Military and Veteran Families’ Well-Being: Focus on Spouse Employment

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Why be concerned with Spouse Employment?

- Well-being of Military Personnel, Veterans, and their Families affected by Spouses’ Earnings and Employment Satisfaction
- Virginia is home to large proportion of military personnel, veterans, and spouses
- Military spouses have serious employment disadvantages (and they may be cumulative)
- Many veterans (including those disabled) rely on spouse’s earnings
Data Source

Data from the American Community Survey 2005-2009

Prepared for the Office of the First Lady by:
Mary K. Kniskern & Dr. David R. Segal
2011

This is the source for statistics and graphs. Other findings and conclusions derive from additional research.
Percentage of Military Wives Residing in Each State
Labor Force Participation of Married Women (U.S.)

• Military wives are less likely than their civilian counterparts to be employed
  – This finding holds regardless of their education or whether they have moved in past year
  – If employed, military wives are less likely to be employed full-time
Unemployment of Military Wives (U.S.)

- Higher percentages of military wives unemployed (not employed, but seeking work) than wives of civilian men
Unemployment Among Military and Civilian Wives in the Labor Force

Percentage


- Military Wives
- Civilian Wives
Percentage of Married Women Unemployed in States Where Most Military Wives Reside

- Military Wives
- Civilian Wives

Data points for each state showing the percentage of married women unemployed.
Percentage of Married Women Unemployed in States Where Most Military Spouses Reside

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Military Unemployed</th>
<th>Civilian Unemployed</th>
<th>% Mil Spouses Residing in State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>10.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>10.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>8.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>9.06</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>5.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>7.17</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>8.72</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>6.89</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>7.14</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparison of Mean Earnings between Military and Civilian Wives Employed Full-time and Year-Round, by State Married Women, Ages 18-46, with Husbands Employed Full-time Data: American Communities Survey 2005-2009

![Graph showing comparison of annual earnings between military and civilian wives by state.](image-url)
Comparison of Mean Earnings between Military and Civilian Wives Employed Full-time
Married Women, Ages 18-46, with Husbands Employed Full-time
Data: American Communities Survey 2005-2009
Differences in Earnings between Military and Civilian Wives

• **Overall wage gap** between **civilian and military wives** is **42%**.
  – This gap represents both substantially lower labor force participation by military wives, and lower earnings for employment.

• Among **households that moved** year prior to survey, wage gap is over **47%**

• Among **employed wives**, civilian wives earn **27%** more than military wives.

• Overall earnings gap between civilian and military wives **employed full-time** is **25%**

• Geographic mobility decreases labor force participation and earnings from employment through
  – difficulty finding employment in new location
  – decreased job tenure
Effects of high military presence in local labor market on women’s earnings

- The greater the % of local labor market that is active duty, the lower the earnings of women
- This result holds even controlling for other variables, e.g., age, education, race, years of job experience, numbers and ages of children
- Women married to military men earn less than women married to full-time employed civilian men

Civilian Husbands of Military Women

Research presented so far covers only civilian wives of military men (more than 85% of civilian spouses of military personnel). Other research compares civilian husbands of military women to civilian wives of military men.

- Male military spouses (civilian husbands of military women) earn more than their female counterparts.
- But these husbands are more dissatisfied with their employment than are civilian wives of military men.

Negative Effects of Moving on Military Spouse Employment

• Increases unemployment
• Decreases wages
• Decreases satisfaction with employment

Geographic mobility measures:
  – Number of moves
  – Time between moves
  – Time at current location
Military Spouse Employment Programs

First federal efforts:
- Writing resume'
- Dressing for job interviews
- Behavior at job interviews

This helps, but **not** effective if:
- There are not enough jobs
- Jobs available do not match spouse skill level
- State licensing requirements hinder employment (especially after moving)
Other Existing and Proposed Employment Efforts

For veterans, military spouses, and military children of working age

• Public-private partnerships to create jobs
  Example: Building on installations for use by private employers – in exchange for training/hiring veterans and military family members

• Tax incentives for employers to train and hire military and veteran family members

• Building/low rent on state property for use by employers of veterans and military/veteran family members

• In-state tuition for veteran and military family members
Other Recommendations

• Conduct research on military personnel and families in the state to determine needs and programs likely to fulfill those needs
• Build evaluations into program plans
• Update data on spouse employment
• Measure veterans’ and military/veteran spouses’ awareness of programs
• In determining program needs and evaluation, analyze differences by education, race, age, gender, time at current location, etc.
Questions and Comments
• Supplementary slides follow
### Mean Earnings (in dollars) and Labor Force Participation of Married Women

**American Community Survey 2006-2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CIVILIAN</th>
<th>MILITARY</th>
<th>Difference in mean earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Earnings</td>
<td>Not in Labor Force</td>
<td>Seeking Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I.</strong> Overall</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>26,965.63</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II.</strong> Moved</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>23079.55</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not move</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>27350.91</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III.</strong> Earnings by Educational Attainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School diploma</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>9,041.58</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School diploma or GED</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>17,994.87</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, less than Bachelor’s</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>23,968.24</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>34091.70</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate education beyond Bachelor’s</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>50,738.31</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV.</strong> Earnings by Education if Working Full or Part-time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Earnings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School diploma</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>20,402.18</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School diploma or GED</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>28,774.39</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, less than Bachelor’s</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>35,670.94</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>43,418.27</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate education beyond Bachelor’s</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>59,279.07</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical significance of variables:

*0.05  **0.001

Prepared 30 NOV 2010
Moving with the Military: Race, Class, and Gender Differences in the Employment Consequences of Tied Migration

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Mady Wechsler Segal
Karin De Angelis
Center for Research on Military Organization
University of Maryland, College Park
# Mobility & Satisfaction w/ Job Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SATISFACTION WITH JOB OPPORTUNITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 28.5% of spouses were dissatisfied &amp; 17.2% were very dissatisfied with opportunities (= 45.7% DS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- For each additional year at current location, the likelihood of being DS decreased by 5.6% (but stronger effect for minorities than for Whites).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENDER</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Likelihood of a civilian wife being DS is 35.3% lower than the likelihood of civilian husband being DS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RACE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Asians and Whites do not differ significantly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Black spouses are 42.2% more likely than Whites to be DS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLASS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Enlisted spouses of all rank categories are significantly more likely to be DS than spouses of senior officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERSECTION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Black women 49.7% more likely than White women to be DS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Black men do not differ significantly from White men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- White women only half as likely as White men to be DS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Black women twice as likely as Black men to be DS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Mobility & Employment

| GENDER       | - Women are 43.7% less likely to be employed than men  
|              | - No significant difference in impact of mobility on employment |
| RACE         | - Black spouses are 22.1% more likely than White spouses to be employed  
|              | - For every year at location, Whites likelihood of employment increases by 12.8%; for Black spouses, the increase is 56.5% per year  
|              | - Unlike Whites, # of children not a significant determinant of Black spousal employment |
| CLASS        | - Spouses of junior enlisted personnel are 39.1%, spouses of midgrade enlisted are 73.9%, and spouses of senior enlisted are 77.4% more likely than spouses of field grade officers to be employed  
|              | - No significant difference in employment rates among officer spouses (company grade v. field grade)  
|              | - Mobility does not significantly affect officers’ spouses, but spouses of enlisted members more likely to work with fewer moves |
# Mobility & Earnings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL</td>
<td>- Each move is associated with a 2% loss of earnings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Every year increase in time between moves is associated with 1.3% increase in earnings; this increases to 2.6% after one year time on station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER</td>
<td>- Women earn 17.6% less than men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACE</td>
<td>- Mobility differentially affects White and Asian spouses; White spouses lose about 2.4% per move, Asians receive a premium of 15.4% per move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS</td>
<td>- Enlisted spouses of all rank categories earn significantly less than officer spouses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERSECTION</td>
<td>- Black men do not differ significantly from White men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Black women earn 28.4% more than White women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- White women earn 23% less than White men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Black men and women do not differ significantly from each other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Potential Impact of Decreasing Geographic Mobility*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group/Sub-Group</th>
<th>Satisfaction with Opportunities</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>+12.4%</td>
<td>+30.0%</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>+8.7%</td>
<td>+20.0%</td>
<td>+3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>+6.9%</td>
<td>+17.7%</td>
<td>+2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>+15.1%</td>
<td>+39.5%</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouses of Enlisted</td>
<td>+9.8%</td>
<td>+14.3%</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouses of Officers</td>
<td>+7.5%</td>
<td>+19.3%</td>
<td>+1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>+9.6%</td>
<td>+19.4%</td>
<td>+3.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Average time between moves and time at current location increased by one year, number of moves decreased by one, all other variables held constant.
Causes of Lower Employment Outcomes

- Moving (more frequently and longer distances)
- Local labor markets in vicinity of military installations
- Employer bias against hiring transient military spouses