

## Supplemental Material S1. Survey questions and response summary.

Q1. Please indicate your academic and credentialing history (check all that apply):		
	%	<i>n</i>
Bachelor's degree in communication sciences & disorders (CSD) or equivalent	12.16	9
Bachelor's degree in field other than CSD	6.76	5
Master's degree	18.92	14
Clinical Doctorate in audiology	48.65	36
Research Doctorate	6.76	5
Doctorate in another field besides audiology	1.35	1
Other (please specify):	4.05	3
I prefer not to answer	1.35	1
<i>Total number of responses (check all that apply) = 74</i>		
Q2. What is your racial identity?		
	%	<i>n</i>
Black or African American	0.00	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.00	0
White/Caucasian	95.74	45
Asian	0.00	0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.00	0
Bi- or Multi-racial	4.26	2
<i>Total number of respondents = 47</i>		
Q3. What is your ethnicity?		
	%	<i>n</i>
Hispanic/Latinx	4.44	2
Not Hispanic/Latinx	91.11	41
Other (please specify):	4.44	2
I prefer not to answer	0.00	0
<i>Total number of respondents = 45</i>		
Q4. What is your gender identity?		
	%	<i>n</i>
Man	14.89	7
Woman	85.11	40
Other (please specify):	0.00	0
I prefer not to answer	0.00	0
<i>Total number of respondents = 47</i>		

Q5. What was your marital status when you left the profession?

	%	<i>n</i>
Married	74.5	35
Single	25.5	12
Other:	4.26	2
I prefer not to answer	0.00	0

*Total number of respondents = 47. Note: Two responses listed under other/please specify were reclassified into the married category ("In a long-term relationship" and "domestic partner")*

Q6. When you left the audiology profession, how would you describe your income relative to overall household income?

	%	<i>n</i>
My income supported only me	17.02	8
My income was the sole support of a household that included at least one other person*	6.38	3
My income was considered an equal contribution to a household that included at least one other employed person.	29.79	14
My income was considered the primary income supporting the household that includes me and at least one other person.*	14.89	7
My income was considered a secondary income supporting the household that includes me and at least one other employed person.	31.91	15
Other (please specify):	0.00	0
I prefer not to answer	0.00	0

*Total number of respondents = 47. Note: For the purposes of analysis, the two items noted with \* were merged to form sole/primary support of household.*

Q7. If you have children (or plan to have children), please indicate how this personal status impacted your decision to leave the profession:

	%	<i>n</i>
This had no impact on my decision to leave the profession.	56.3	18
This was the sole or primary reason I left the profession.*	9.38	3
This was part of the reason I left the profession but there were other important considerations.*	34.38	11

*Total number of respondents = 32 Note: Responses for sole/primary and part of the reason (noted with \*) were grouped together for analysis.*

Q11. At about what age did you first learn about the profession of audiology?

	%	<i>n</i>
Early childhood through elementary school	12.77	6

Middle school/early teenage years (approx. 11-14 years)	2.13	1
Highschool/late teenage years (approx. 14-18 years)	23.40	11
Undergraduate/young adult years (approx. 18-21 years)	48.94	23
Other: _____	0.00	0
After age 21	12.77	6

*Total number of respondents = 47*

Q12. At about what age did you decide to become an audiologist?

	%	<i>n</i>
Early childhood through elementary school	2.13	1
Middle school/early teenage years (approx. 11-14 years)	0.00	0
Highschool/late teenage years (approx. 14-18 years)	14.89	7
Undergraduate/young adult years (approx. 18-21 years)	65.96	31
Other: _____	0.00	0
After age 21	17.02	8

*Total number of respondents = 47*

Q13. What other profession(s) did you seriously consider as a career choice before pursuing audiology? Check all that apply. Include other careers under other.

	%	<i>n</i>
Speech-language pathology	28.13	27
Nursing	9.38	9
Medicine (physician)	17.71	17
Pharmacy	5.21	5
Sign-language interpreter	2.08	2
Physical Therapist/Occupational Therapist	7.29	7
Dentist	2.08	2
Performing arts (Music, dance, theater, etc.)	3.13	3
Linguistics	0.00	0
Deaf education	1.04	1
General education	6.25	6
Other: _____	17.71	17
None	0.00	0

*Total number of responses = 96. Note: Responses under other (please specify) included: computer engineering, special education, scientist, medicine, teacher, CPA, engineer, veterinarian, journalism, photography, physician, business management, economics, psychiatry, psychology, chef, computer programmer.*

Q14. As an adult, did you work in another career/profession before becoming an audiologist?

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	%	<i>n</i>
No	91.49	43
Yes (If yes, what profession? _____)	8.51	4

*Total number of respondents = 47. Note: Responses under other (please specify) included: IT/ interpreting, education, engineer, speech-language pathologist.*

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Q15. How many different audiology positions have you held?

	%	<i>n</i>
1	23.91	11
2	10.87	5
3-4	50.00	23
5+	15.22	7

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*Total number of respondents = 46*

Q16. At approximately what age did you first **consider leaving** the profession?

	%	<i>n</i>
21-30	31.91	15
31-40	29.79	14
41-50	14.89	7
51+	23.40	11

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*Total number of respondents = 47*

Q17. At approximately what age did you **actually leave** the profession?

	%	<i>n</i>
21-30	19.1	9
31-40	23.4	11
41-50	29.8	14
51+	27.7	13

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*Total number of respondents = 47*

Q20. What was the primary work setting of your **final** audiology position?

	%	<i>n</i>
School (Preschool, K-12)	0.00	0
University	10.87	5
Hospital (all types)	17.39	8
Residential health care facility (e.g., skilled nursing facility)	0.00	0
Audiology private practice (as practice owner)	10.87	5
Audiology private practice (as employee)	15.22	7
Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) clinic	23.91	11
Telehealth agency	2.17	1

Hearing aid industry or other electronics manufacturer	8.70	4
Industrial audiology (hearing conservation)	2.17	1
Other (please specify):	8.70	4

*Total number of respondents = 46. Note: Other/please specify included: VA, corporate owned clinics, hearing clinic for HMO, nonprofit speech and hearing clinic*

Q21. How many of your audiology positions involved dispensing hearing aids?

	%	<i>n</i>
None	2.17	1
1	28.26	13
2	26.09	12
3-4	28.26	13
5+	15.22	7

*Total number of respondents = 46*

Q22. Have you ever felt uncomfortable dispensing hearing aids because of negative attitudes from patients (e.g., distrust, rudeness)?

	%	<i>n</i>
Yes	50.00	23
No	50.00	23

*Total number of respondents = 46*

Q23. Have you ever felt uncomfortable dispensing hearing aids because of workplace policies, procedures, or compensation systems (e.g., pressure to upsell hearing aids, income dependent on commission/bonus for hearing aid sales)?

	%	<i>n</i>
Yes	52.17	24
No	43.48	20

*Total number of respondents = 44*

Rated Questions	Mean
• During my last audiology position, I perceived my job satisfaction to be positive.	3.13
• Considering my entire career as an audiologist, I perceived my job satisfaction to be positive.	3.33
• During my last audiology position, I perceived my income to be commensurate with my level of education and experience.	2.63
• Throughout my entire career as an audiologist, I perceived my income to be commensurate with my level of education and experience.	2.13
• I felt valued at my final position in audiology.	2.96

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|--|------|
| • Throughout my entire career as an audiologist, I felt valued during my career.   | 2.89 |
| • During my last audiology position, I often felt lonely.  | 2.65 |
| • Considering all aspects of being an audiologist (e.g., income, job satisfaction, job duties, professional costs, etc.), I think the cost of audiology education is reasonable. | 1.78 |
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Q24. What were the primary reasons you chose to leave the profession of audiology?

*Total number of respondents = 41*

Theme #1: Lack of Reward ( $n = 20$ ): Audiologist positions were not adequately compensated, and upward mobility was limited. Example quotes:

- "Pay."
- "I'm not making the money I hoped for."
- "Not an income that can sustain a family, last job had no job satisfaction."
- "Low salary, lack of benefits."
- "Lack of upward mobility in career."
- "Lack of opportunity and limitations to income."
- "Pay, childcare costs vs staying home."
- "My childcare costs were pretty equal to my salary, so it wasn't worth the increased stress."
- "Income, lack of respect and acknowledgement."
- "Lack of competitive compensation and limited growth opportunities."

Theme #2: Hearing Aids ( $n = 13$ ): Emphasis on selling hearing aids. Example quotes:

- I was tired of selling. I didn't like having to watch patients settle for less than what they needed because of pricing.
- Pressure to sell hearing aids.
- I also do not want to sell hearing aids for commission.
- Stress of selling hearing aids.
- Horrible supervisor and management only concerned about the numbers.
- I did not like selling hearing aids. There was pressure to sell to every patient no matter the degree of hearing loss or no hearing loss.
- I felt more like a salesperson than clinician.

Theme #3: Psychosocial Work Environment ( $n = 10$ ): Poor organizational culture with high work demands, low level of control, and low level of support.

- Lack of professionalism from administrators and lack of respect from medical colleagues. It got tiring defending my profession.
  - Poor work environment.
  - No support from administration. Taking computer home at night to chart note. IT support was slow. No office staff to help sending out repairs. Having to do end of month accounting report.
  - Impossible to take time off. Coverage always an issue. Fed up with patients lack of respect and pressure from employer. Not a pleasant work environment.
  - Horrible supervisor and management.
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Theme #4: Patients ( $n = 7$ ): Participant reported frustration with how patients treated them.

Example quotes:

- How patients treated me.
- Generally, it is incredibly difficult to deal with the general population and people being rude and difficult as patients.
- Lack of consumer respect.
- Rude patients.

Theme #5: Stress and Burnout ( $n = 4$ ): Participants cited stress and burnout as reasons for leaving the profession.

- To reduce the stress in my life.
- I had been in direct patient care for more than 20 years and I was burned out.
- Burnout.

Theme #6: Other Opportunities ( $n = 11$ ): Audiologists were presented with opportunities that were more desirable than continuing in the profession.

- I started a new career at age [age omitted] in [new career area].
- Had an offer to purchase my practice I couldn't refuse.
- Relocation to work in a family business.
- Left to stay home with my children.
- I had a professional administrator opportunity arise that was taught as an option with my degree.

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Q25: Under what circumstances would you consider returning to the profession of audiology?  
*Total number of respondents = 37*

Theme #1: Greater Reward ( $n = 21$ ): Participants would return to audiology for greater rewards, primarily salary, but also opportunities for advancement and flexibility. Example quotes:

- "Flexible scheduling."
- "If pay ever matches the education level needed."
- "Higher salary with benefits."
- "The salary is significantly more, and my children are much older. The lack of pay doesn't match the high cost of childcare."
- "Better income and more opportunities to advance."
- "Income increase, better schedule."
- "Flexibility to leave, part-time opportunities."
- "I would need to be offered an absurd amount of money to deal with general population and be berated and undervalued daily."
- "Intellectually challenging audiology job opportunity, where I learn every day."
- "The opportunity to work in a more dynamic and diverse environment, with true growth potential, and compensation commensurate with my level of training and experience."

Theme #2: None ( $n = 14$ ): Participants would not return to audiology under any circumstances or under extremely limited circumstances. Example quotes:

- "None" (8 participants)
- "At this point, I don't see anything that would make me return"
- "Would have to be a catastrophic life event and I don't foresee ever returning to audiology"

Theme #3: Hearing Aids ( $n = 3$ ). Participants would return to audiology if they did not have to sell hearing aids. Quotes:

- “Not having to base an audiologist’s worth on the amount of hearing aids they sell.”
- “No stress to sell hearing aids.”
- “If I could find a position where I didn’t work with hearing aids.”

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*Note.* Questions from the original survey that did not contribute to the outcome of the study were omitted from this supplementary materials tables