function.

^c p < .05.

^d p < .0001.

In previous research, educational attainment is repeatedly stated alongside training as a focus area for turnover in childcare. Machado (2008) mentioned that teachers are being hired with fewer training requirements. The need for continued training is frequently highlighted in childcare staff interviews and retention recommendations. A notable point from Machado (2008), “childcare workers must be trained to deal with difficult days in order to be able to overcome them and return the next morning (p. 311).” Hiring of staff with low onset educational attainment but supported with continued training may have an effect upon staff turnover decisions. For the presented research staff matching this description, low educational attainment with continued training, were included in the sample. Whitebook and Sakai (2003) found in centers where highly trained staff worked with other highly trained teachers who remained on the job, they themselves were more likely to stay. The current research problem also included staff with high onset educational attainment coupled with continued training on the job.
Again, the demographic data point of educational attainment was used to define the given sample. Previous research findings have defined educational attainment as noteworthy in turnover decisions. Teaching staff who left the field were somewhat more likely to have completed a Bachelor of Arts degree (60%) compared to those who remained in the field (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). It was expected that educational attainment coupled with other factors would be found to foster turnover decisions.

*Childcare staff tenure.* Childcare staff tenure reflects the amount of time staff have worked in the childcare field. Some studies differentiate tenure in the field as a whole and also tenure as the length of time at a specific childcare center. For the given research both aspects of tenure were studied. Tenure in regards to length of time in the industry was researched in order to find a correlation between it and the decision to stay or leave the childcare field. Manlove and Guzell (1997) found an inverse relationship with tenure, those who have been in a job for a shorter period of time are more likely to leave the job than longer term employees, while an increasing number of years in the field makes an individual increasingly less likely to intend to leave in the near future.

Extended tenure in the field offers childcare staff more experience and training, while tenure at a specific program may offer insights into organizational commitment. “An employee who is committed to the organization will have values and beliefs which match those of the organization, a willingness to exert effort for the organization, and a desire to stay with the organization (Manlove & Guzell, 1997).” Cohen (1993) pointed out that by definition highly committed employees wish to remain with their employing organizations. Despite this statement Cohen and others have looked further into organizational commitment in regards to turnover, dissecting specific factors that may predict turnover decisions more precisely. These factors
include individual’s age, career stage, and outside job options. Review of turnover literature across occupations indicates both age and tenure are associated with voluntary job leaving (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Early in individuals’ careers, their levels of organizational commitment vary because of differing propensities to become committed to an employing organization; commitment level could also depend on an individual’s opportunities and the availability of attractive alternatives (Cohen, 1993). Previous studies have attempted to connect tenure and other demographic factors to organizational commitment. Manlove and Guzell (1997) found that childcare staff new to the field who have a choice of other jobs and expect to leave in the near future have a 63% probability of leaving their jobs in the next 12 months. By the time they have been on the job for five years the probability that they will leave has decreased to 46%.

Experiences immediately after hiring have been shown to influence the level of commitment employees have to an organization (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). These experiences can include interactions with children, parents and other staff members, training, orientation and a list of other factors. Developing more effective procedures for familiarizing new employees with the job and the setting may be helpful in reducing turnover among newer employees (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Staff with longer tenure in the field may carry over experiences that affect their decisions to remain or leave a given center, or the field as a whole. Manlove and Guzell (1997) noted that those who are have already been in the field for some time may have limited job alternatives and thus stay on the job.

Gable et al. (2007) found that when compared to individuals with satisfying work experiences, those individuals who experience frequent workplace rewards, low costs and who are actively invested in their vocation and perceive few employment alternatives are more likely to remain in their jobs and become committed. The given research expected to discover similar
findings involving tenure as have other researchers found in past studies. Tenure was studied as a means to define the given sample, but also in regards to its effects upon turnover in light of other factors.

Childcare staff compensation. Repeatedly, the low wages that characterize childcare employment have been identified as the strongest predictor of instability among teaching staff (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Low wages are consistently linked to staff turnover in childcare, explaining between 4% and 17% of the variance in turnover, depending upon job title (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). The turnover factor of pay has been one of the most heavily researched topics in regards to the subject. The effect that pay has upon turnover decisions in the childcare field is multifaceted.

Childcare workers are consistently found to be earning near the bottom of the wage scale in spite of having higher than average levels of education (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Positions at childcare facilities will often vary hiring requirements in regards to education and experience for the assorted levels of caregiver responsibilities. Some facilities will hire staff without a high school diploma while others will require some sort of secondary education. Regarding those caregivers with educational levels on par with K-12 teachers, childcare staff earned at least $10,000 less per year than the average school teacher and $6,000 less than starting teachers (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003).

The search for higher wages has caused both departure from specific care centers and departure from the childcare field altogether. When teaching staff leave their centers, only half continue to work in childcare (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). This shift in occupational choice is not surprising when considering pay and salary data. For current wages, teaching staff who left the childcare field earned more on average than teaching staff who left their center but remained
in the field (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Teachers no longer in the childcare field were found working in a wide variety of occupations, on average those working in non-childcare related industries earned significantly higher wages than those who accepted new childcare positions (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003).

There is some questioning in the established research as to how significant pay and salary really is in regards to turnover decisions. Staff are aware of their wages upon hiring, it is reasonable that wages would not be the only factor involved in volunteering to terminate employment (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Other studies have noted that “childcare workers enjoy their work and are highly committed to their jobs, even though their pay, benefits, and opportunities for promotion are less than desirable (Stremmel, 1994, p. 294.)” It was expected that in the current research, pay would be coupled with other factors, and not be a singular factor, in decisions to leave. Employees are more likely to remain in their current positions when they have adequate pay and benefits and also other positive factors such as satisfactory relationships, professional development and training (Cassidy et al, 2009). For the individual and for the center the impact of pay coupled with other factors may have direct effects upon voluntary separation. Whitebook and Sakai (2003) asserted that “it is likely, if early care and education teachers were paid commensurate with their education and training and comparably to other human services fields that wages per se would play a less significant role in the quality of care and staffing (p. 290).”

Low wages for childcare staff have a significant impact on quality, primarily in regards to preventing qualified and committed individuals from considering childcare work in the first place (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Whitebook and Sakai (2003) found that centers that paid higher wages to teaching staff were better able to retain workers and attract individuals who were better
trained. Furthermore, the higher caliber teaching staff in turn promoted stability among other qualified staff, seeing lower intention to leave among staff with highly trained coworkers (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Basic rate of pay was not the only means to reduce turnover, other benefits can increase retention, the Gable et al. (2007) study found lower turnover rates for childcare workers involved in wage supplement programs. The presented research proposal looked at pay and employment benefits as a factor of turnover.

*Childcare staff external and non-work influences.* There are two key areas of external influence affecting childcare staff turnover decisions which have been noted numerous times in previous research studies: opportunities for advancement and non-work influences, specifically family demands. Opportunities for advancement include both options for other jobs and the pursuit of further education. Advancement was the most frequent reason given for those expected to leave (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Advancement opportunities regarding other jobs can include positions both in the childcare facility and outside of it, but ultimately refer to an employee’s decision to leave their current childcare facility to work elsewhere.

Several of the preceding factors can combine to increase childcare workers’ opportunities for advancement such as higher level of education and tenure. Childcare staff may pursue other opportunities as they search for higher pay or better benefits. Many staff who left a program actually stayed in the field, but found better paying positions (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). All other factors being constant, an individual who has the perception of job alternatives is almost three times as likely to intend to leave the current job in the near future as an individual with no perceived job alternatives (Manlove & Guzell, 1997).

Non-work factors affecting turnover decisions primarily refer to family related demands. These family demands may include marriage, moving, child-rearing, elderly parent care and
other factors. Manlove and Guzell (1997) noted that family and personal reasons played a role for both staying and leaving the childcare field. In regards to leaving the field, a focus group mentioned a range of constraints on achieving a career, including having children, priority given to partner’s career, hours of work, and occupational mobility (Cameron et al., 2001). Furthermore, Cameron et al. (2001) found that a quarter of caregiver leads expected to have time away from employment in the next few years for family or care reasons.

One study found that 98% of childcare staff were female, with a low average age (Cameron et al., 2001). This combination of starkly female and low age employees combines to force the issue of parenting upon turnover in childcare. Manlove and Guzell (1997) noted that even in today’s times, women typically have greater responsibility for household and care giving tasks, while also earning wages that are lower than men’s. Ultimately, combining childcare work and parenting is an issue for many workers (Cameron et al., 2001). It was expected that non-work factors, especially family care, would have a high level of influence upon the research pool.

_Childcare staff job satisfaction._ For those who expected to stay in the childcare industry, the most frequent reason given was satisfaction with work (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Job satisfaction can be a culmination of several factors; the intrinsic rewards (enjoyment of working with children) are high among childcare workers (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Both satisfaction and dissatisfaction have been found to have influence upon turnover decisions. Facets of job satisfaction, such as satisfaction with supervisors, coworkers and pay have generally been shown to have negative relationships with turnover (Manlove & Guzell, 1997).

Dissatisfaction at work has been found to stem from various other sources, some of which are controllable by management, others are more personal to the individual. Research by Gable et al. (2007) found support of investment theory, satisfaction as emerging from a careful
balance of investments, costs, rewards and alternatives. Whitebook and Sakai (2003) reported that in particular, inappropriate hires and poor working relationships with co-workers were identified as factors influencing turnover decisions. Additionally, Whitebook and Sakai found “turnover to beget turnover” causing more stress and dissatisfaction at work; turnover created more work for remaining staff who noted the connected problem of high child ratios due to decreased staffing.

The term for stress caused by certain workplace related factors in the childcare industry has been coined as burnout. An important emotional precursor to job satisfaction, documented widely in literature is the level of stress associated with a job (Kitchel et al., 2012). Burnout is a topic researched in both the childcare industry and in education as a whole, as teachers at all levels face this workplace stressor. Burnout has been implicated in a variety of human services occupations, including childcare, as a major factor in high turnover rates and low morale on the job (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Kitchel et al. (2012) defined burnout as being characterized as an extreme type of role specific alienation with a focus on feelings of meaninglessness, especially as it applies to an individual’s ability to reach students successfully. Manlove and Guzell (1997) found that “medium to high exhaustion makes it nearly two and a half times more likely that an individual will intend to leave in the near future (p. 154).”

Manlove and Guzell (1997) described burnout as not a static phenomenon but as a process. This process can have more imminent effects upon decisions of turnover, especially when combined with other factors. Studies examining childcare staff turnover have found a link between higher turnover and a variety of factors including low wages, short job tenure and burnout (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Those who experience burnout may struggle with finding the desire and motivation to continue in their current profession (Kitchel et al., 2012). Researchers
who have studied other occupations identify a link between a supportive work environment and staff stability (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Kitchel et al. (2012) found teachers to experience moderate levels of burnout as it pertains to emotional exhaustion, a possible implication that teachers feel emotional implications of a complex and multifaceted career. Burnout is a serious concern for employers whether staff leave the job or not, since those who feel burned out and do not leave may provide less than optimal care for children (Manlove & Guzell, 1997).

It was expected that likewise with past research, the current research would find concerns between job satisfaction and other factors in effecting turnover decisions. An interesting point made by Manlove and Guzell (1997) is that for the childcare industry, reported satisfaction keeps caregivers in their childcare jobs but dissatisfaction is not the primary reason given by caregivers for leaving. This further illuminates how turnover decisions are multifaceted and a combination of given factors, including demographic data points, personal inclinations, family needs, and various other items that can have an effect upon employees’ decisions to stay with or leave a program.

*Military spouses and the workplace.* Facilities located on military installations regularly hire military spouses; current research shows that the majority of military spouses are employed (Castaneda & Harrell, 2008). The current research topic focused on childcare at Minot Air Force Base. The military community has separate and unique factors that can affect decisions of employment. As the David C. Jones Youth Center is located on a military installation, it was anticipated that military spouses were employed by the center and would be used in the research, therefore factors affecting military spouse employment and turnover must also be reviewed.

The unique factors effecting military spouses have been cited to include negative effects such as frequent and disruptive moves, service member absence, childcare difficulties, and
employer bias against or stigmatization of military spouses (Castaneda & Harrell, 2008). Furthermore, Hosek established that in comparison to civilian wives, military wives have lower wages and are less likely to work (Castaneda & Harrell, 2008). Additionally, compared to civilians, service members marry younger and start families earlier (Clever & Segal, 2013). The stress related to young families, common with military spouses, can affect turnover. In dual career families, spouses noted a difficulty of sharing parenthood with a service member (Castaneda & Harrell, 2008). This difficulty was expected to be noted by participants in the study as a factor of turnover decisions.

Outside of childcare and parenting, frequent moves were a concern for military spouses in regards to employment. The higher the spouse’s level of education, the more likely they were to perceive a negative impact from moving (Castaneda & Harrell, 2008). Disruptions from frequent moving can have lasting effects upon the military spouse’s career. One spouse mentioned in a Castaneda and Harrell (2008) interview that, “You can’t really make a career being married to a military member because they move you all the time…it’s hard to keep starting over and over (p. 403).”

Another common concern for military spouses was frequent absences of the military member due to training, deployments and odd working schedules. A Castaneda & Harrell (2008) study found that the absence of the military member caused disruptions and difficulties in their day to day lives especially regarding childcare constraints. One interviewee noted that, “Being a military spouse has affected me greatly in being able to work a full-time job and maintain supervision for the children in his absence because he’s gone a lot. We really can’t depend on him…I feel like I’ve been a single parent even though I’m married (Castaneda & Harrell, 2008, p.409). The higher the spouses’ level of education the less likely they were to interpret the
impact of service member absence as a negative factor; these differences could imply that more highly educated spouses had control over their work schedules and could accommodate such absences more easily (Castaneda & Harrell, 2008).

Castaneda and Harrell (2008) found that most employed spouses perceived that being a military spouse negatively affected their work opportunities. As previously stated this could include perceived negative association with military spouses, difficulty of family demands, regular moving and other issues. A military spouse interviewed by Castaneda and Harrell (2008) highlighted this fact, “My job definitely takes a second priority. If there’s ever a problem with my daughter or with scheduling difficulties, my job is always the one that has to take a backseat (p. 398).” It was expected that many previous staff members of the David C. Jones Youth Center were military spouses, the unique influences of military life was expected to have specific effects upon decisions to terminate employment.

Retention practices for childcare staff. One goal of the current research problem was to discern positive retention practices as defined by previously employed childcare staff. The majority of the established research on childcare staff turnover offers suggestions as to improving retention for skilled staff members. These recommendations generally touch upon the previously listed turnover factors and include recommendations to improve compensation and benefits, provide trainings, and provide opportunities for advancement.

Knowing that some degree of turnover will always take place in childcare centers, training can focus on how to manage this turnover; practitioners can learn how to reduce turnover by focusing on their compensation packages, hiring procedures, substitute policies and work environments (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Even if wages remain low, a position with
clearly articulated professional development goals may serve to support staff and encourage them to remain in the profession (Manlove & Guzell, 1997).

Retention of skilled staff has been found to help reduce additional staff turnover. Caregiver staff repeatedly reported that the staffing crisis negatively affected their ability to do their jobs, and for some, this contributed to their decision to leave their current employment or the field altogether (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Providing benefits, a structured pay scale and other supports are essential components to attracting and keeping qualified staff (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Suggestions for retention practices which align with those mentioned in previous research will be discussed in the Recommendations section of Chapter Five.

Summary of the Literature

The presented subtopics of research were chosen based upon their repeated appearances in previous research and as they specifically relate to the presented research problem. Although the effects of turnover on childcare quality were not specifically researched, it was expected to be referenced by research participants during the study. Quality as a whole, in regards to the program itself, classrooms, programming and childcare staff have specific affects upon youth development. It was expected that participants would note discrepancies in quality when referencing the turnover of other staff and their own decisions of voluntary termination.

The factor of caregiver education was expected to have influences upon childcare staff decisions of turnover; however, education alone was not expected to be a sole factor in this decision process. When education was coupled with other factors, specifically compensation, benefits, outside opportunities and satisfaction, it was expected to be an influencing factor in the decision to leave the given childcare program. More specifically, it was expected that caregiver staff with more education would be more likely to leave the program in pursuit of more highly
compensated work. Likewise with education, tenure was expected to have specific effects upon turnover decisions when paired with other factors. A short tenure in the childcare field, coupled with other outside opportunities or personal difficulties, especially those referencing military specific issues, was expected to influence turnover decisions. Lack of satisfaction and burnout were also expected to be found as noted factors for turnover.

Available research on childcare workers identifies wages as the factor most predictive of turnover (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Wages were not expected to be a primary factor influencing decisions of turnover at the David C. Jones Youth Center. However, overall compensation was expected to have a significant influence. Overall compensation includes the amount of hours worked weekly and the available benefits to employees. It was expected that compensation as a whole, coupled with education and tenure would affect turnover decisions. Specifically high levels of educational attainment and long tenure and a perceived low rate of compensation was expected be a factor for turnover decisions.

External factors were also expected to have a great influence upon employee decisions of turnover. Perceived choice of other jobs had the greatest impact on actual 12-month turnover as found by Manlove and Guzell (1997). The economic climate in Minot is unique in today’s America; it is healthy and bursting with jobs. Residents of Minot have access to jobs in varying fields and with competitive compensation. For Minot, North Dakota in 2014 the average hourly pay for all occupations was $21.20 and for the field of education was $23.50 (Bls, 2015). It was therefore expected that employees of the childcare program would have been faced with several outside job opportunities and this factor was expected to have a direct effect upon decisions to leave the program. Additionally non-work factors were expected to have a weighty impact upon turnover decisions. Most notably, it was expected that family issues, especially finding
affordable childcare, would be one of the most commonly mentioned influences for job turnover. Research regarding military spouse retention in the workforce often points to improving military childcare as the most frequently cited suggestion to help spouses with their careers (Castaneda & Harrell, 2008).

Military specific influences were expected to have been found to have specific influences upon childcare staff decisions regarding turnover. It was expected that of the sample, some staff would note that the decision to leave the program was solely based on their spouse receiving orders of a permanent change of duty station. Finally, retention practices were questioned in hopes of defining which of these practices were viewed positively or negatively for recently terminated staff. Responses to retention practices, whether seen as a positive or negative attribute by staff were used to make recommendations and helped to define the varying factors of termination as identified by research participants.
Chapter III: Research Methodology

Research Approach

It is evident from the presented research that turnover in the childcare industry can have far reaching effects for the childcare program, the remaining staff and most importantly upon the development of youth (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). The research aimed to identify specific factors affecting turnover decisions at the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base. The goal was to use the information obtained from the research to inform administrative staff at Minot as to how to possibly lessen turnover among their current child and youth program assistants.

The presented research problem was approached through a program design typology. Program design typology was used as the research reviewed aspects of staffing and retention. As the goal of the research was to determine a means by which to lessen turnover at Minot, the program design was reviewed. Gathered data from the research is available for use, to affect hiring practices or the future staffing plan at the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base. Data was gathered through surveys; these focused on the individual’s perspectives for leaving the program. Surveys included a mix of question types including closed response, yes/no, open-ended, and Likert scale. Responses to these survey questions were analyzed to look for correlation.

Data Collection Approach and Procedures

Data collected. The collected data addressed factors that lead to the decision to terminate employment from the youth center at Minot Air Force Base. The question presented by the research was such, “What factors influence turnover decisions by child and youth program assistants at the David C. Jones Youth Center of Minot Air Force Base?” This question was
further extracted to focus on the specific data points required by the researcher to find correlations among the given data.

The demographic data collected included educational background, tenure, and compensation. These data points were used as a means to describe the overall population in the study. This information aided the researcher in understanding how these specific demographic data points compounded with other factors or how they alone may have effected turnover decisions by staff. The demographic data was analyzed and cross-referenced with participant Likert scale responses as a means of developing correlative connections. Past research has shown that these data points can be influential upon turnover in both childcare and other industries (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Demographic data was categorized and each category was graphically displayed to show proportions of the population. Table 3.1, Data Sub Category Information, describes what information was collected and the implications this data had upon the given research. Surveys topics include: other job opportunities, family issues, military based factors and current retention practices. This information was used to determine how these factors may have influenced staff to leave the program.

Table 3.1- Data Sub Category Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sub Category</th>
<th>Information collected in survey</th>
<th>Implications for Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Demographic Information</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment rank</td>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment category</td>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of time in childcare industry</td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of time at Minot AFB Youth Center</td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Background</td>
<td>Highest level of education</td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional certifications</td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enrollment status during employment at Minot AFB Youth Center</td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>Average weekly working hours</td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hourly rate of pay</td>
<td>Descriptive of population, Used to cross-reference other information and to define correlative relationship with other information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Opportunities</td>
<td>Searched for new job</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jobs after employment at Minot AFB Youth Center</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Specific Issues</td>
<td>Relationship to military</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention Practices</td>
<td>Air Force Child &amp; Youth Programs modules</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termination Factors</td>
<td>On-the-job training</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Experiences with management</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Staff meetings</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiences with co-workers</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy/ new child</td>
<td>Terminated due to pregnancy/new child</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling conflicts</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational advances</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child care conflicts</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parenting concerns</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military specific move</td>
<td>Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information-specifically intention to leave</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turnover in Childcare Staff at Minot Air Force Base</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Acquisition of new job | Used to cross-reference other information to define correlative relationship with other information—specifically intention to leave

The noted subcategories have been selected for the current research as each of these subcategories have been studied in past research when addressing turnover issues in the childcare industry. Additionally, these data subcategories show a broader snapshot regarding decisions of turnover specifically at the David C. Jones Youth Center. As the research occurred with military affiliated individuals, it was vital that military specific questions were asked. Staff at the David C. Jones Youth Center may experience different stressors than workers with no military connection. By collecting this broad array of information, better insight was drawn by the researcher in regards to previous caregiver staff turnover decisions.

*Data collection procedures.* Surveys were used for data collection. The survey is presented in the appendices, along with the survey instruction sheet. The survey included varying types of questions such as closed response, open-ended, five point Likert scale, and yes/no. These varying types of questions were selected as to allow optimal responses from participants. Some questions required a greater range of response and others required a more discrete response, the variety aided in data analysis. The survey was created specifically for the given research problem as to ensure that the specific and unique questions asked in the current research were able to be answered. Validity and reliability were not tested so no determination was made regarding either measure.

The target population for the survey was previous child and youth program assistants of the David C. Jones Youth Center from the past five years. The population includes employees from the past five years as a means to collect current data that relates to current policies and procedures. The population for the research was small with less than 500 individuals; expected
population for the research was less than 60 individuals, in total 30 individuals were contacted. As was expected only a portion of the surveys were returned, the research sample was produced from the pool of returned surveys. The individuals in the data pool were all previous colleagues of the researcher, through the Fifth Force Support Squadron and the David C. Jones Youth Center. All individuals who were contacted were supervisors, peers or subordinates of the researcher. None of the individuals who were contacted in the study were current colleagues of the researcher, nor were they members of the Fifth Force Support Squadron. The researcher produced a list of names of past colleagues from the David C. Jones Youth Center. Intentional bias was not foreseen, however as the researcher used memory to produce the list of name, bias could have occurred due to memory lapse. Of the 30 individuals contacted for the study, seven returned completed surveys.

All individuals on the given list were contacted through the private messaging function of Facebook ®. Each individual was sent the same message with the same cover page and survey attached. The contacted individuals were given up to 30 days to return a completed survey via email to the researcher. The time limit was set to ensure data was collected in a timely period in order to facilitate analysis. Upon receipt of emails, the researcher printed out the attached results and deleted the email to maintain anonymity of the participants. Surveys were then filed in non-sequential order as to further ensure anonymity. As surveys were returned in an anonymous matter and respondents no longer maintained a professional relationship with the researcher, respondents had no concern for repercussions.

**Approach for Data Analysis and Synthesis**

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and was presented in several ways including graphs and tables. Descriptive statics was used to analyze the given data as an entire
Turnover in Childcare Staff at Minot Air Force Base

population was surveyed. The following table describes the category of information, the specific facts collected, the analysis method and the options of graphical display method.

Table 3.2- Data Categories and Analysis Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sub Category</th>
<th>Sub Category Divisions</th>
<th>Specific Information Collected</th>
<th>Analysis Method</th>
<th>Display Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Demographic Information</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Ordinal scale: Less than 25 years old, Between 25 and 50 years old, More than 50 years old</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Frequency Table</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment Rank</td>
<td>Nominal scale: CY 1701-01 (Entry Level) CY 1701-01 (Intermediate Level), CY 1701-02 (Target Level), CY 1701-02 (Lead Level)</td>
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<td>Frequency Table</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment Category</td>
<td>Nominal scale: FLEX or REGULAR</td>
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<td>Bar Graph, Frequency Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Length of time at Minot AFB Youth Center</td>
<td>Ordinal scale: Less than one year, One to Five Years, Six to Ten Years, Ten or More Years</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Bar Graph, Frequency Table</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Background</strong></td>
<td>Highest level of education</td>
<td>Nominal scale: High School Diploma or Equivalent, Some College or Associate’s Degree, Bachelor’s Work or Degree</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency</td>
<td>Bar Graph, Frequency Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Certifications</td>
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<td>Nominal scale: Youth Development Credential, Child Development Credential, Teaching License, Other Certification</td>
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<td>Frequency Table</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrollment status during</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nominal scale: Full-time, Part-time, Not Enrolled</td>
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<td>employment at Minot AFB Youth Center</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Compensation</strong></td>
<td>Average Weekly Working Hours</td>
<td>Ordinal scale: 0-9 hours, 10-19 hours, 20-29 hours, 30-40 hours</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Frequency Table</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turnover in Childcare Staff at Minot Air Force Base</td>
<td>Hourly Rate of Pay</td>
<td>Ordinal level scale: Less than $10 per hour, At least $10 per hour, At least $11 per hour, At least $12 per hour, At least $13 per hour, At least $14 per hour, At least $15 per hour, More than $15 per hour</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Bar Graph, Frequency Table</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Opportunities</td>
<td>searched for new job</td>
<td>Nominal scale: Yes or No</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency</td>
<td>Frequency Table</td>
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<td>Jobs after employment at Minot AFB Youth Center</td>
<td>Nominal scale</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency</td>
<td>Frequency Table</td>
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<td>Military Specific Issues</td>
<td>Relationship to Military</td>
<td>Nominal scale: Yes or No</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Frequency Table</td>
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<td>Retention Practices</td>
<td>Air Force Child &amp; Youth Program Modules</td>
<td>Ordinal scale, convert qualitative data to quantitative for 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Disagree = -2, Disagree = -1, Neutral = 0, Agree = 1, Strongly Agree = 2</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Pie Chart, Bar Graph Frequency Table</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On-the-job Training</td>
<td>Experiences with Management</td>
<td>Staff Meetings</td>
<td>Experiences with Co-workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ordinal scale, convert qualitative data to quantitative for 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Disagree = -2, Disagree = -1, Neutral = 0, Agree = 1, Strongly Agree = 2</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
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<td>Bar Graph Frequency Table</td>
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<td>Bar Graph Frequency Table</td>
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<tr>
<td>Termination Factors</td>
<td>Pregnancy/ New Child</td>
<td>Nominal scale: Yes or No</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Pie Chart, Bar Graph Frequency Table</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Scheduling conflicts</td>
<td>Nominal scale: Yes or No</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Pie Chart, Bar Graph Frequency Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educational Advances</td>
<td>Nominal scale: Yes or No</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Pie Chart, Bar Graph Frequency Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Care Conflicts</td>
<td>Nominal scale: Yes or No</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Pie Chart, Bar Graph Frequency Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parenting Concerns</td>
<td>Nominal scale: Yes or No</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution, Relative Frequency, Measures of Central Tendency, Range</td>
<td>Pie Chart, Bar Graph Frequency Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants were asked open-ended questions regarding tenure in childcare, employment after leaving the youth center, and reasons for terminating employment. The responses to these open-ended questions were coded. Responses regarding tenure were analyzed using a ratio scale to account for frequency. Table 3.3 describes in detail the scales used for tenure. Responses for employment after leaving the youth center were coded by industry and frequency was analyzed. Finally, responses regarding reasons for terminating employment were also coded as voluntary and military initiated. Voluntary factors are defined as those based upon determining factors which the respondent was in control of, such as a terminating due to acquiring a new job. Military initiated reasons are those the staff member or their family has little control of, for this research those are the military specific factors such as a deployment.

Closed response and yes/no questions had far more finite responses. These types of questions addressed: age, rank, rate of pay, employment category, average weekly hours worked, education, school enrollment status, certifications, alternative job opportunities, and military relationship. Those closed responses on a nominal scale were analyzed using frequency
distribution and relative frequency; those closed responses on an ordinal scale were analyzed using frequency distribution, relative frequency, measures of central tendency or range. Data for either type of scale are displayed on graphs, either on a pie chart or bar graph, whichever offers a clearer representation of the given data.

Finally, a series of Likert scale questions were asked regarding provided training, managerial approach and availability, opinion of co-workers, and job stressors. Likert scale questions are coded on an ordinal scale as follows: Strongly Disagree = -2, Disagree = -1, Neutral = 0, Agree = 1, Strongly Agree = 2. Each question was coded to relate to one of the listed data sub-categories. Responses to Likert scale questions were analyzed using frequency distribution, relative frequency, measures of central tendency or range. These items were graphically displayed using a bar graph. For all of the listed types of questions and method of analysis, the computing software, Excel ® was used for data synthesis. Sample tables 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 are provided.

Table 3.3 – Sample Ordinal Scale Open-Ended Question Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Relative Frequency</th>
<th>Central Tendency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 1 year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.286</td>
<td>Mean: 1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Median: 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mode: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 2 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 3 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 4 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 5 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.4- Sample Nominal Scale Closed Response Question Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Relative Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.5- Sample Ordinal Likert Scale Survey Question Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Relative Frequency</th>
<th>Measure of Central Tendency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job Training</td>
<td>-2 -1 0 1 2 -2 -1 0 1 2 0 0 0.143 0.286 0.571</td>
<td>Mean= 1.42 “Agree”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of Co-workers</td>
<td>-2 -1 0 1 2 -2 -1 0 1 2 0 1 0.286 0.429 0.429</td>
<td>Mean= 0.43 “Neutral”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources for job related stressors</td>
<td>-2 -1 0 1 2 -2 -1 0 1 2 0 0 0.429 0.571</td>
<td>Mean= 1.57 “Strongly Agree”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methodological Limitations

As with all studies, there were expected limitations to the research. The sample size relied upon returned surveys and ultimately only a small number were returned. Of the 30 individuals contacted only seven returned surveys, a response rate of 23%. As the population list was not randomly generated and was based upon the researcher’s memory and access to Facebook ®, bias could have resulted. It is difficult to ascertain if responses were altered due to the previous
working relationship between participants and researcher. The survey is self-designed; validity and reliability have not been tested.
Chapter IV: Data Analysis

Data Analysis

All surveyed participants were under the age of 50; three individuals were less than 25 years old and the remaining four individuals were between 25 and 50 years old. This basic demographic data is presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 - Demographic Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Less than 25 Years Old</th>
<th>Between 25 and 50 Years Old</th>
<th>More than 50 Years Old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Educational background.* What was the educational background of recently terminated child and youth program assistants while employed at the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base? Of returned surveys, all respondents completed at least some college. One individual completed some college or an associate’s degree, three individuals had some bachelor’s work or a degree and three individuals had completed some graduate work or a degree. Most respondents held some sort of professional certification and two of the respondents obtained multiple certifications; in total there were two Youth Development Credentials, two Child Development Associate’s, two teaching licenses, and one respondent held three different health related certificates. The majority of respondents were not enrolled in school during employment, only one respondent was a full time student, and none were part time students. This information is presented in Table 4.2 - Educational Background.
### Educational Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Level of Education</th>
<th>High School or Equivalent</th>
<th>Some College or Associates Degree</th>
<th>Bachelors Work or Degree</th>
<th>Graduate Work or Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Certificates</th>
<th>Youth Development Credential</th>
<th>Child Development Associates</th>
<th>Teaching License</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Enrollment Status</th>
<th>Part Time</th>
<th>Full Time</th>
<th>Not Enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tenure and experience.** How long did recently terminated child and youth program assistants from the David C. Jones Youth Center work in childcare? Three respondents had worked in the childcare field between five and ten years and the majority of four respondents had worked in childcare for less than five years. The question of tenure specifically at the David C. Jones Youth Center was open-ended and a fill in the blank so participants could respond with any variable of time. Responses varied between several months to years of experience at the youth center. Based upon responses, the data was categorized as follows: less than one year and one to two years. The majority of respondents, four in total, had worked less than one year and the remaining three had worked for one to two years at the youth center. Table 4.3- Tenure provides a concise representation of this data.
Table 4.3- Tenure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure in Child Care Industry</th>
<th>Less than 5 Years</th>
<th>Between 5 and 10 Years</th>
<th>More than 10 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure at David C. Jones Youth Center</th>
<th>Less than 1 Year</th>
<th>1-2 Years</th>
<th>More than 2 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pay and benefits.** What was the average pay of recently terminated child and youth program assistants while employed the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base? Regarding hourly rate of pay, responses varied widely amongst the intervals provided. One respondent worked for at least $11 per hour, two worked for at least $12 per hour, two worked for at least $13 per hour, one worked for at least $14 per hour, and one worked for at least $15 per hour. Expanding from rate of pay, other compensatory factors were also specifically surveyed. Surveyed individuals represented each of the four possible job position ranks available to care staff at the youth center, and four of the individuals were of the highest ranking position as a lead. Each of the three subordinate ranks was represented by one responding participant. What benefits, if any, did recently terminated child and youth program assistants receive from the David C. Jones Youth Center at Minot Air Force Base? Employment categories of regular or flexible describe staff benefits and guaranteed hours. Regular employees receive the option of benefits and were guaranteed twenty scheduled hours per week; flexible staff receive no benefits and no guaranteed hours (Murrie, 2013). Participants who responded were nearly split, 57% were regular, the remaining 43% were flexible. The next compensation related data to consider was average number of hours worked. The data results showed that most respondents worked...
between 20 and 40 hours per week. Three respondents worked 20-29 hours and four worked 30-40 hours per week. Table 4.4 represents data for compensation and benefits.

Table 4.4- Pay and Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pay and Benefits</th>
<th>At Least $10</th>
<th>At Least $10</th>
<th>At Least $11</th>
<th>At Least $12</th>
<th>At Least $13</th>
<th>At Least $14</th>
<th>At Least $15</th>
<th>More than $15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Hourly Pay</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Weekly Hours Worked</td>
<td>0-9 Hours</td>
<td>10-19 Hours</td>
<td>20-29 Hours</td>
<td>30-40 Hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Category</td>
<td>FLEX</td>
<td>REG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Rank</td>
<td>CY 1701-01 Entry</td>
<td>CY 1701-01 Intermediate</td>
<td>CY 1701-02 Target</td>
<td>CY 1702-02 Lead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other opportunities.* Did recently terminated child and youth program assistants from the David C. Jones Youth Center actively search for other job opportunities while employed?

Regarding other professional opportunities, there was a split between staff who actively searched alternative employment and those who did not; 43% did not seek other employment, while 57% did seek other employment. Participants were asked an open ended question in regards to where
they worked after leaving the youth center. The responses were then categorized into four general fields: education, military service, medical, and clerical. The majority of respondents, 43%, found employment in education, 28.5% joined military service, and the remaining two respondents, 28.5%, moved to either the medical field or into clerical work. Table 4.5 describes data related to other professional opportunities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Professional Opportunities</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actively Sought New Job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field after employment at Youth Center</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Military specific. Did recently terminated child and youth program assistants from the David C. Jones Youth Center face military specific issues that affected work? Military specific demographic information represented data regarding participant relationship to the military. Results found 57% of respondents identified themselves as military dependents and 100% marked that they were military spouses. Six of the seven respondents identified that they were not active duty military members, one respondent did not respond to the question. Military specific data is represented in Table 4.6. Military specific termination factors will be discussed later in this chapter.
Table 4.6- Military Specific Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Specific Demographic Data</th>
<th>Response Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Dependent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Spouse</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Duty Member</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retention practices. What program practices can be used to increase retention in child and youth program assistants at Minot Air Force Base? The survey contained nine questions related to retention practices that were measured using a Likert scale. All questions were presented in positive, affirmative statements. Respondents marked Agree or Strongly Agree 53 times, they marked Neutral eight times, Disagree was marked one time and Strongly Disagree was never marked. Overall, a positive association was found regarding retention practices within the respondent group. The responses of these questions are presented in Table 4.7- Retention Practices.

Table 4.7- Retention Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention Practices</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I found the on-the-job training practices helpful in my day-to-day interactions at work.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree</td>
<td>0 0 1 2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found the modules to be useful and helpful in my day-to-day interactions at work.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree</td>
<td>0 0 2 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention Practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I found staff meetings useful.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I found management to be helpful.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I felt supported by the management team.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I found my co-workers to be knowledgeable in regards to standard child care practices.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I felt I was part of a team while at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I had adequate resources to handle job related stressors.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I feel I received adequate training while at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Retention Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factors of termination. Participants were asked to specifically state their reason for termination from their childcare position at the David C. Jones Youth Center. The survey offered nine reasons and a tenth open-ended option. Participants were allowed to mark as many reasons as they saw best explained their decision to leave employment at the center. Of the ten given options the following listed responses were identified by the respondents: finding a new job received the most tallies with four, family member/self receiving a permanent change of duty station received three tallies, to stay at home and raise children and inadequate pay both received one tally each. Additionally, one respondent also marked other, stating their decision to terminate employment was based upon their divorce. When reviewing surveys where only one response was selected, two respondents stated they terminated employment solely due to the acquisition of a new job and two stated termination was due to their receipt of military permanent change of duty station orders. A permanent change in duty station (PCS) indicates that military personnel and their families have been issued orders to move from one duty location to another (Dunbar, 2005). These orders are commonly at the complete behest of the military, especially in regards to the new duty station and in the timing of the move. One participant marked their termination as being two fold- due to the acquisition of a new job and the receipt of PCS orders; another marked inadequate pay and the acquisition of a new job as their determining factors for termination. One respondent marked options unrelated to a new job or PCS orders; that individual marked two reasons related to family needs- care of children and a divorce. Four of the seven respondents offered an anecdotal response in regards to additional information.
regarding the decision to terminate employment. Table 4.8 displays the ten options provided to participants and displays the frequency of selection by respondents; Figure 4.1 uses a pie graph to show allocation of responses.

Table 4.8 - Termination Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Terminating Employment from the David C. Jones Youth Center</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center due to conflicts with my school schedule or responsibilities.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at David C. Jones Youth Center upon graduating with my secondary degree.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center upon finding out I was pregnant or after the birth of my child.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center due to the cost of child care.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center due to inability to find adequate child care.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center to stay at home and raise my child(ren).</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center due to my spouse, family member or self receiving orders of a permanent change of duty station.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center due to my spouse’s, family member’s or my own deployment.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center due to conflicts with my spouse’s or family member’s schedule.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center after finding a new job.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center as I was not receiving adequate pay.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center due to conflict with the available shifts or workdays.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Turnover in Childcare Staff at Minot Air Force Base

| I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center due to job related stress. | 0 |
| I terminated employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center due to the following reason(s): __________________________ | 1 |

Figure 4.1- Factors for Termination

For the given research, the reasons for terminating employment as provided in the survey were divided into two categories: voluntary and military initiated. Voluntary reasons will be categorized as those based upon determining factors which the respondent was in control of, such as a terminating due to acquiring a new job. Military initiated reasons are those that the staff member or their family has little control of, for this research those are the military specific factors, such as a deployment.
Age as a factor. When considering age, the researcher expected those staff who were younger, less than 25 years, to have left employment for voluntary reasons (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). The two respondents within the younger age group did indeed meet this expectation. Those under 25 years noted that their decision to terminate employment was based upon either the acquisition of a new job or due to family demands. It was expected that as these staff members left employment for voluntary reasons, they would have scored the retention practices in low ratings; however, the converse was true. Regarding retention practices, those in the younger age group identified the retention practices in highly positive ratings: training practices were rated 1.88, relationships with coworkers was 1.75, fatigue relief and perception of management were both rated a 2. These results are interpreted as showing that the appeal of a new position and the power of family had a stronger influence than the provided retention practices, despite being rated in positive standings. It could further be stated that such practices, no matter how successful, may not have a weighty influence upon certain voluntary factors, especially those with complicated implications that the youth center has no control over such as family demands.

Education as a factor. Based upon existing research by Whitebook and Sakai (2003), the researcher expected that staff members with more education would be more likely to voluntarily leave employment. The research found that half of those with some college and up to an associate’s degree terminated based upon voluntary reasons. Those respondents with up to a bachelor’s degree completed left exclusively for voluntary reasons and those with graduate work or a graduate degree primarily left for voluntary reasons, 66.6% left for another job and 33.3% left due to military orders. An interesting trend appeared in the research related to education and retention practices. Within the group of respondents, there was an inverse relationship between
educational attainment and perception of training practices. Those with less education rated training practices higher than those respondents with more education. It is proposed that those with more education, especially in a related field, are likely knowledgeable about presented training topics since program trainings mirror classes provided in early education degrees. Those who had not started or had not completed degrees in related fields were less likely to be knowledgeable on these topics and therefore found the new information to be immediately applicable. Figure 4.2 represents educational attainment compared to the rating of training practices.

Figure 4.2- Educational Attainment and Training Practices

Tenure as a factor. Regarding tenure, an inverse relationship between tenure and voluntary separation was expected based upon research by Manlove and Guzell (1997). This expectation was not fully met. Those respondents with more than five years of experience noted voluntary reasons for separation three times and involuntary only one time; this group did not match expectations as those with more experience were anticipated to primarily have selected involuntary reasons for separation. However, those with less than five years of experience did
match expectations as they primarily left for voluntary reasons at a rate of 3:2. The research showed that those respondents with shorter tenure in the childcare industry, less than five years of experience, found the David C. Jones Youth Center to have adequate on-the-job stress relief resources overall; conversely those with higher tenure at the youth center were more likely to score stress relief resources with lower scores. The opposite response was found regarding tenure specifically at the youth center, those with less experience rated fatigue relief with lower rankings. These findings are interpreted to show that staff with less experience in the field overall may have found stress relief trainings and experiences immediately applicable, or they simply incurred less stress. Those with less experience working specifically at the youth center, may have had incurred more stress or have experienced more successful stress relief at other jobs. Figure 4.3 shows the varying relationship between fatigue relief and tenure.

Figure 4.3- Tenure and Fatigue Relief
Compensation as a factor. Based upon established research regarding turnover within the childcare industry it was expected that pay would have substantial influence upon decisions to terminate employment and would be mentioned multiple times by respondents. For the given research, pay was noted as a factor in the decision to terminate employment. Regarding employment categories, flexible employees identified a voluntary reason for termination three of four times or 75%; for regular employees voluntary reasons were selected three of five times or 60%. Those who worked within the range of 20-29 hours per week selected one voluntary factor and two involuntary. Unexpectedly, the highest range of 30 to 40 hours worked weekly showed more voluntary separation factors of 83%. It would be expected that the opposite would have surfaced as working more hours per week equates to a larger salary and higher pay was anticipated to be an incentive to stay employed. It was found that those employees who worked in the highest range of weekly hours were most often in a higher rank of employment. This data is interpreted to show that those in higher ranks and thus having more experience were more likely to seek other employment opportunities, possibly due to their increased marketability.

The adequacy of hourly pay will be dependent upon the economic environment and the individual. With the given survey it is difficult to make assumptions about the influence of hourly pay and the individuals’ needs as a specific question of this nature was not posed. It should be noted that for Minot, North Dakota in 2014 the average hourly pay for all occupations was $21.20 and for the field of education was $23.50 (BIs, 2015). Of the respondents who identified voluntary reasons for separation their average hourly rate of pay was $12.50; for those who identified involuntary reasons, their average hourly rate of pay was $12.66. With the given range of pay being less than $10 and $15 or more per hour, it would have been expected for a higher variance between these numbers. Those respondents who continued to work in education
averaged 30 hours per week and $13.33 hourly while at the youth center. Those who left the field completely also worked an average of 30 hours per week, but hourly rate of pay was $12.50. Those who left employment at the youth center to begin a new job worked an average of 35 hours per week, with an hourly rate of pay of $13. Only one of the seven respondents specifically selected pay as a factor for terminated employment. Based upon given responses, the economic climate and the numerous individuals who actively searched other employment it is interpreted that compensation was a contributing factor for termination, but was not a singular factor in decision making.

*Other opportunities as a factor.* Other professional opportunities have been noted in research as a factor of turnover, Hulin et al. (1985) mentioned studies in which searching for another job was a step which preceded actually leaving the present job. The researcher anticipated that those who were actively searching for other employment would select a voluntary reason for termination. It was found that of the respondents who were actively searching for jobs, 80% selected a voluntary reason for termination. Furthermore, the one instance where a military initiated reason was selected, the respondent mentioned, “I left my job due to moving but probably would have quit the following year.” These results are interpreted to show that active search for other employment is a top factor in terminating employment at the youth center.

*Military specific factors.* As the given childcare center is located on a military installation, military specific factors were expected to have a large influence upon turnover decisions. Although 100% of respondents were military spouses, military specific reasons for termination and as categorized for this study as *military initiated* were selected by less than half
of respondents. Furthermore, the only military specific issue that effected turnover was the receipt of permanent change of duty station orders.

*Retention practices.* In further analysis of turnover decisions, retention practices must be considered, especially as they relate to specific groups. The questions posed using a Likert scale can be divided into the following categories: training practices, relationship with coworkers, fatigue relief, and perception of management. Analysis of the Likert scale questions was accomplished by assigning numerical values to each given response, values were between -2 and 2; table 4.9 below shows the assigned values.

Table 4.9- Likert Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Scale Responses</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value Given</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, respondents rated the David C. Jones Youth Center as follows: training practices at 1.29, relationship with coworkers at 1.43, fatigue relief at 1.57, and perception of management at 0.71.

Figure 4.4- Retention Practice Comparison
Termination due to acquisition of new job. Cross referencing termination factors with demographic information and retention practice ratings will provide further insight into turnover decisions at the David C. Jones Youth Center. The first group to be considered is those who terminated employment due to the acquisition of a new job, henceforth this group has been assigned the title of New Job Group. Four of the seven respondents indicated that the factor of finding a new job described, at least in part, their decision to terminate employment at the David C. Jones Youth Center. Of these individuals, the average age was between 25 and 50 years old. All four individuals were at the floor supervisor level, in either of the upper ranks of target or lead caregiver. The average tenure in the childcare industry for this group was less than five years and average tenure at the youth center was one year. Three of the respondents in this group were in the regular employment category. Average hours worked was between 30 and 40, with an average pay of $12.75 per hour.

All individuals in this group had attended some college, college experience ranged from course work at the associate’s level, bachelor’s level, and graduate level; only one of the individuals was a current student while employed at the youth center. Two of the four individuals had acquired additional licenses or credentials. Half of the members in the group had actively searched for new employment while employed at the youth center. After termination of employment, two respondents from the group found a new position in the education field, one joined military service and one found employment in a clerical position. It should be noted that of the four individuals in this group, two identified the acquisition of a new job as the only factor in deciding to terminate employment. One respondent identified the acquisition of a new job and inadequate pay as factors in their decision to terminate employment. The other respondent identified both the acquisition of a new job and the receipt of permanent change of duty station
Turnover in Childcare Staff at Minot Air Force Base

orders. This data is interpreted to show that those with more experience and education, as evident by employment rank in this group, may be more likely to find other employment. Despite the fact that the majority of this group received benefits and worked over 30 hours per week, this was the only group where compensation was specifically mentioned as a factor leading to termination. This may indicate that pay conjoined with other factors, such as high levels of educational attainment, ultimately influenced the termination decisions of this marketable group.

Military initiated termination. Of the returned surveys, three respondents noted that the receipt of a permanent change of duty station order was the only reason, or at least one of the reasons, in deciding to terminate employment from the youth center. Within this response group, henceforth called the PCS Group, all members were between the ages of 25 and 50 years old. The mode regarding rank of these individuals was that of a lead caregiver, as two caregivers were leads and one was in an entry position. Tenure at the youth center all averaged less than one year, likewise was tenure in the childcare industry an average of less than one year. Average hourly pay for this group was $13, and all respondents worked between 20 and 29 hours per week. Two of the respondents were in a regular position and one was in a flexible position. All respondents had some college experience, varying between associate’s work and graduate work. Two of the individuals in the group had additional credentials or licensing, both of which were related to the field of education. One of the respondents was actively seeking other employment and only one was attending school while employed at youth center. As PCS orders instruct families to move from one station to another, it is concluded that the desire to keep families intact outweighs all demographic factors in the reported termination decisions.

Retention practices and termination groups. Retention practices were then compared to the various termination groups to illuminate relationships. In the New Job Group retention
practices were valued in the positives. Training practices received the lowest rating of 1.31, relationships with coworkers received a 1.38, fatigue relief received a 1.5 and finally, perception of management received a 1.63. As none of these retention practices are rated low, it is expected that other factors influenced individuals in this group in their termination decision.

Those in the PCS Group also fell in the positive values range: training practices was scored at 1.25, relationship with coworkers was scored at 1.33, fatigue relief was scored at 1.66 and perception of management was at 1.33. Again, those in the PCS group were instructed to move, staying at the center would result in a voluntary separation from family. The scores seem to indicate a positive environment for this group, however these retention practices cannot account for family influence.

The respondent who identified their decision to terminate employment was based upon their choice to stay home and raise their children had very high ratings for retention practices; training practices averaged at 2, coworkers averaged at 2, fatigue relief averaged 2 and perception of management averaged a 1.5. Again, this shows that retention practices have little effect upon decisions based in family needs. Finally, the respondent who identified inadequate pay as a factor in their decision to terminate employment marked noticeably lower scores when compared to the other groups. This respondent rated training practices as a .75, relationships with coworkers as a 1, fatigue relief as a 1 and perception of management as a 2. These results demonstrate that pay, coupled with other factors can influence termination decisions. Figure 4.5 shows the perception of retention practice by termination group.
**Educational attainment and retention practices.** In regards to specific demographic information, responses to retention practices varied. Groupings in regards to educational attainment showed a variance in the perception of training practices. Respondents who had completed some college or an associate’s degree rated training practices slightly higher at 1.62; respondents who completed some bachelor’s course work or received a degree rated training practices at 1.38, while respondents with graduate course work or a degree rated training practices slightly lower at 1. Despite level of educational attainment, all groups identified training practices with a positive response. This would indicate that training practices are a useful retention tool at the youth center as it is viewed positively by previous staff members. The inverse relationship between educational attainment and perception of training practices indicates
that those with more education found training less useful, therefore these practices must be reviewed in order for effective utilized across all groups and for the benefit of the staff and the program.

Figure 4.6- Training Practices and Educational Level Comparison

Tenure and retention practices. Tenure in the childcare industry divided the respondent pool into two groups: less than five years of experience and more than five years of experience in the field. There was a stark contrast in responses to retention practices when analyzing feedback based upon tenure. The less than five years group rated training practices at 1.81, relationships with coworkers at 1.75, fatigue relief at 2, and perception of management at 1.75. The more than five years group rated training practices at .58, relationship with coworkers at .83, fatigue relief and perception of management both at a 1. This indicates that those with more experience found retention practices to be less successful, the two individuals in this group were split evenly between voluntary and military initiated termination. Interestingly, the respondent who terminated for a military initiated reason remarked that they would probably have quit employment within a year whether they had received PCS orders or not. Including this anecdotal
remark into analysis, this group’s data indicates that those with more experience, but less confidence in retention practices are more likely to terminate employment for voluntary reasons.

Figure 4.7- Childcare Industry Tenure and Retention Practices

Search for other employment and retention practices. Respondents were grouped in two categories in regards to choice of other jobs, those who actively searched for a new job and those who did not search for a new job. Both groups were analyzed in regards to retention practices and termination factors. Those who actively searched for a new job rated training practices and relationships with coworkers at 1.17, fatigue relief at 1.33 and perception of management at 1.5; 100% of respondents in this group identified the factor of “acquisition of new job” as a reason for termination. As has been noted in previous research, those with marked intention to leave were most likely to leave for voluntary reasons. Those who did not search for a job rated training practices at 1.83, relationships with coworkers at 1.5, fatigue relief at 1.75, and perception of
management at 1.38; 25% of these respondents identified the factor of “acquisition of new job” as a reason for termination. Based upon the data, those who regarded retention practices with lower ratings were more likely to search for other employment. Furthermore, those who searched for other employment were more likely to leave for voluntary reasons, specifically for a new job.

Figure 4.8-Search for Employment and Retention Practices

![Search for Employment and Retention Practices](image)
Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

According to Whitebook and Sakai (2003), highly trained teaching staff were more likely to leave their jobs if they earned lower wages, worked in a climate with less stability of highly trained coworkers, and worked with a greater percentage of teaching staff who did not have a bachelor’s degree. The first data point to be considered is educational attainment. None of the respondents to this study had less than at least some college experience. It was found that those with less educational attainment, being some college or up to an associate’s degree, left employment for voluntary reasons 50% of the time. Based on previous research literature, the researcher proposed that staff with more education would be more likely to leave employment for another, higher paying position; this was found to be partially correct. Those with more education, at least bachelor's course work and up to a graduate degree left employment for voluntary reasons 83% of the time; one of the respondents with a bachelor’s degree noted that they specifically left employment for a higher paying job. The current research shows that those with higher education were more likely to voluntarily leave employment, but not necessarily for a higher paying job. The researcher also proposed that education coupled with at least one other factor would be specifically noted as a deciding factor for terminating employment. Education was not specifically noted as a factor for termination, but other factors related to increased educational attainment were, such as other employment opportunities. Educational attainment can lend itself to offering more professional opportunities, another considered factor in termination decisions. Organizational commitment can help to retain all staff members, despite educational attainment and other specific factors.

Those with lower levels of organizational commitment have been found to be less satisfied with their job and more likely to plan to leave their jobs (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). The
lack of organizational commitment can materialize within staff members as the pursuit of other employment. Of the majority, respondents who were searching for another job selected a voluntary reason for termination of employment four of five times. The other respondent in this group who selected the military initiated reason of permanent change of duty station move noted, “I left my job due to moving but probably would have quit the following year.” Of the given research, it was found that the active pursuit of a new job was a very strong indicator for termination of employment. Within the same group another respondent who terminated employment and was actively searching for a new job noted that they moved to a position that was “more financially secure with the ability to promote…” These results supported the researcher’s proposal that the search for other employment would be noted as a factor in termination decisions among child and youth program assistants at Minot Air Force Base.

Pay was noted as a factor in the decision to terminate, but was not found as a singular reason for termination. This finding is contradictory to established research where low wages are consistently linked to staff turnover in childcare (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). For all completed surveys, only once did a respondent specifically mention inadequate pay as a reason for termination. Employment category, an aspect of compensation, saw similar responses regarding its connection to factors of termination. Regular employees marked voluntary reasons for termination three of four times, while flexible employees terminated for voluntary reasons three of five times. All respondents worked over 20 hours per week on average; those in the lower range of 20-29 primarily left employment for military initiated reasons, while those who worked 30-40 hours per week primarily left for voluntary reasons. Those employees who terminated employment for voluntary reasons averaged $12.50 per hour, while those who left for military initiated reasons averaged just sixteen cents more, $12.66 per hour. Although there is only a
slight difference in pay between these groups, it is possible that those making more may have stayed at the job had they not received PCS orders. The researcher had proposed that wages alone would not be a primary reason for termination, however, overall compensation including average weekly hours worked and benefits, would influence termination decisions. As only one respondent specifically noted that pay was a factor for termination this proposal supported, but not robustly.

Research from Macado (2008) noted that employees who left the teaching field were often newer and with less specialized training. The current research found that those with less than five years experience in the childcare field were more likely to leave for military initiated reasons, rather than for voluntary reasons. Those with more than five years experience in childcare noted voluntary reasons more often than military initiated reasons for separation. None of the respondents noted that they stayed specifically within childcare upon finding new employment, but rather, within the field of education. All respondents with more than five years experience stayed in the field of education, a majority in this group actively searched for a new job while employed and half left for the voluntary reason of acquisition of a new job. This indicates that for the current study, more experience in childcare and the active pursuit of new employment would lend to voluntary reasons of termination.

Regarding tenure at the youth center, the current study also contradicted previous research. Manlove and Guzell (1997) noted that those who have already been in the field for some time may have more limited job alternatives and thus stay on the job. Those employees with the most experience among all respondents left for voluntary reasons 100% of the time. Those with less than one year experience at the youth center left for voluntary reasons 50% of the time. Those staff who stayed in the field of education all worked at the youth center for less
than one year and a majority of those individuals actively searched for a new position. The researcher had proposed that a short tenure along with other factors would influence the decision to terminate. Those with shorter tenure at the youth center who left for voluntary reasons primarily did so after actively searching for other employment. However, as half of those with a shorter tenure left employment due to military initiated factors, this proposal is not completely supported.

All respondents were military spouses meaning military specific factors could affect 100% of the data. Ultimately, military specific reasons for termination were selected 43% of the time as a termination factor. These findings supported the researcher’s proposal that military specific factors would influence the decision to terminate employment. Military specific separation factors included PCS move, deployment and military based scheduling conflicts. Of the given options, the only issue that effected turnover was the receipt of PCS orders. The data shows that despite high rating of retention practices, the inherent influence of family compelled respondents to terminate employment in order to remain with family.

Research supports that individuals typically leave their jobs due to a combination of personal dissatisfaction and unsupportive work environment (Gable et al., 2007). Retention practices include training practices, fatigue relief, support and relationship with coworkers and support and perception of management. Those who left employment for voluntary reasons marked all retention practice groups higher than those who left for involuntary reasons, with the exception of fatigue relief which was marked with the same rating by both groups. This finding was not expected, it was anticipated that the voluntary group would have rated retention practices lower than the military initiated group. It should be noted that the differences in ratings was not drastic. These results can most likely be attributed to reasons for termination, as most
were for other jobs or for family needs. The researcher expected that burnout, or fatigue, would be a specific factor for termination, but the current findings did not support this proposal. Additionally, non-work factors such as childcare were not noted by respondents, nor were discrepancies in quality as was incorrectly anticipated by the researcher.

**Conclusions**

It is determined that several compounding factors will ultimately lead to termination of employment. For the David C. Jones Youth Center, several demographic data points helped to define commonalities among recently terminated staff members. The following statements serve to summarize the population and provide responses to the initial research questions regarding factors that influence turnover decisions in child and youth program assistants at Minot Air Force Base. The overall educational background of the respondents was at least some college experience. For all respondents, tenure within the field of childcare was less than ten years. The average rate of hourly pay for respondents was $12.86 per hour and a majority received benefits to include paid vacation, paid holidays, a guaranteed 20 hours per week and the option to health, life and dental coverage. A majority of the respondents did search for other employment while employed at the David C. Jones Youth Center. All of the respondents were military spouses, but military specific issues affected termination decisions just 43% of the time. Of those military specific issues the only noted military initiated action was that of a PCS move. As for retention practices, overall the respondents viewed current practices as positive. It is believed that the retention practices along with the demographic information combined to produce the eventual turnover factors.

Within a community so affected by the military, the decision to terminate employment can likely be based on factors outside of one’s own control. There are specific negative factors
that can influence turnover decisions and positive retention practices that can help retain staff members. Based upon the collected data, it is suspected that pay alone was not a deciding factor for voluntary termination but rather, was coupled with other factors. Those who had attained more education were more likely to voluntarily leave employment. Furthermore, those who had completed at least some bachelor's course work were more likely to search for other employment at a rate of 3:2. This indicates that those with more education were more likely to search for other jobs while employed at youth center. Those who searched for other jobs are more likely to voluntarily leave employment, specifically for another job. The data shows that those with less tenure at the facility, who are actively searching for new employment are more likely to terminate employment for voluntary reasons, specifically for new employment. Intention to leave has been shown in most turnover models as a step which immediately precedes leaving (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). Ultimately the active search for new employment had the most consistent connection to voluntary separation.

Retention practices can help to provide employees with an enjoyable work experience. Those with more experience in the childcare industry rated retention practices much lower than those with less experience. This indicates that a reconsideration of program design should be considered regarding retention practices for more experienced staff members. Despite positive ratings, retention practices have very little, if any, influence upon retention with military initiated terminations. In this study, those military initiated reasons were exclusively due to the receipt of a permanent change of duty station order. Commitment to stay with family consistently outweighed the option to remain in a child and youth program assistant position.

**Recommendations**

*Recommendations for current staff members.* For currently hired staff, management will need to rely upon retention practices to reduce turnover. As noted in the research, the active
pursuit of other employment was the most reliable indicator for voluntary separation. A lack in satisfaction with the job or with the organization can lead to staff turnover. Manlove & Guzell (1997) noted a negative relationship between turnover and satisfaction in the workplace. The current research showed positive associations with retention practices overall, but certain practices rated lower and could afford some adjustment.

Overall, the retention practices related to perception of management was rated lowest among participants. Management helps to develop and maintain the culture of the organization and can help to improve organizational commitment by ensuring a positive and supportive culture. Additionally, a positive relationship with management can enable staff to seek help, ask questions and overall, feel supported. Noted in the research was the strong influence that family issues have over staff termination decisions. It is possible that an improved relationship with management can enable staff to continue working while meeting the needs of their family. How can management specifically improve employee perception? Management can offer an open-door policy when confronting staff concerns or offer team building opportunities so staff and management can build a stronger rapport. The rapport may translate into employees having a strong, family-like association with the organization lending to reduced turnover and increased retention. Additionally, as personal issues come about, the strong rapport may lead to employees finding solutions with management that meets the needs of both the program and the individual.

The other retention practice to specifically be considered is training practices, in respect to education and experience. The study found that those staff members with more experience and education rated training practices lower than those with less experience and education. Across all fields it can be generally stated that staff with more experience and education are the most effective staff members. Therefore it should be at the forefront of management consideration to
alter training practices to suit the needs of these individuals. Those with more experience and education are likely to already be knowledgeable in core child development principles. Management can consider providing training based upon individual needs rather than general, group trainings. Management can also support experienced staff members by encouraging their pursuit of professional development trainings and additional credentials or degrees. Those experienced staff could also be chosen to attend conferences as a means to increase professional development.

Recommendations for hiring practices. Reduction in turnover of quality staff members begins in the hiring process. The need to hire begins with a staff members’ decision to leave employment. In determining upcoming hiring needs management can opt to survey employees anonymously to gauge how many are actively searching other employment as this is the strongest indicator of voluntary intention to leave. Management can then analyze those surveys to deduce how many new job openings would be required during the next hiring session. Doing so can enable managers to accurately plan for turnover and ensure the program is appropriately staffed.

Intention to leave employment can stem from an employee’s dissatisfaction with their position. To curb this dissatisfaction, management can ensure applicants have a clear understanding of job exception and employee role in the organization. Upon initial orientation and in the job interview management should be very clear about expectations and responsibilities so employees know early on if they are a good match for the program. Stremmel proposed that, “perhaps caregivers who are more committed to their jobs have more realistic expectations about the conductions of work before going into it (p. 294)”. One respondent noted that, “Before working for Minot AFB youth programs I was a 20 year military member. I was running my own
programs and managing five airmen. It was hard for me to start over in a lower management position. Therefore I found a job where I was in a one-deep position, running my own program and schedule.” This employee’s quote shows how mismatched expectations or needs lead to turnover. Ensuring new employee expectations match that of the program can reduce this source of turnover.

Management should reconsider current hiring protocol in order to recruit staff members who will be effective and who will be more likely to remain employed. According to the research study, individuals new to the field are likely to become those who are retained the longest. Experience should therefore be considered on both sides of the spectrum. Veteran applicants may require less training costs, but could incur more costs as turnover rates increase. Management can consider hiring staff with less experience and focusing on a quality training program that provides staff members with knowledge and creates a strong organizational commitment, further encouraging staff retention. Likewise to tenure, the more educated staff members are also more likely to leave employment for voluntary reasons. Again, management can consider hiring staff with less education and focus on providing a quality training program that enables those staff to meet program expectations. It is not to say that programs should exclusively hire low education and low experience employees, rather management should consider a healthy balance between those with more education and experience and those with less.

Recommendation to program training manager. Another consideration for current and new staff is employee professional growth. Employee professional growth relates to many aspects addressed in the study, including training practices, educational attainment and pursuit of other employment. It is likely that some employees who search for other jobs due so to advance
their careers. Working with employees to educate them on professional opportunities within the program could help to curb staff members from seeking other employment. One respondent noted that their decision to leave employment was based upon their perception that, “I could no longer promote in (my) position at the YC (youth center).” Ultimately, management needs to use retention practices and deliberate hiring procedures to ensure a committed staff of quality caregivers. In doing so, turnover will be reduced and effective caregivers will be retained which will lead to an increase in the quality of childcare provided to youth.
REFERENCES


Turnover in Childcare Staff at Minot Air Force Base


Appendices

Appendix A: Definition of Terms

*Child and Youth Program Assistant*- term used within Air Force Youth Programs to describe childcare staff members responsible for the care of children 6 weeks to 18 years of age. This term can be compared to *childcare worker* and *teacher* in private childcare programs.

*Child Development Associate’s*- credential equivalent to an associate’s degree in early childhood education.

*Entry level*- employees with no education and no experience working with children.

*Flexible*- those staff members of the Non-Appropriated Funds of Department of Defense employment who do not receive benefits and are not guaranteed any working hours.

*Intermediate level* who are employees that have at least six months experience working with children and have completed three sections of the Air Force Child and Youth Module Training Program.

*Lead level*- employees with a bachelor’s degree or equivalent in education and at least one year experience working with children.

*Military specific*- term used to describe reasons for employee separation that the staff member or their family has little control of and stemming from a military order such as a deployment.

*Permanent change of duty station*- term used to describe orders by the Air Force for a service member to relocate to a different base for work purposes.

*Regular*- those staff members of the Non-Appropriated Funds of Department of Defense employment who are guaranteed benefits, including medical coverage, life insurance and a retirement option. These staff member are guaranteed to work at least 20 hours per week and receive paid holiday time and paid leave.
Target level- employees that have at least an associate’s degree in education or have completed the Air Force Child and Youth Module Training Program and one year experience working with children.

Voluntary- those based upon determining factors which the respondent was in control of, such as a terminating due to acquiring a new job.

Youth Development Credential- credential equivalent to an associate’s degree in elementary education.
Appendix B- RRA Approval

Research Review Application approval/ R. Labadie

PC Prout, Christina Leigh

To: Labadie, Racquel A; Cc: Andrews, Dee H; Zeh, Colleen Marie; ...

Wed 12/9/2015 8:18 AM

Inbox

| Action Items

Dear Racquel,

Your Research Review Application has been reviewed and approved. You may start your data collection. This approval will not expire as long as your topic and methodology remain unchanged. If your topic or methodology changes, please submit a new Research Review Application and supporting documents to your instructor by e-mail.

Please contact your instructor if you have any questions. Also, be sure to check with your instructor concerning the due dates for your project.

Good luck with your project. This is the only notification you will receive. Please keep a copy for your records.

Kim Gribben
Assistant Director, MSA Program

Christina Prout
Administrative Secretary Master of Science in Administration Program
Rowe 222 | Central Michigan University | Mount Pleasant, MI 48859
(989-774-6525 6: Fax 989-774-2575
1-800-950-1144, ext. 6525
* prout.lcl@cmich.edu
8: Visit us online

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Appendix C- Cover Letter

Dear Participant,

My name is Racquel Labadie and I am a graduate student at Central Michigan University. For my final project, I am examining employee turnover at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center and Child Development Center. Because you were a Child and Youth Program Assistant at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center or Child Development Center I am inviting you to participate in this research study by completing the attached survey. The following questionnaire will require approximately 25 minutes to complete. There is no compensation for responding nor is there any known risk. In order to ensure that all information will remain confidential, please do not include your name. Copies of the project will be provided to my Central Michigan University instructor. If you choose to participate in this project, please answer all questions as honestly as possible and return the completed questionnaires promptly by e-mail. Because e-mailed responses are not anonymous, I will maintain the confidentiality of your responses by printing off your survey and then deleting your e-mail. In that way, I will not be able to match names to surveys. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.

If you choose to complete the attached survey, please use the following directions to guide you. Ensure you have not included any identifying information on the survey, especially your name. The survey was designed as a .pdf in Adobe Acrobat and will work best with this software. To complete the survey with Adobe as a .pdf, simply mark your choices in the specified spots or write in your response in the given space. If you are unable to utilize Adobe, you can also fill out the survey in Word. To use Word, please bold your choice or write in your response in the given space. Finally, if neither option is working, you can also respond via email, by writing your response next to its corresponding number. For example: 1. Less Than 25 Years Old 2. CY 1701. After completing the survey, please save it as "survey" and email it back to me at the address listed below.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my educational endeavors. The data collected will provide useful information regarding employee terminations, retention and program policy. Completion and return of the questionnaire will indicate your willingness to participate in this study. If you require additional information or have questions, please contact me at the number or e-mail address listed below. Additionally, if you wish to be provided with a summary of the project, please use the contact information below. Please note that if you are not satisfied with the manner in which this study is being conducted, you may report (anonymously if you so choose) any complaints to the MSA Program by calling 989-774-6525 or addressing a letter to the MSA Program, Rowe 222, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

Sincerely,

Racquel Labadie
arlabdie@gmail.com
701-340-7982

Dr. Dee Andrews
andre1dh@cmich.edu
480-926-3252

Thanks for your participation.
Appendix D - Survey

1. How old were you while you were employed at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center?
   - Less than 25 years old_____
   - Between 25 and 50 years old_____
   - More than 50 years old _____

2. My highest position rank at Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center was:
   - CY 1701-01 (Entry Level) _____
   - CY 1701-01 (Intermediate Level) _____
   - CY 1701-02 (Target Level) _____
   - CY 1701-02 (Lead Level) _____

3. How long have you worked in the child care industry?
   - Less than 5 years_____
   - Between 5 and 10 years_____
   - More than 10 years_____

4. How long did you work at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center __________?

5. My highest hourly rate of pay at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center was:
   - Less than $10 per hour _____
   - At least $10 per hour _____
   - At least $11 per hour _____
   - At least $12 per hour _____
   - At least $13 per hour _____
   - At least $14 per hour _____
   - At least $15 per hour _____
   - More than $15 per hour _____

6. My employment category upon terminating employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center was:
   - FLEX _____ (Received no benefits, Guaranteed no hours)
   - REGULAR _____ (Option for benefits, Guaranteed 20 hours per week)

7. I worked an average of ______ hours per week while at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center:
   - 0-9 hours _____
   - 10-19 hours _____
   - 20-29 hours _____
   - 30-40 hours _____
8. During my employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center my highest level of education was the following:
   High School Diploma or Equivalent _____
   Some College or Associates Degree _____
   Bachelors Course Work or Degree _____
   Graduate Course Work or Degree _____

9. During my employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center, I had the following certifications:
   Youth Development Credential _____
   Child Development Credential _____
   Teaching License _____
   Other Certification (please explain): _______________________________________

10. While working at Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center did you actively search for a new job?
    Yes _____
    No _____

11. In what field did you begin work after leaving Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center?
    Please explain: ___________________________________________________________

12. Select your school enrollment status while employed at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center.
    Part-time student _____
    Full-time student _____
    Not enrolled in school _____

13. During my employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center I was a dependent in the military.
    Yes _____
    No _____

14. During my employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center I was a military spouse.
    Yes _____
    No _____

15. During my employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center I was an active duty military member.
    Yes _____
    No _____
16. I found the on-the-job training practices helpful in my day-to-day interactions at work.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

17. I found the modules to be useful and helpful in my day-to-day interactions at work.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

18. I found staff meetings useful.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

19. I found management to be helpful.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

20. I felt supported by the management team.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

21. I found my co-workers to be knowledgeable in regards to standard child care practices.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

22. I felt I was part of a team while at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

23. I had adequate resources to handle job related stressors.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

24. I feel I received adequate training while at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

25. Regarding your decision to terminate employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center please mark any and all of the following statements if they describe a factor in your decision to leave.

A. _____ I terminated employment at Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center due to conflicts with my school schedule or responsibilities.

B. _____ I terminated employment at Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center upon graduating with my secondary degree.
C. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center upon finding out I was pregnant or after the birth of my child.
D. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center due to the cost of child care.
F. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center due to inability to find adequate child care.
G. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center to stay at home and raise my child(ren).
H. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center due to my spouse, family member or self receiving orders of a permanent change of duty station.
I. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center due to my spouse’s, family member’s or my own deployment.
J. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center due to conflicts with my spouse’s or family member’s schedule.
K. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center after finding a new job.
L. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center as I was not receiving adequate pay.
M. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center due to conflict with the available shifts or workdays.
N. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center due to job related stress.
O. _____ I terminated employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center due to the following reason(s):

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

26. Additional comments regarding your decision to terminate employment at the Minot Air Force Base Youth Center/Child Development Center:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________