

AN ANALYSIS OF THE LABOR FORCE IN THE SEMINOLE AREA IN CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

A SUMMARY REPORT PRESENTED TO

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and

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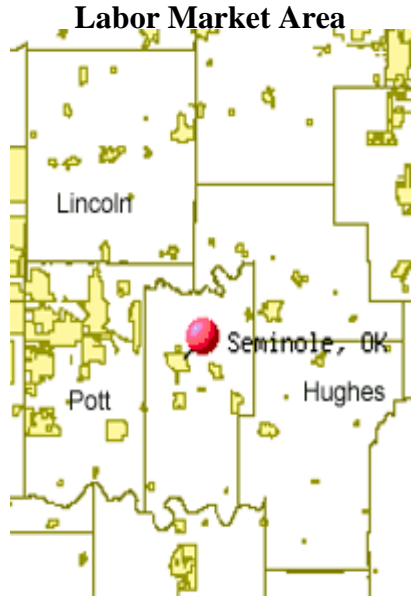
Introduction

Sponsored by the Seminole Economic Development Council and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, this report is the latest in a series of local labor force studies in Oklahoma. The report examines the availability of labor in the Seminole area of central Oklahoma, including all of Hughes County, Lincoln County, Pottawatomie County, and Seminole. These counties comprise the 'labor market area' referred to in this report.

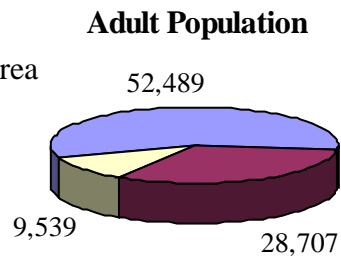
The data contained in this report were collected by telephone from randomly selected adults in the summer of 2002. The results are based on 1,002 interviews of persons 18 years old or older who reside in areas served by the telephone prefixes for localities in the areas listed above. The number of interviews completed by county is shown in the Appendix. Results are subject to a sampling error of +/- 3.1 percentage points with a confidence level of 95 percent.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

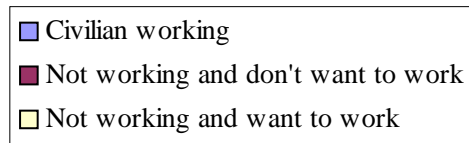
- A total of 9,538 workers are either actively looking for other work or willing to change jobs for the right opportunity.
- An estimated 5,716 workers are Underemployed.
- In addition to the Underemployed, 3,823 workers have looked for other work during the previous three months.
- The Underemployed exhibit a variety of occupations and skills.
- About 14.0 percent of Underemployed workers hold at least a bachelor's degree.
- The typical Underemployed worker is willing to change jobs for an increase in pay of 10% to 15%.
- A job that pays \$10 an hour is viewed as attractive by 3,963 Underemployed and 6,779 workers looking for other work.



Of the 90,735¹ adults who reside in the labor market area 52,489 are employed. Approximately 10 percent live in Hughes County, 24 percent in Lincoln County, 48 percent in Pottawatomie County, and 18 percent in Seminole County.



As is the case in any labor market area, a significant number of adults do not work outside



the home including retirees, students, homemakers, the disabled, and the unemployed. Approximately 38,302 adults in the study area are presently not

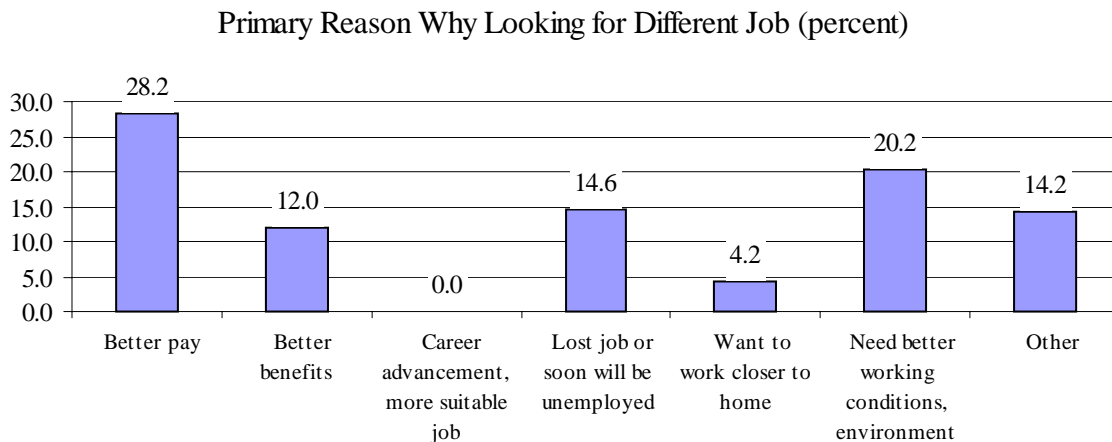
Persons Not Working			
<u>Reason Not Working</u>	<u>Want to Work</u>	<u>Don't Want to Work</u>	<u>Total</u>
Retired	2,198	16,880	19,078
Disabled or unable to work	575	5,120	5,695
Don't work outside the home	506	2,425	2,931
Student	61	170	230
Family responsibilities	0	0	0
Just moved into area	0	0	0
Laid off, lost job	1,269	878	2,146
Don't have reliable transportation	0	0	0
Other	4,931	3,190	8,121
Total	9,539	28,663	38,202

¹ Excludes institutionalized population.

working. Most (28,663) do not desire to work citing as reasons retirement, inability to work, or a preference not to work outside the home (table). A smaller number of adults (9,539) want to work; this group consists primarily of persons who have recently lost their jobs, students, persons who want to go back to work, and homemakers who are looking for work outside the home. Only a small portion of those who want to work could be classified as unemployed. Using the U.S. Department of Labor definition, a person is unemployed if he or she is without work and engages actively in job-searching activities. Using this definition, approximately 5.5 percent of the labor force in the labor market area was unemployed on average during the second quarter of 2002, according to figures obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Actively Looking for a Different Job

Approximately 6,145 workers, 11.7 percent of those working in civilian jobs, took actions in the previous three months to find a new job. Better pay was the primary reason for looking for a different job for most workers while better working conditions and future unemployment were mentioned next most often.



Education

The percentage of workers with at least a Bachelor's degree is lower than the Oklahoma state average (table). More workers in the labor market area have completed at least some college, compared with state averages.

Highest Level of Education of Working Persons 18 Years Old or Older (percent)		
	Labor Market	
<u>Level of Education</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>State</u>
Less than high school	3.3	10.8
High school	40.0	37.0
Some college	32.2	20.1
Associate degree	6.2	6.5
Bachelors degree	12.1	16.2
Postgraduate degree	4.9	9.4
Bachelors degree or higher	16.9	25.7

Note: State averages are compiled from the Current Population Survey conducted in March 1999 by the U.S. Census Bureau

Household Mobility

Many households are very mobile, moving from one residence to another after a stay of only a few years. Compared with five years ago, 19.0 percent of households lived in a different residence in the same county, 13.0 percent lived in a different county in Oklahoma, and 4.7 percent lived in a different state. In all, 37.1 percent of households lived in a different house or apartment five years ago. Job Shifters are the most mobile of households: 60.1 percent lived in a different residence in the same county, different county or different state five years ago compared with 50.9 percent for the Underemployed and 40.9 percent for Job Keepers.

Type of Employment

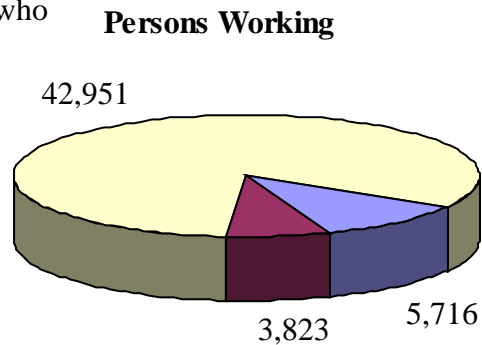
Eighty-five percent of civilian workers have full-time, permanent jobs. A significant proportion of civilian workers have part-time jobs, about one in six. About 15.4 percent of part-time workers would like to work full-time. Health and medical limitations, lack of full-time work, and child and family considerations are given as reasons why some are working part-time and not full-time (table).

Type of Employment	
Full-time	
Permanent	44,503
Temporary	753
Unknown	199
Part-time	
Permanent	6,727
Temporary	212
Unknown	175
Total	52,569

Reasons for Working Part-time (percent)	
Could only find part-time work	6.3
Retired / Social Security limit on earnings	3.5
Child care obligations /problems	13.3
Other family / personal obligations	12.6
School / training	2.8
Health / medical limitations	28.0
Slack work / business conditions	16.0
Other	1.6

Availability of Labor

This study identified 9,538 workers who are readily available for other work, including workers who have looked for other work during the past three months (Job Shifters), and workers who are Underemployed. In addition to these two types of workers, the study identified workers who are neither Underemployed nor looking for other work (Job Keepers), and persons who are not working but want to work (Job Seekers).



■ Underemployed ■ Looking for other work ■ Rest of employed

Job Shifters

Approximately 3,823 workers in the labor market area looked for other work during the previous three months. Most engaged in what the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics refers to as active job-search methods, including contacting employers and employment agencies, sending out resumes and completing employment applications, and answering help wanted ads (table).

Jobsearch Methods Used by Workers Looking for Other Work	Number of <u>Workers</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<i>Active Jobsearch Methods</i>		
Contacted employer directly / interview	2,158	56.5
Contacted public employment agency	318	8.3
Contacted private employment agency	357	9.4
Contacted friends or relatives	350	9.2
Contacted school / university employment center	0	0.0
Sent out resumés / filled out applications	734	19.2
Checked union / professional registers	0	0.0
Placed or answered ads	271	7.1
<i>Passive Jobsearch Methods</i>		
Looked at want ads	717	18.8
Attended job training programs / courses	0	0.0
At least one <i>active</i> jobsearch method	3,621	94.7
Note: more than one jobsearch method is possible.		

Underemployed

This study estimates that 5,716 workers in the labor market are Underemployed, 10.9 percent of all workers. In order to be classified as Underemployed in this study, all three of the following conditions must be satisfied.

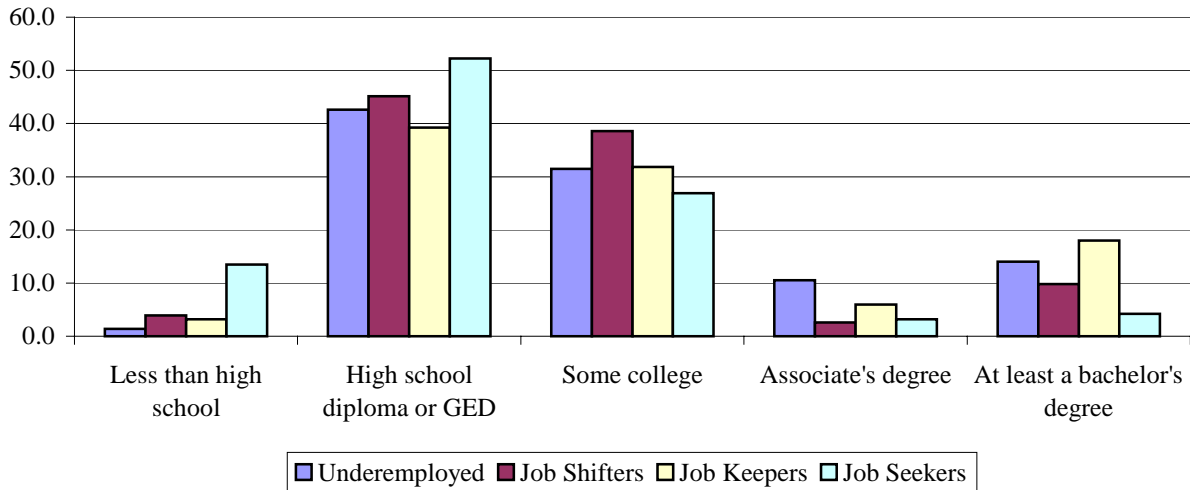
The worker must:

- feel underutilized in present employment,
- possess training or education that is not required by his or her current job, and
- be willing to change jobs in order to better utilize his or her skills and education.

Characteristics of Workers

The Job Keepers have the highest percentage of college graduates, about 18.0 percent, followed by Underemployed (14.0 percent), Job Shifters (9.8 percent) and Job Seekers (4.2 percent).

Civilian Workers by Level of Education



Job Shifters are the youngest while Job Seekers are the oldest group. The Job Keepers have the largest percentage in the 45 to 64 age group.

Civilian Workers by Age Group



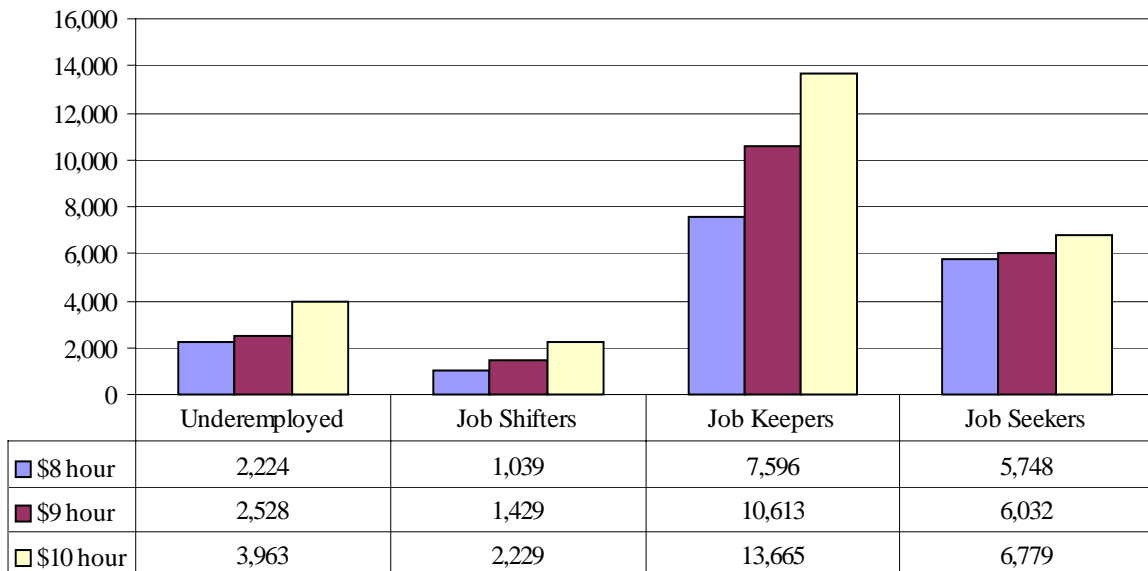
The Underemployed, Job Seekers, and Job Shifters are all predominately female while the Job Keepers are made up about equally of males and females.

Workers by Gender



About one in four workers finds a wage of \$8 per hour desirable, including 2,224 Underemployed, 1,039 Job Shifters, and 7,596 Job Keepers, as well as 5,748 Job Seekers. For a wage offer of \$9 per hour the number of available workers increases by about 34 percent, rising another 37 percent for a wage of \$10 per hour.

Number of Persons Willing to Work by Wage Rate



The attractiveness of a particular wage rate varies greatly with the worker's level of education. For example, only 3.4 percent of workers with Bachelor's degrees find \$8 per hour attractive compared with 16.7 percent of those with two years of college or Associate's degrees and 29.1 percent of those with only a High School diploma (see Table 2 in the Appendix).

The Underemployed and Job Shifters display a variety of occupations and skills, from executives and other professionals to craftsmen and clerks. The largest occupations are Service occupations (1,665), Transportation and Material Moving (1,276), Precision Production and Repair (1,153), and Executive, Administrative and Managerial (1,095).

	Underemployed and Job Shifters by Occupation		
	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job Shifters</u>	<u>Total</u>
Executive, Administrative, and Managerial	972	123	1,095
Professional Specialty	369	507	876
Technicians and Related Support	0	222	222
Sales	853	171	1,024
Administrative Support, including Clerical	655	405	1,059
Service Occupations	1,012	654	1,665
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing	99	0	99
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	391	761	1,153
Machine Operators, Assemblers, and Inspectors	344	657	1,001
Transportation and Material Moving	953	323	1,276
Other	0	0	0
	5,648	3,823	9,471

Workers with workplace skills that are not being used offer potential recruits for employment opportunities that better use their skills. This study found that 15.6 percent of those with skills not presently in use have computer skills of one type or the other (see Table 5 in the Appendix). Knowledge of word processing was most often mentioned, followed by Bookkeeping (table).

Workers with Computer Skills (among workers with skills not in use)			
		Job	
<u>Strongest Computer Skill (percent)</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Shifters</u>	<u>Total</u>
Word processing (MS-Word)	1,110	0	1,110
Spreadsheet analysis (Excel, Lotus)	146	211	357
Bookkeeping (Quicken)	248	219	467
Computer programming (C, SAS, SPSS)	0	0	0

About 62 percent of the Underemployed and 85 percent of Job Shifters are willing to change jobs for an increase in pay of 15 percent or less (table), a potential pool of workers of numbering 6,814. The median Job Keeper, however, would require a raise of more than 20 percent to change jobs. In addition, 28.6 percent of Job Keepers are not interested in changing jobs regardless of the increase in pay.

Workers Willing to Change Jobs by Percent Pay Raise			
		Job	Job
<u>Desired raise in pay</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Shifters</u>	<u>Keepers</u>
Less than 5%	910	759	5,152
Between 5% and 10%	1,422	1,406	3,986
Between 10% and 15%	1,226	1,090	6,737
Between 15% and 20%	593	235	5,265
More than 20%	757	332	6,868
Not interested	318	0	12,277
Don't know	317	0	1,831
Refused	0	0	466
Other	172	0	275
Total	5,716	3,823	42,856

Sixty-two percent of all workers drive at least 6 miles to work, and about 50 percent drive at least 11 miles. Commuting distances for the Underemployed, Job Shifters, and Job Keepers are similar (table).

	<u>All Workers</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job Shifters</u>	<u>Job Keepers</u>
0 - 5 miles	36.8	37.0	35.4	36.4
6 - 10 miles	11.3	11.0	8.5	12.1
11 - 20 miles	13.9	13.5	18.7	10.4
21 - 30 miles	10.8	11.2	11.5	12.2
30 - 50 miles	19.1	19.0	20.2	20.0
More than 50 miles	6.6	6.5	4.8	8.0

More than half the Job Shifters (54.4 percent) and a smaller proportion of the Underemployed (45.1 percent) and Job Keepers (39.6) are willing to commute 31 miles or more to a job.

Willingness to Commute



Conclusions

- A significant pool of available labor exists in the labor market area among the Underemployed (5,716 workers) and among workers looking for other jobs (3,823 workers).
- Many underemployed workers are searching for higher paying jobs.
- The underemployed exhibit a variety of occupations and skills.
- A smaller pool of labor exists among those not working who desire work (Job Seekers). Job Seekers typically are less skilled and not as well educated as most workers.

Appendix: Distribution of Interviews by County

<u>Area</u>	<u>Interviews</u>
Hughes County	100
Lincoln County	180
Pottawatomie County	501
Seminole County	221
Total	1,002

Approximately 11,246 randomly generated phone numbers were called in order to complete the 1,002 interviews. Of these phone numbers 2,234 were not in service and 652 numbers were not eligible for the study (language barrier, hard of hearing, children's telephone, business or fax). In addition, 671 households refused to be interviewed and 4,162 numbers were never answered after five and six attempts. A response rate of 56.7 percent was achieved among the eligible numbers that were answered. Completions for each county were weighted by age group, gender, and county population.