

An Analysis of the Okmulgee Area Labor Force

Summary Report

for the

Okmulgee Area Development Corporation

and

Oklahoma Department of Commerce

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Sponsored by the Okmulgee Area Development Corporation and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, this study examines the availability of labor in the Okmulgee, Oklahoma, area. Data were collected by telephone from randomly selected adults in August of 1998. The results presented in this report are based on 1,003 interviews targeted to residents of Okmulgee County and areas in neighboring Creek, Hughes, Okfuskee and McIntosh counties. Residents of Okmulgee constitute 35 percent of the sample.

This study demonstrates that a pool of labor exists among workers who are employed but do not fully utilize their education and skills. We call these workers the *underemployed*. In this study, underemployed workers meet three conditions: 1) they feel they are underutilized in their present employment, 2) they have training or education that is not required by their current job, and 3) they would change jobs in order to better utilize their skills and education. Approximately 12.5 percent of workers in the area fit the underemployed criteria.

Many of the underemployed are searching for improved job situations. These workers exhibit a variety of occupations and skills. The results show that the median underemployed worker is willing to commute 20 miles or more for a job that pays 10 percent to 15 percent more than current wages.

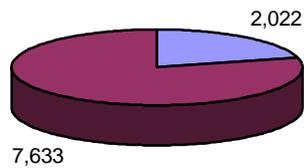
A smaller pool of labor exists among those who are without work but who want to work. These persons include retirees who wish to return to work for a variety of reasons. In general, those who want to work are less skilled and have less education than does the average worker in the area.

The next section provides comparative survey details regarding the underemployed followed by comparisons of Okmulgee with the surrounding area.

Highlights Regarding the Underemployed

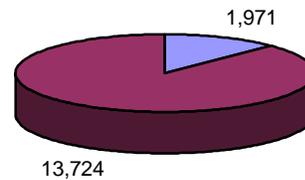
Approximately 1,971 persons in the target area are looking for work that better utilizes their skills and education. Another 2,022 persons are currently not working but want to work.

Estimated Persons Who Are Not Working



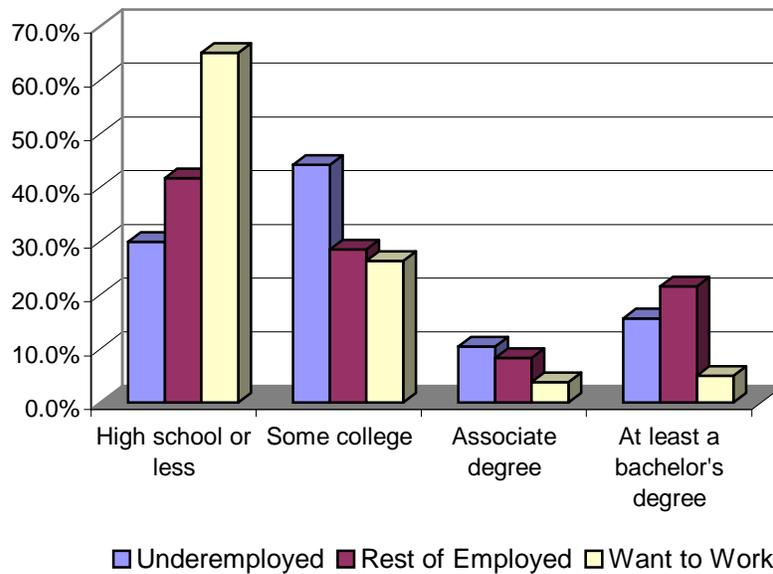
Want to Work Don't desire work

Estimated Persons Who Are Working



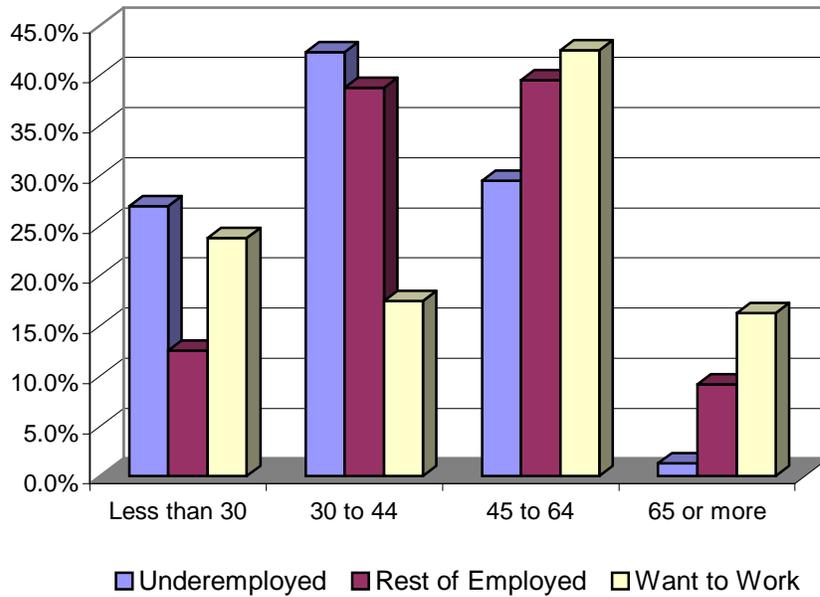
Underemployed Rest of Employed

Fewer underemployed workers have four-year degrees than do other workers. Persons who are not working and want to work have much less education.

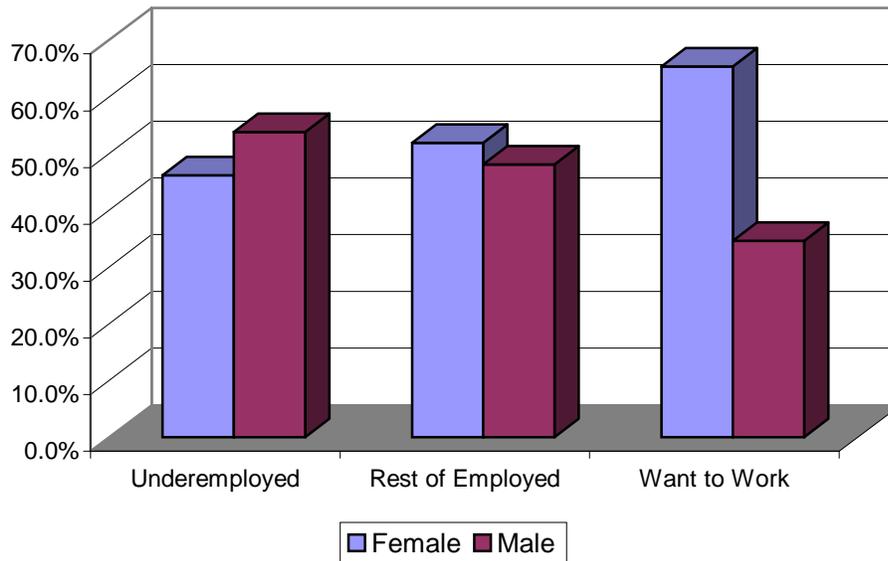


Underemployed Rest of Employed Want to Work

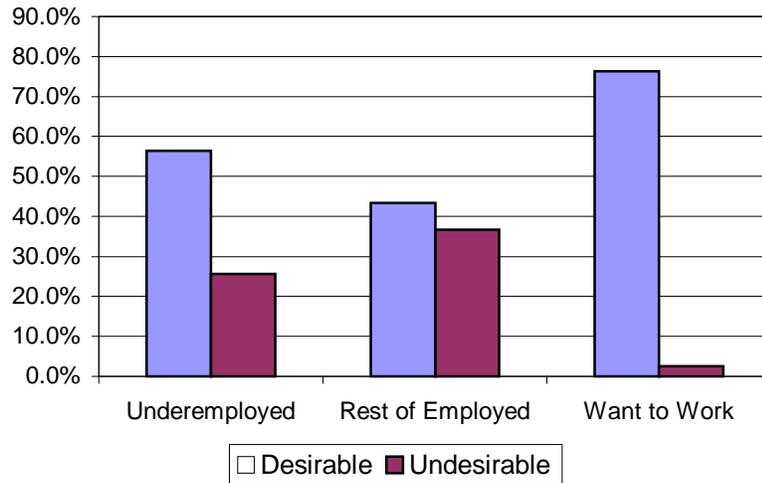
Underemployed workers are younger while persons without a job but who want to work are older.



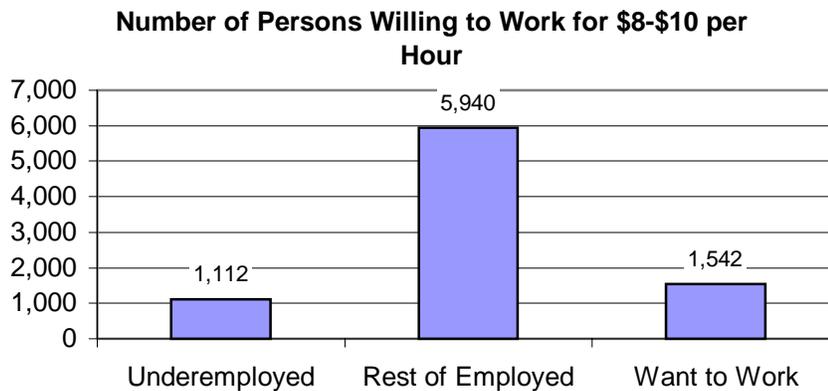
Most of the underemployed are male. Those who are without work but want to work are mostly female.



An employment opportunity that pays from \$8 per hour to \$10 per hour is viewed as desirable by 56 percent of the underemployed and by 43 percent of the rest of employed. Approximately 76 percent of persons who are without work but want to work view such a job as desirable.



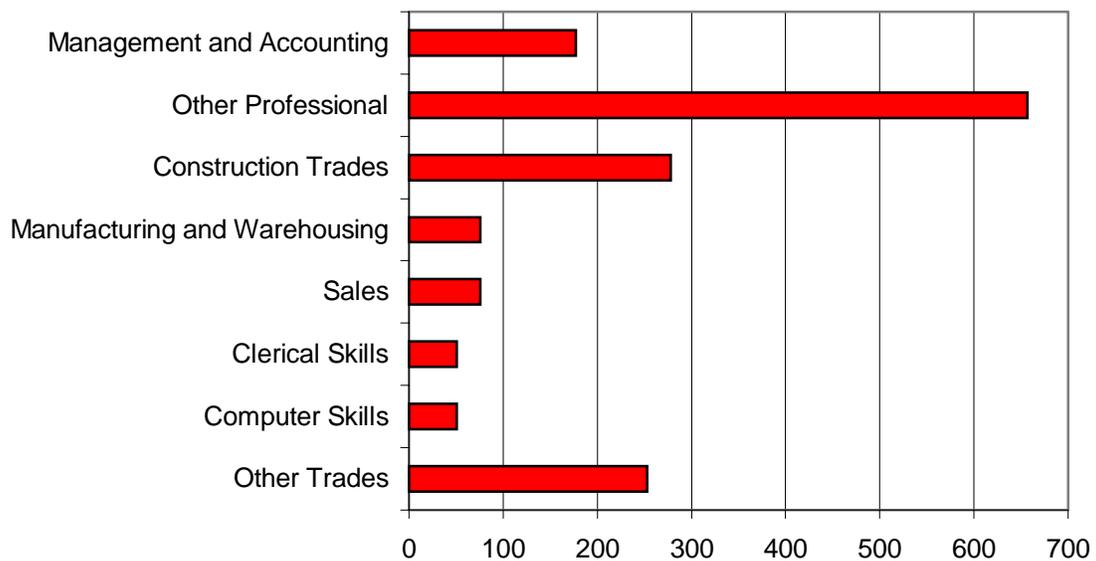
An estimated 8,593 persons living in the Okmulgee area are interested in a job that pays from \$8 hour to \$10 hour...



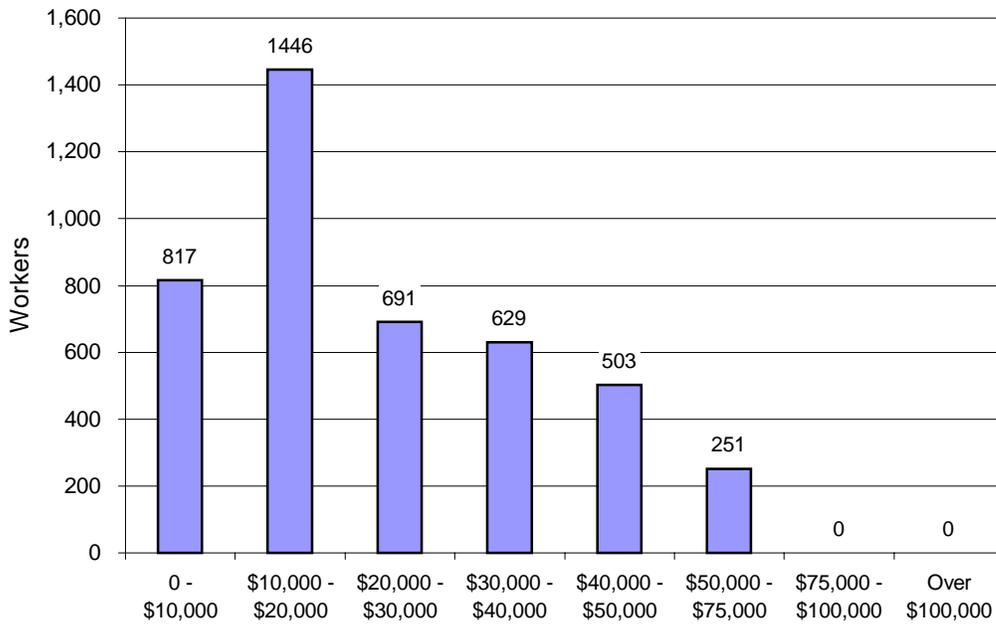
The underemployed work in a variety of occupations and skills, from executives and other professionals to craftsmen and clerks:

	<u>Estimated Workers</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Executive, Administrative, and Managerial	202	10.2
Professional Specialty	152	7.7
Technicians and Related Support	76	3.9
Sales	177	9.0
Administrative Support, Including Clerical	253	12.8
Service Occupations	278	14.1
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing	202	10.2
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	278	14.1
Machine Operators, Assemblers, and Inspectors	227	11.5
Transportation and Material Moving	126	6.4

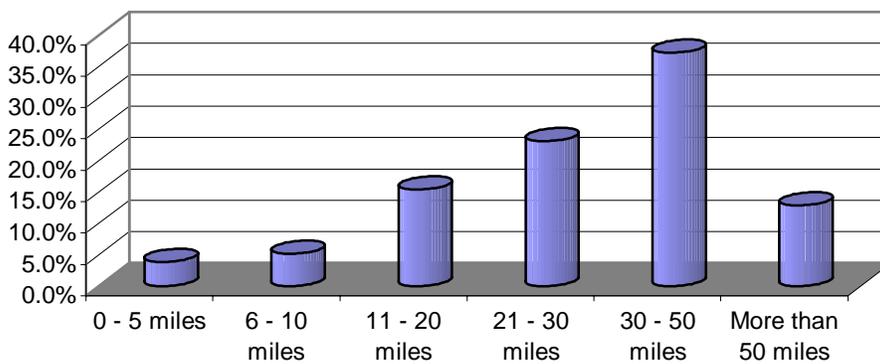
Most of the underemployed have skills they presently are not utilizing. These skills include...



The typical (median) underemployed worker earns between \$20,000 and \$30,000 a year and would change jobs for a pay increase of between 10 percent and 15 percent.

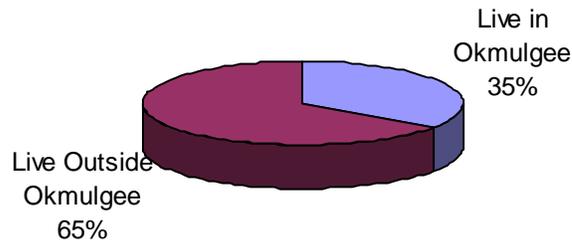


Approximately 73 percent of underemployed workers are willing to commute at least 21 miles to work...



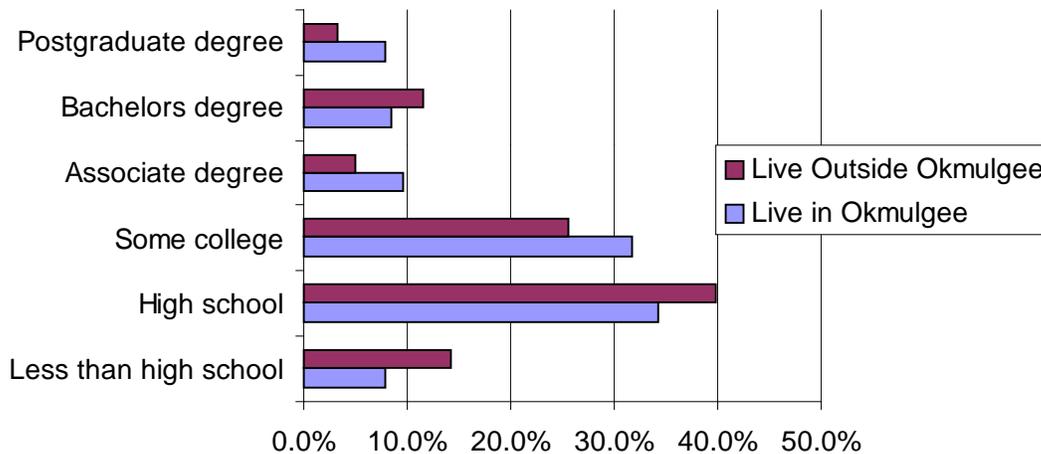
Contrasting Okmulgee Residents with Non-Okmulgee Residents

Thirty-five percent of workers in the study live in Okmulgee while 65 percent live elsewhere in Okmulgee County or in one of the surrounding counties.



A significant percentage of both Okmulgee residents and non-Okmulgee residents have completed at least an associate's degree: 26 percent of Okmulgee residents and 19 percent of non-Okmulgee residents. Also, non-Okmulgee residents have a slightly higher proportion of Bachelor's degrees.

Level of Education by Place of Residence



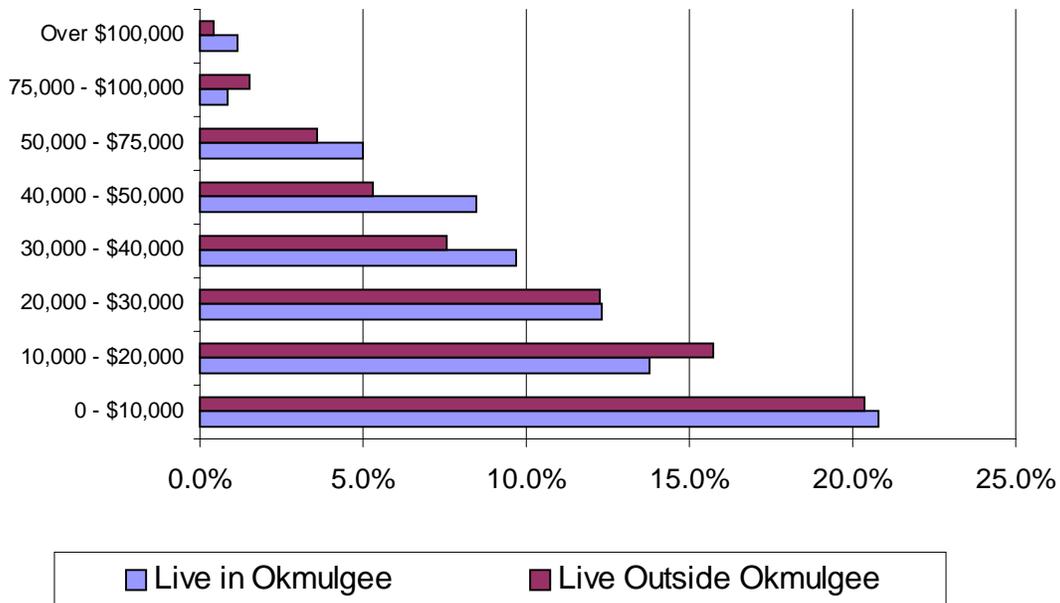
The majority of Okmulgee residents and non-Okmulgee residents work for private-sector companies. Residents of Okmulgee are slightly more likely to work for government and non-profit organizations than are non-Okmulgee residents.

Sector of Employment by Place of Residence



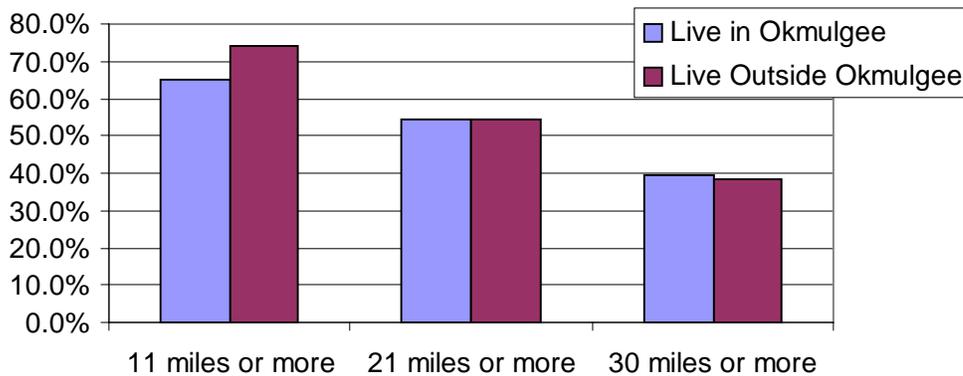
Median earnings for both groups are between \$20,000 and \$30,000. A higher percentage of Okmulgee residents earn \$50,000 to \$75,000 but a greater percentage of non-Okmulgee residents earn over \$100,000.

Distribution of Earnings by Place of Residence



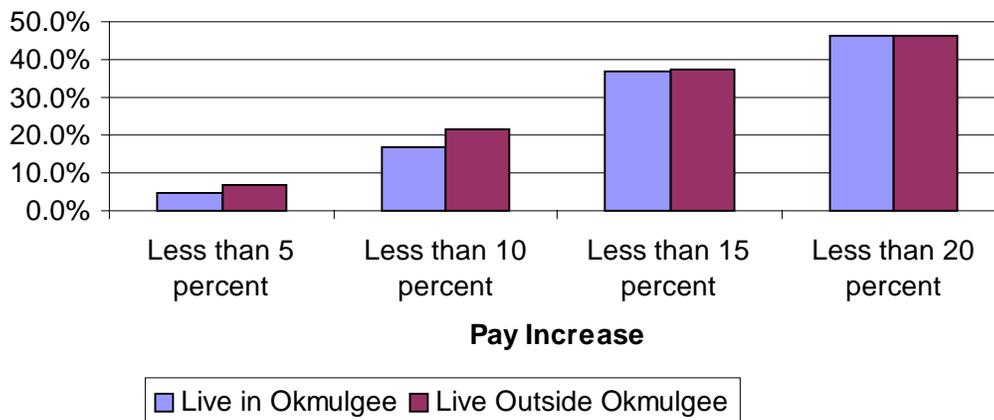
Some difference exists regarding willingness to commute. Non-Okmulgee residents are somewhat more willing to commute than are Okmulgee residents.

Willingness to Commute by Place of Residence



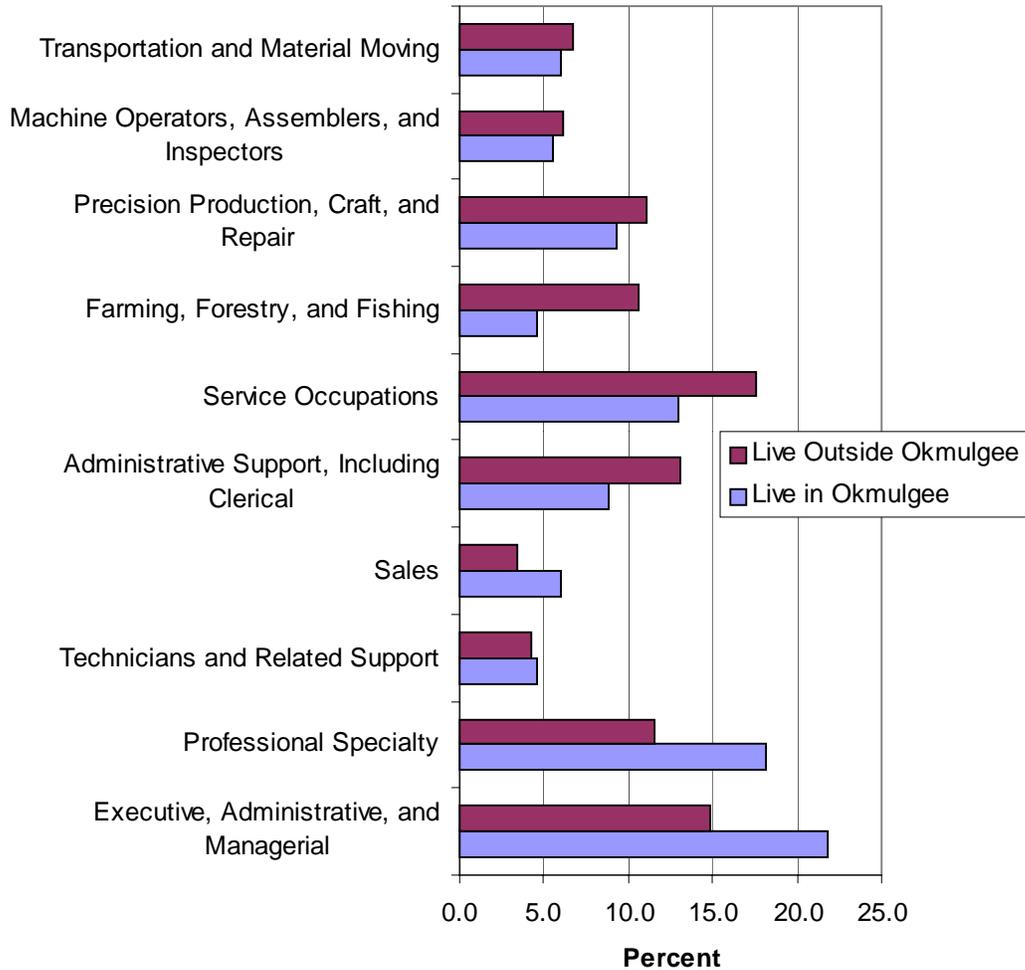
Little difference exists between Okmulgee residents and non-Okmulgee residents in their willingness to change jobs: thirty-seven percent of Okmulgee residents would change jobs for a pay increase of 15 percent or less, compared with 37.3 percent for non-Okmulgee residents. Also, 24.3 percent of non-Okmulgee residents and 24 percent of Okmulgee residents are not interested in changing jobs at any increase in pay.

Percent of Workers Willing to Change Jobs by Percent Pay Increase Needed

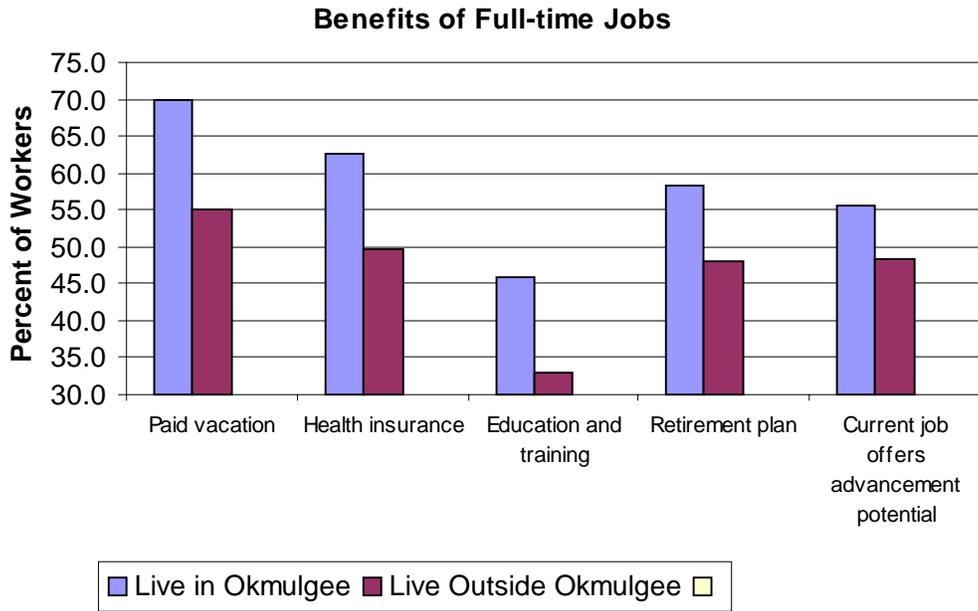


The distribution of occupations is similar. However, Okmulgee residents tend more towards administrative support jobs while non-Okmulgee residents tend more towards executive, administrative, managerial, and professional jobs.

Occupation by Place of Residence



Compared with non-Okmulgee residents, a larger percentage of Okmulgee residents receive benefits with their jobs.



Conclusions

Underemployed workers

- A significant pool of labor exists among workers who are not fully utilizing their education and skills
- Many underemployed workers are searching for higher-paying jobs
- The underemployed exhibit a variety of occupations and skills
- Most are willing to commute 30 miles or more for an increase in pay of 10% to 15%
- A smaller pool of labor exists among those not working who desire work. These persons typically are less skilled and not as well educated

Okmulgee residents vs. non-Okmulgee residents

- On average, earnings for Okmulgee residents are about the same as for non-Okmulgee residents
- Okmulgee residents are somewhat more resistant to changing jobs compared with non-Okmulgee residents
- Occupational patterns are very similar, but Okmulgee residents tend to be more concentrated in administrative support positions while non-Okmulgee residents are more concentrated in service occupations
- More than 40% of both Okmulgee residents and non-Okmulgee residents are employed in private sector positions
- Compared with non-Okmulgee residents, a higher proportion of Okmulgee residents enjoy benefits with their full-time jobs

Appendix: Distribution of the Sample

City/town	Interviews	Percent
Beggs	38	3.8%
Boley	26	2.6%
Bristow	88	8.8%
Castle	7	0.7%
Depew	11	1.1%
Dewar	12	1.2%
Dustin	15	1.5%
Hanna	14	1.4%
Henryetta	155	15.5%
Hitchita	6	0.6%
Milfay	1	0.1%
Morris	36	3.6%
Mounds	33	3.3%
Okemah	78	7.8%
Okmulgee	341	34.0%
Preston	13	1.3%
Schulter	13	1.3%
Slick	45	4.5%
Weleetka	32	3.2%
Other	39	3.9%
	1,003	100.0%

County	Interviews	Percent
Creek	136	13.6%
Hughes	48	4.8%
McIntosh	23	2.3%
Okfuskee	169	16.8%
Okmulgee	622	62.0%
Other (specify)	5	0.5%
Valid cases	1,003	100.0%