

DTIC FILE COPY

1

# Spouse Employment User Summary

**Kathleen Coolbaugh and Harriet S. Perrine**

Caliber Associates

**Janet D. Griffith**

Research Triangle Institute

for

**Contracting Officer's Representative  
D. Bruce Bell**

**Personnel Utilization Technical Area  
Paul A. Gade, Chief**

**Manpower and Personnel Research Laboratory  
Zita M. Simutis, Director**

**August 1990**



**United States Army  
Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences**

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

AD-A226 877

DTIC  
ELECTE  
SEP 28 1990  
S B D  
C

# **U.S. ARMY RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**A Field Operating Agency Under the Jurisdiction  
of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel**

**EDGAR M. JOHNSON**  
Technical Director

**JON W. BLADES**  
COL, IN  
Commanding

---

Research accomplished under contract  
for the Department of the Army

Research Triangle Institute

Technical review by

Arthur C.F. Gilbert

## **NOTICES**

**DISTRIBUTION:** This report has been cleared for release to the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) to comply with regulatory requirements. It has been given no primary distribution other than to DTIC and will be available only through DTIC or the National Technical Information Service (NTIS).

**FINAL DISPOSITION:** This report may be destroyed when it is no longer needed. Please do not return it to the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences.

**NOTE:** The views, opinions, and findings in this report are those of the author(s) and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy, or decision, unless so designated by other authorized documents.

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified		1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS --	
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY --		3. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.	
2b. DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE --			
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) --		5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) ARI Research Note 90-98	
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION Research Triangle Institute	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) --	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences	
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) P.O. Box 12194 Research Triangle Park, NC 27709		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) 5001 Eisenhower Avenue Alexandria, VA 22333-5600	
8a. NAME OF FUNDING / SPONSORING ORGANIZATION U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences	8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) PERI-R	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER MDA903-87-C-0540	
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) 5001 Eisenhower Avenue Alexandria, VA 22333-5600		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS	
		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO. 63007A	PROJECT NO. 792
		TASK NO. 242	WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO. C2
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) Spouse Employment User Summary			
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) Coolbaugh, Kathleen; Perrine, Harriet S. (Caliber Associates), and Griffith, Janet D. (Research Triangle Institute)			
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Final	13b. TIME COVERED FROM 86/11 TO 88/11	14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 1990, August	15. PAGE COUNT 26
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION Contracting Officer's Representative: D. Bruce Bell; Caliber Associates is a subcontractor for Research Triangle Institute and is located at 3998 Fair Ridge Drive, Suite 360, Fairfax, VA 22033.			
17. COSATI CODES		18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)	
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP	Spouse employment
			Retention
			Reenlistment
			Salaries
			Labor
			Army families, (AF) (-
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) The Army Family Research Program (AFRP) is a 5-year integrated research program that supports the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) White Paper 1983: The Army Family and The Army Family Action Plans (1984-1990) by developing databases, models, program evaluation technologies, and policy options that assist the Army to retain quality soldiers, improve soldier and unit readiness, and increase family adaptation to Army life. This report is an easy-to-read document that illuminates the issue of spouse employment for the Army. It traces why spouses are employed or not employed, why they work, what they earn, what they do, and the barriers they find when seeking employment. It describes organizational programs and policies that assist spouses in finding employment and outlines research questions being addressed by the Army Family Research Program.			
20. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS		21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified	
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL D. Bruce Bell		22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (202) 274-8119	22c. OFFICE SYMBOL PERI-RP

SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT USER SUMMARY

CONTENTS

---

	Page
THE ARMY FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM . . . . .	1
WHY STUDY SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT? . . . . .	2
THE MAJORITY OF SOLDIERS IN TODAY'S ARMY ARE MARRIED . . . . .	3
WHO ARE THE SPOUSES OF SOLDIERS? . . . . .	4
ARMY WIVES, ON THE WHOLE, ARE YOUNG . . . . .	5
ARMY WIVES, GENERALLY, ARE A WELL-EDUCATED GROUP . . . . .	6
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN IN GENERAL IS ON THE RISE . . . . .	7
ARMY WIVES ARE PART OF THE TREND TOWARD INCREASED LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AMONG WOMEN. . . . .	8
AMONG THOSE IN THE LABOR FORCE, UNEMPLOYMENT IS HIGHER FOR ARMY WIVES IN GENERAL, BUT ESPECIALLY FOR ENLISTED SOLDIERS' WIVES. . . . .	9
WIVES WHO HAVE BEEN AT THEIR CURRENT LOCATION FOR A LONGER TIME HAVE A HIGHER PROBABILITY OF: . . . . .	10
WHAT DO EMPLOYED ARMY SPOUSES DO?. . . . .	11
HOW MUCH DO THEY EARN? . . . . .	12
HOW SATISFIED ARE SPOUSES WITH THEIR WORK? . . . . .	13
WHY DO ARMY WIVES WORK?. . . . .	14
. . . AND WHY DO OTHERS CHOOSE NOT TO BE EMPLOYED? . . . . .	15
BARRIERS TO SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT. . . . .	16
THE SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT MAZE . . . . .	17
HOW DOES THE ARMY HELP?. . . . .	18
TWO KEY ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE. . . . .	19

CONTENTS (Continued)

	Page
PRELIMINARY DATA SUGGEST SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS MAY HELP THE ARMY RETAIN QUALITY SOLDIERS. . . . .	20
THERE ARE STILL SEVERAL IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED ABOUT SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT. . . . .	21



<b>Accession For</b>	
NTIS GRA&I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC TAB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justification	
By _____	
Distribution/	
<b>Availability Codes</b>	
Dist	Avail and/or Special
A-1	

SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT USER SUMMARY

# THE ARMY FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Army has initiated an Army Family Research Program (AFRP) to investigate the importance of family factors in retention, readiness, and the Army community. Sponsored by the Community and Family Support Center (CFSC), the research activities are being conducted by the Army Research Institute for the Behavioral Sciences (ARI) with the assistance of a contract research consortium of Research Triangle Institute (RTI), Caliber Associates, and the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO). Four research areas are being investigated:

- Family adaptation
- Family factors in retention
- Family factors in readiness
- Spouse employment.

This report is a summary of the research findings to date about spouse employment. It is based on review of the literature, special analyses of the 1985 DoD Surveys of Officer and Enlisted Personnel and Military Spouses, the March 1985 Current Population Survey, the 1987 Annual Survey of Army Families, and exploratory interviews with employment program managers and family members at Army installations throughout the United States and Germany. It presents our current understanding of spouse employment issues and questions, and provides a point of departure for future research and program efforts.

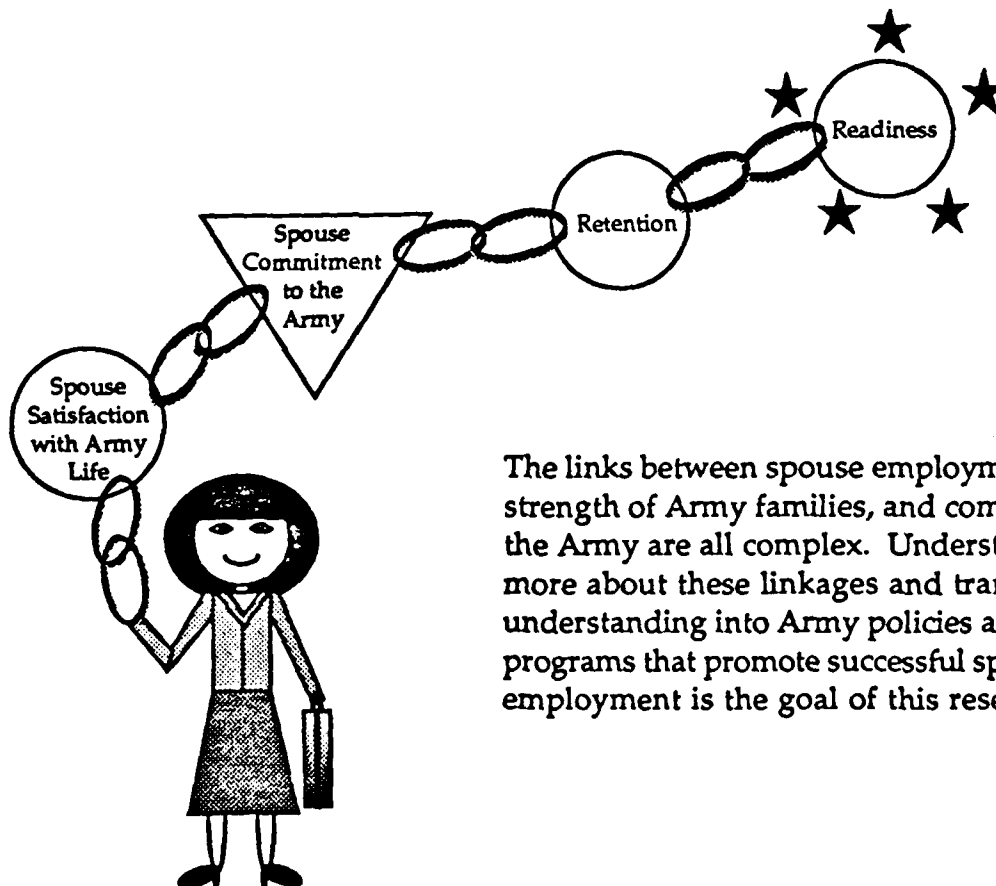
"A major contribution to retention is ensuring that our soldiers and families know we will take care of them. You see, family programs are not only the right thing to do for our soldiers -- they also improve our readiness through retention."

General Carl Vuono  
Chief of Staff, U.S.  
Army

# WHY STUDY SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT?

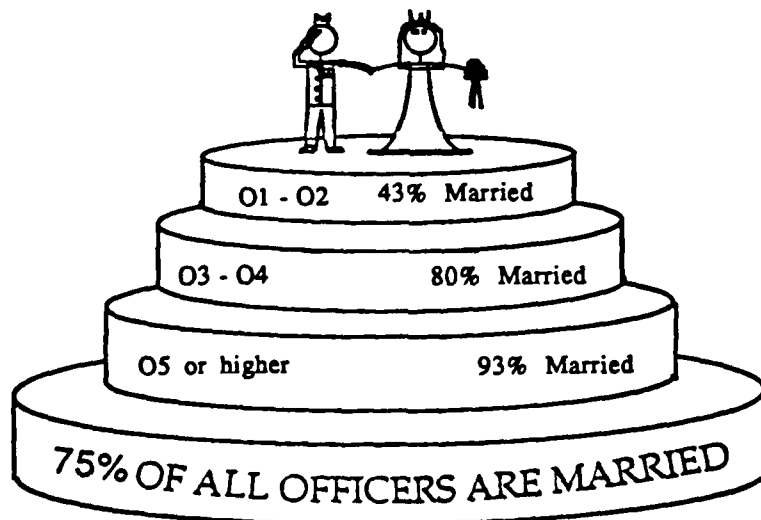
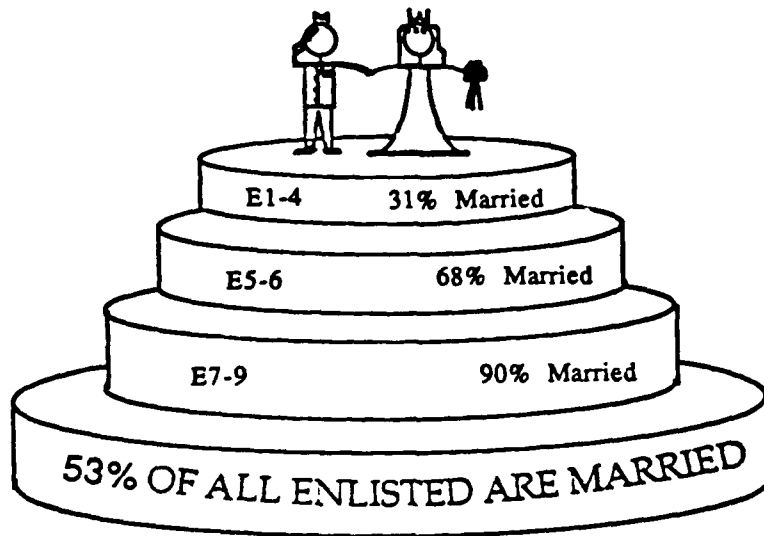
The national trend in the United States is toward dual-income families. More than half of the wives in America are now working outside of the home. This figure is projected to rise to more than 80 percent by the year 2000. Obviously, the two-income family is now the norm, not the exception.

Findings from earlier research on military families suggest that employed Army spouses are more satisfied with Army life than their unemployed counterparts. They are also more committed to the Army as a way of life. Spouse commitment to the Army has a positive effect on the service member's decision to continue on active duty. Such career decisions mean that trained, experienced soldiers are retained, leading to the accomplishment of the Army's foremost goal – improved individual and unit **READINESS**.



The links between spouse employment, the strength of Army families, and commitment to the Army are all complex. Understanding more about these linkages and translating that understanding into Army policies and programs that promote successful spouse employment is the goal of this research effort.

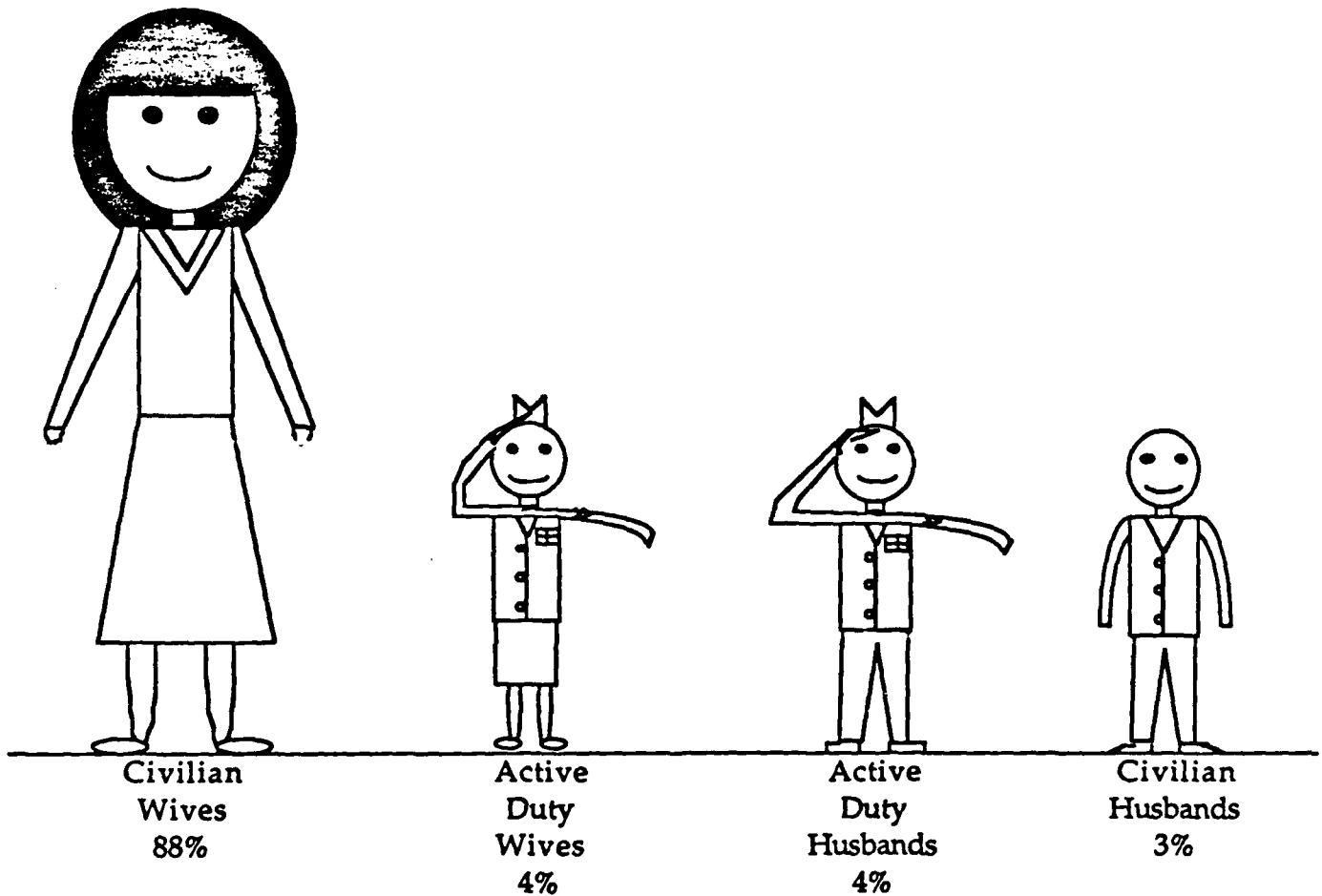
# THE MAJORITY OF SOLDIERS IN TODAY'S ARMY ARE MARRIED



**OVERALL, 56% OF ARMY PERSONNEL ARE MARRIED**

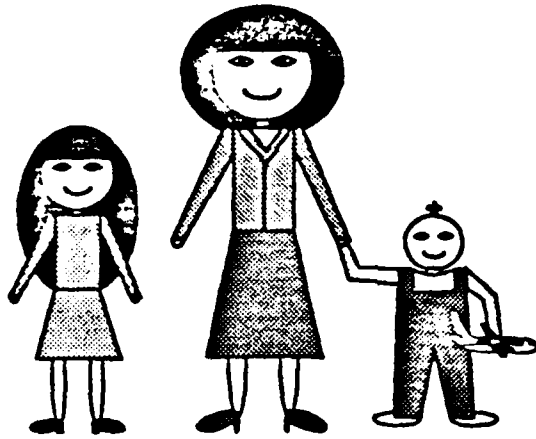
# WHO ARE THE SPOUSES OF SOLDIERS?

THE VAST MAJORITY OF ARMY SPOUSES ARE THE CIVILIAN WIVES OF SOLDIERS.

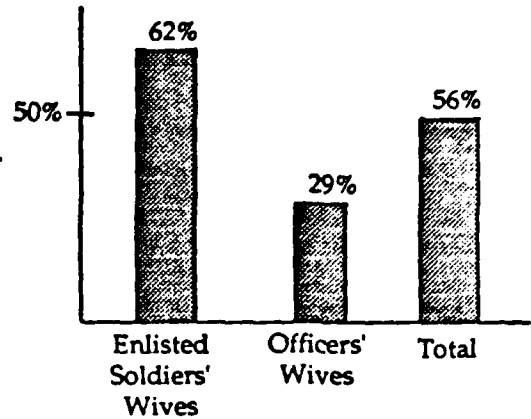


SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT ISSUES THEREFORE FOCUS PRIMARILY ON CIVILIAN WIVES.

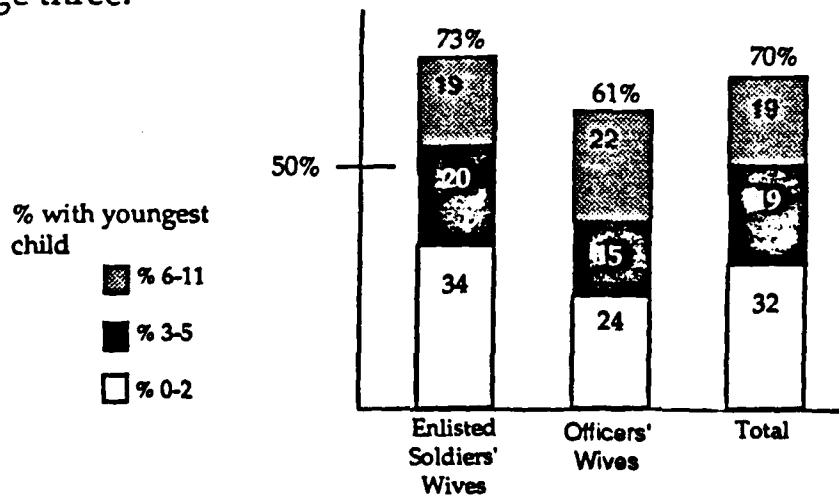
# ARMY WIVES, ON THE WHOLE, ARE YOUNG...



% of wives under 30 years old

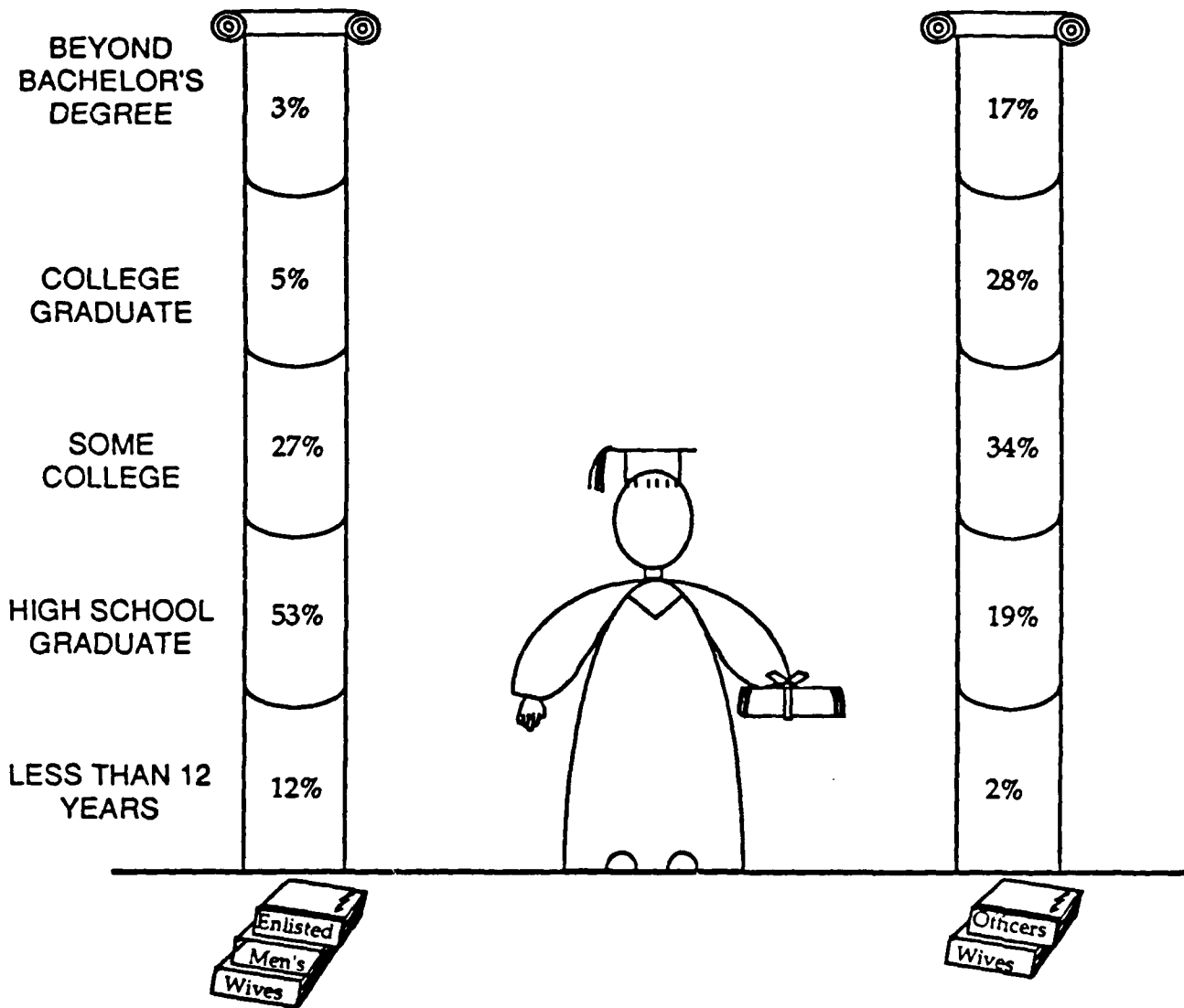


- Wives of enlisted soldiers tend to be younger than officers' wives: 34% of enlisted soldiers' wives are 24 or under, compared with only 8% of officers' wives.
- Most spouses (77%) are also parents, most with young children.
- For 70% of Army wives the youngest child is 11 years old or under.
- Nearly half (46%) of junior enlisted (E1-E4) families have a youngest child under age three.



...WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

# ARMY WIVES, GENERALLY, ARE A WELL-EDUCATED GROUP

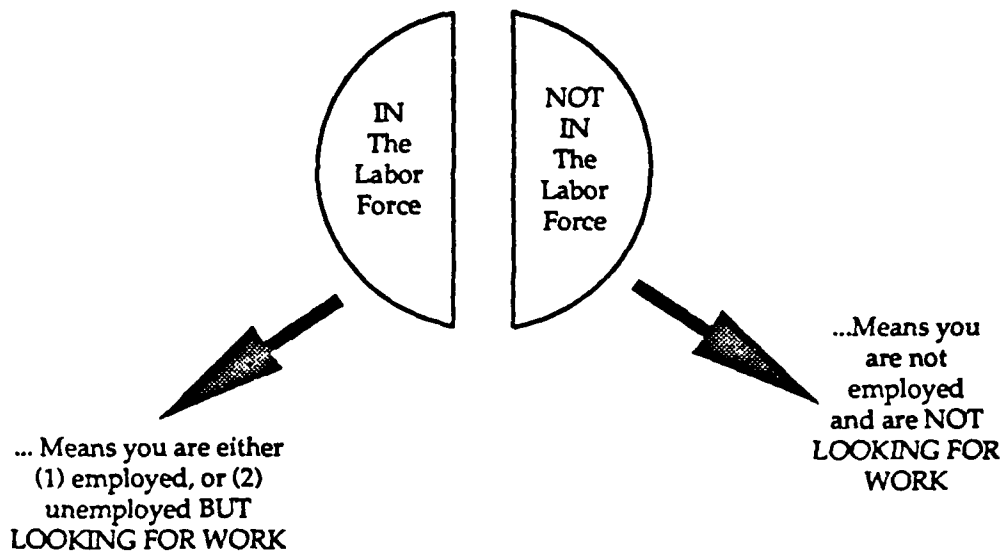


- 88% of enlisted soldiers' wives have at least a high school diploma, and 35% have at least some college.
- All but 2% of officers' wives are at least high school graduates, and 45% have bachelors' degrees or more.

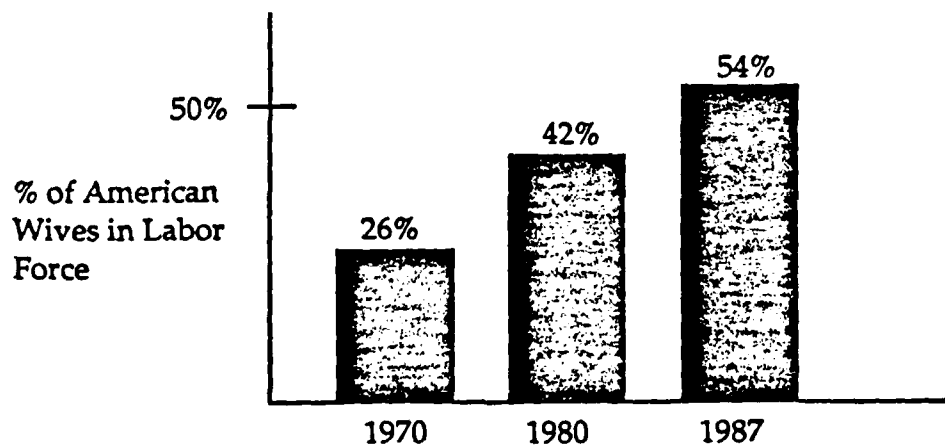
## AND THE MAJORITY NEED OR WANT TO WORK

# LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN IN GENERAL IS ON THE RISE

... Which means that more women *are employed or want to work and are looking for employment*

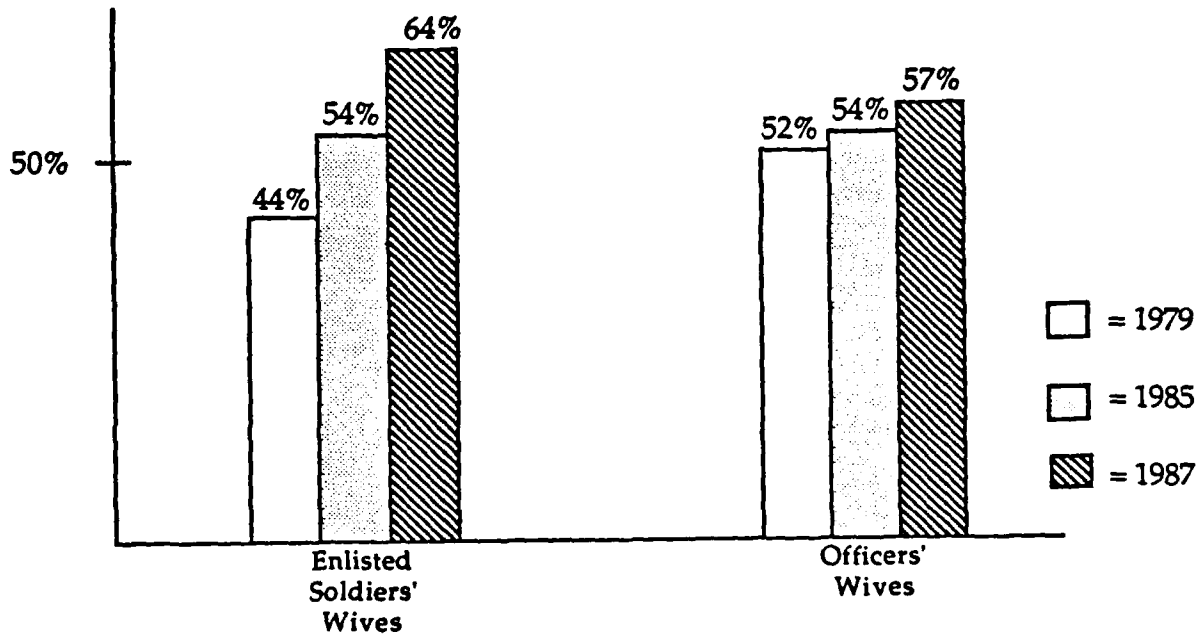


Since 1970, labor force participation by American wives *whose youngest child is under the age of three* has risen dramatically:

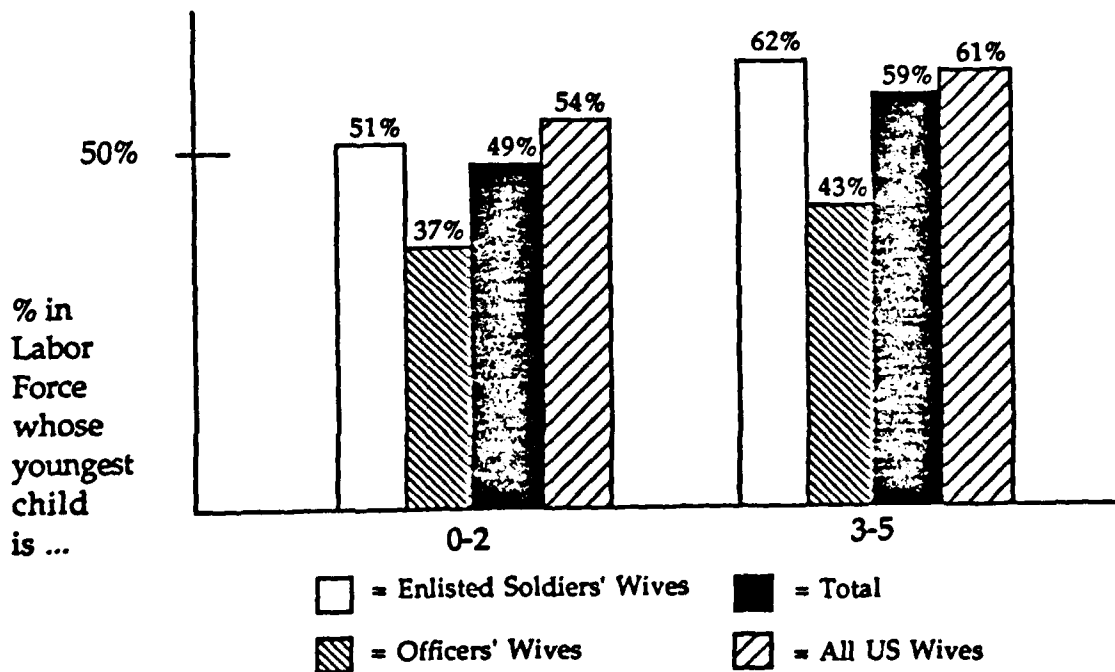


# ARMY WIVES ARE PART OF THE TREND TOWARD INCREASED LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AMONG WOMEN

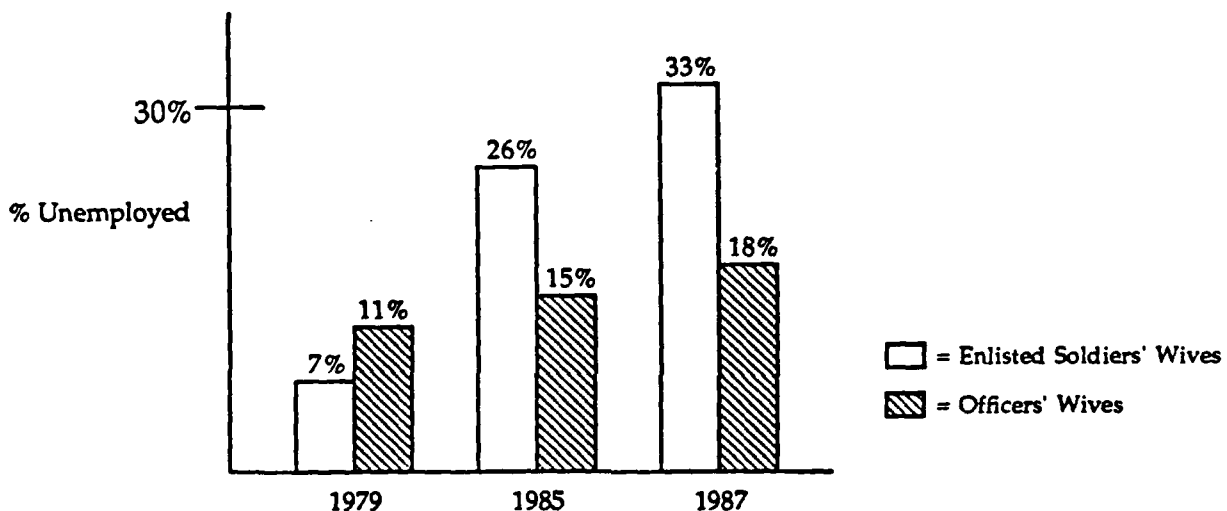
Labor Force Participation by Army Wives, 1979-1987



## ... INCLUDING MANY WHO HAVE YOUNG CHILDREN



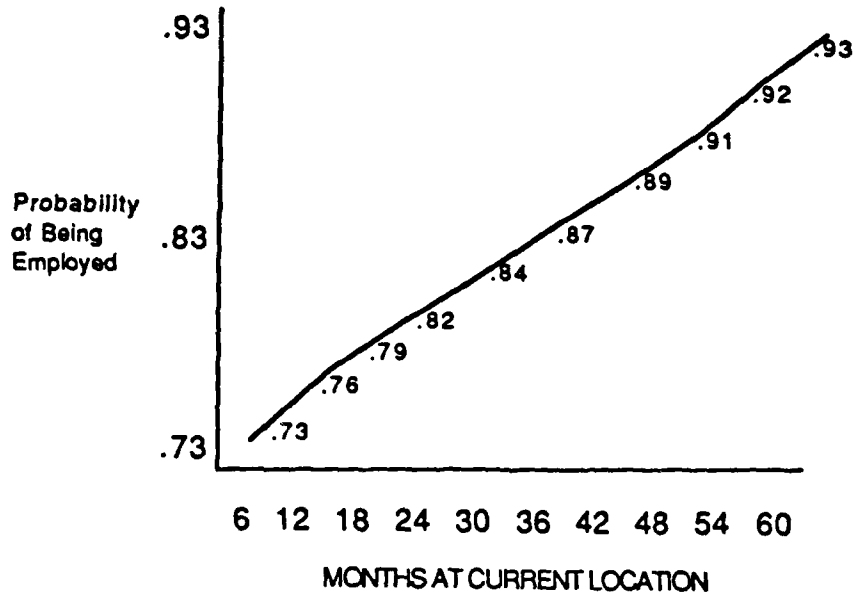
# AMONG THOSE IN THE LABOR FORCE, UNEMPLOYMENT IS HIGHER FOR ARMY WIVES IN GENERAL, BUT ESPECIALLY FOR ENLISTED SOLDIERS' WIVES



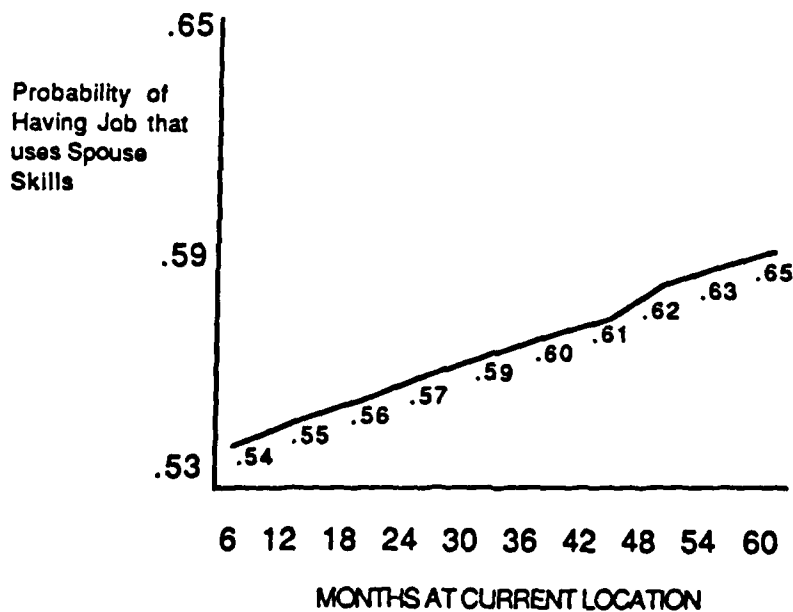
- Wives of junior enlisted soldiers (E1-E4) experience the highest rate of unemployment at nearly 45%.
- Wives of senior officers (O4 and above) have the lowest rate of unemployment at 15%.

# WIVES WHO HAVE BEEN AT THEIR CURRENT LOCATION FOR A LONGER TIME HAVE A HIGHER PROBABILITY OF:

## BEING EMPLOYED\*



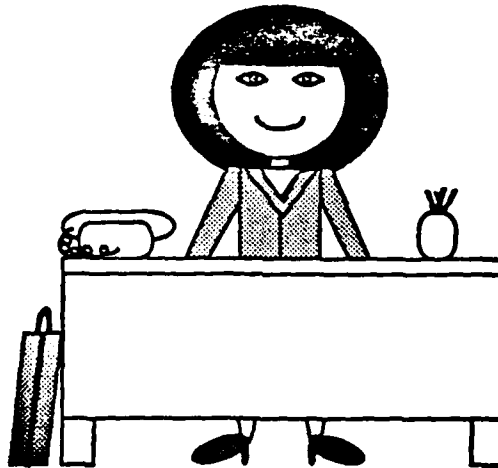
## BEING IN A JOB THAT USES THEIR SKILLS\*



\* Simulation results based on regression model

# WHAT DO EMPLOYED ARMY SPOUSES DO?

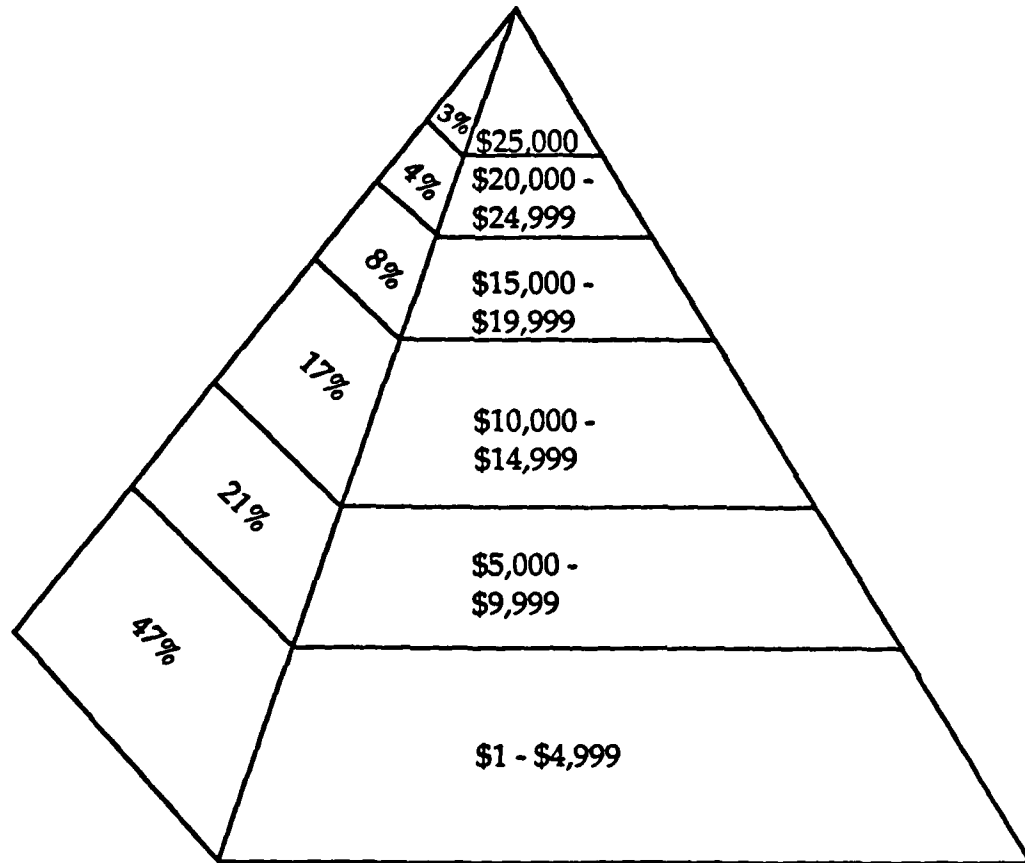
<u>Occupation</u>	Enlisted	Officers'	<u>Total</u>
	Soldiers'	Wives	
	<u>Wives</u>	<u>Wives</u>	
	%	%	%
Clerical/Technical	30	31	30
Sales	11	7	10
Service	23	4	20
Professional/Teacher	12	41	18
Managerial/Administrative	8	12	9
Child Development	8	4	7
All Others(labor, craft, etc.)	8	2	7
Total	100	100	100



- Overall, most (60%) of the employed Army wives are concentrated in three occupational categories: clerical/technical, service, and sales.
- More than a quarter (27%) of the wives with bachelor's degrees or beyond are in clerical, sales, or service positions.
- The majority (63%) of employed wives work full-time, about one-third (32%) work part-time, and the rest (5%) are self-employed (which can vary from part- to full-time).
- Most employed wives (64%) work in private sector jobs, with the other 36% working for the Federal Government (primarily Department of the Army).

# HOW MUCH DO THEY EARN?

Total Gross Army Spouse Earnings for 1986



- Overall, Army spouse earnings are low, with two-thirds (68%) earning less than \$10,000.
- Half of all employed senior enlisted soldiers' spouses, and 63% of spouses of E4s and below earned less than \$5,000 in 1986. Only 5% of employed enlisted soldiers' spouses earned more than \$20,000.
- Of employed officers' wives, more than one-third (35%) earned less than \$5,000 in 1986. At the high end of the scale 16% earned \$20,000 or more.
- Overall, Army spouse earnings contribute approximately 28% to family cash income (30% for enlisted spouses, and 22% for spouses of officers).

# HOW SATISFIED ARE SPOUSES WITH THEIR WORK?

Percent Who Are "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" With Each Aspect

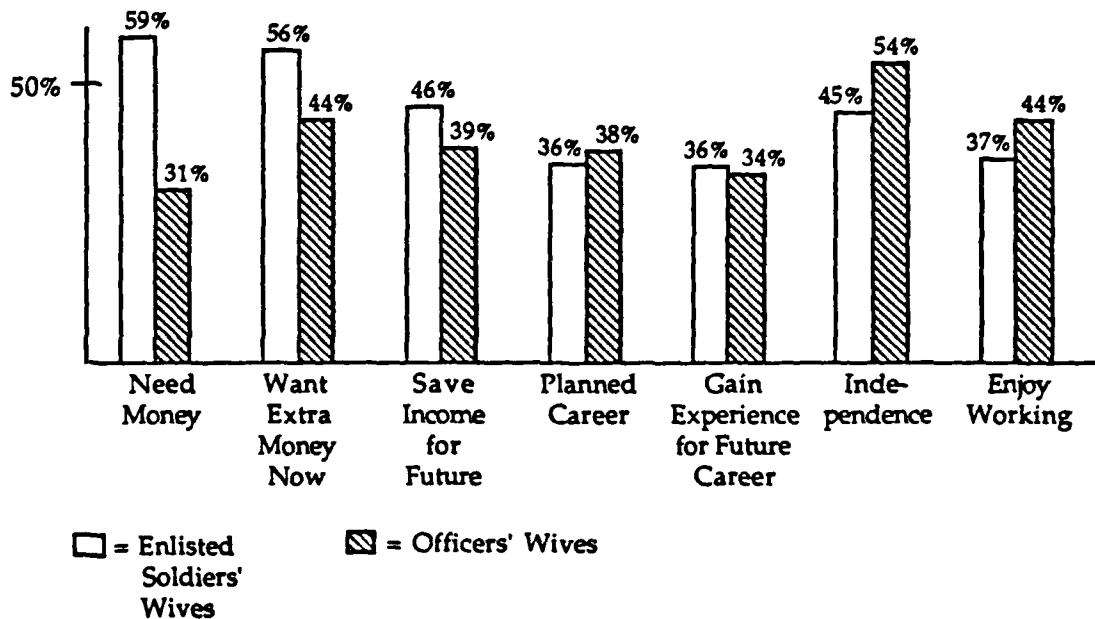
	Enlisted Soldiers' <u>Wives</u>	Officers' <u>Wives</u>	<u>Total</u>
	%	%	%
Salary	47	54	48
Promotion Opportunity	29	32	30
Opportunity to Progress	35	39	36
Level of Responsibility	65	73	66
Use of Skills and Abilities	61	70	63
Challenge	55	68	58
Use of Education	46	61	49
Job Security	60	67	61
Location of Job	78	82	79

- Less than half (48%) of employed Army spouses are less than satisfied with their current salaries.
- Only a minority are satisfied with their opportunities for promotion (30%) and career progression (36%).
- More spouses in professional and managerial/administrative jobs than other kinds of jobs are satisfied with level of responsibility (83% and 84% respectively), use of skills and abilities (82% and 78%), challenge of the work (79% and 75%) and use of educational background (79% and 59%).

# WHY DO ARMY WIVES WORK?

Army wives, like other women, both need and want paid employment. There are a variety of often-overlapping reasons for working, but they fall into two main categories: financial need and achieving personal job or career goals.

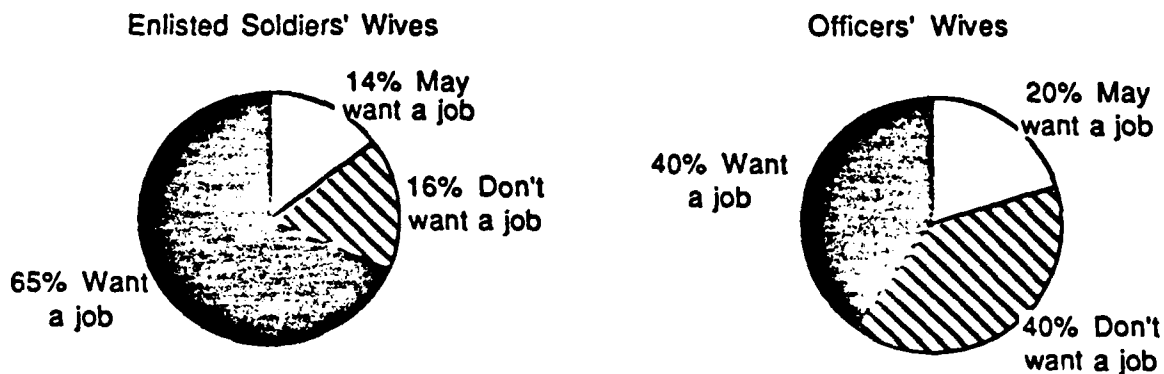
Percentage of Wives Who Cite Each As A Major Reason For Working



- Data on labor force participation, especially for enlisted soldiers' wives with young children, suggest that there is considerable financial pressure to seek employment rather than stay at home with children

## ... AND WHY DO OTHERS CHOOSE NOT TO BE EMPLOYED?

Among spouses who do not hold paid jobs, a substantial number, in fact, do or may want to be employed.



- 61% of enlisted soldiers' spouses whose youngest child is age 5 or younger want to be employed.
- 32% of officers' wives whose youngest is 5 or under want to be employed.

Reasons for NOT having a paid job fell into six broad categories:\*

	Enlisted Soldiers' Wives	Officers' Wives	Total
	%	%	%
Family Responsibilities	54	54	54
Do not want paid job	9	19	11
Lack child care, transportation or training	16	5	14
Appropriate work unavailable	4	5	4
In school or training	3	4	3
Other (health, age, employer prejudice, etc.)	14	14	14

\* These mutually exclusive categories were created for analysis purposes from 14 more specific reasons from which respondents could select any number that applied.

# BARRIERS TO SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

Military spouses seeking employment often face more difficulties or "barriers" than do their civilian counterparts. Not all these barriers, however, are attributable to the military lifestyle. They group themselves into three general categories: individual barriers, program barriers, and institutional barriers.

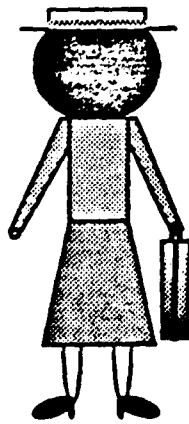
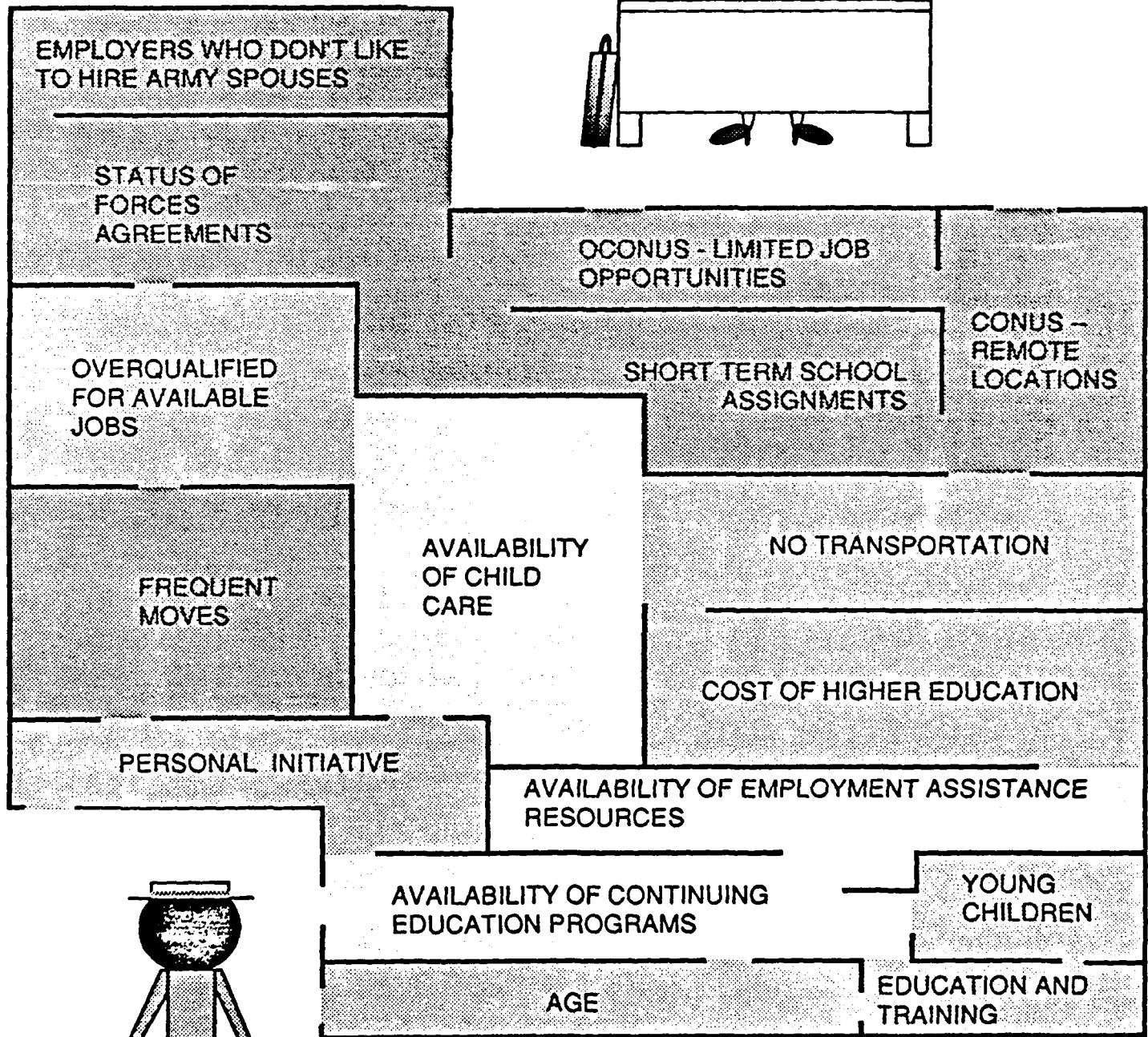
**INDIVIDUAL** barriers to employment are challenges that any job-seeker, whether military or civilian, might face. They could include personal initiative, age, or the number of young children in the family. Lack of education, training or experience may also hamper a job search. Lack of job search skills and career goals/planning are also forms of individual barriers.




**PROGRAM** barriers to employment include the lack of employment support programs. These programs typically include child care, continuing education resources and a variety of job skills/employment assistance support programs.

**INSTITUTIONAL** barriers result from the requirements of military life, such as frequency of moves and location of Army posts. Civilian employers are often reluctant to hire and train Army spouses who are unable to commit to more than two or three years with a company. Remote U.S. locations have few civilian job opportunities; assignments to Army schools are generally so short that it's virtually impossible for spouses to work except in low paying clerical and sales positions. In overseas assignments, Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA) often determine how many and which jobs will be available to American citizens.

The maze that results from all these barriers can prove particularly frustrating to job seekers. Still, with almost 45% of Army wives working, many have found their way through their personal maze to job satisfaction and career progression.

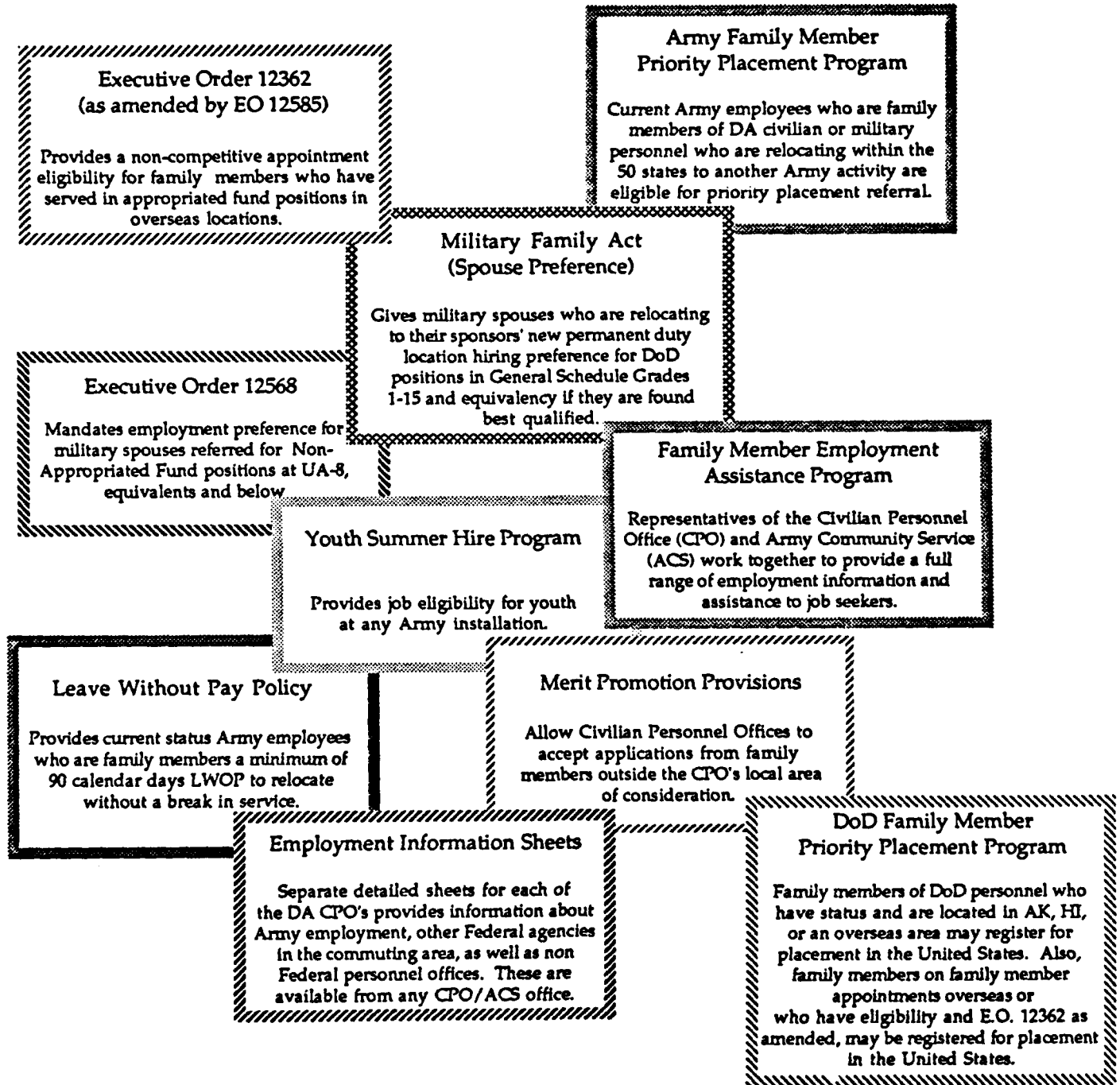
# THE SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT MAZE



-  INDIVIDUAL BARRIERS
-  PROGRAM BARRIERS
-  INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

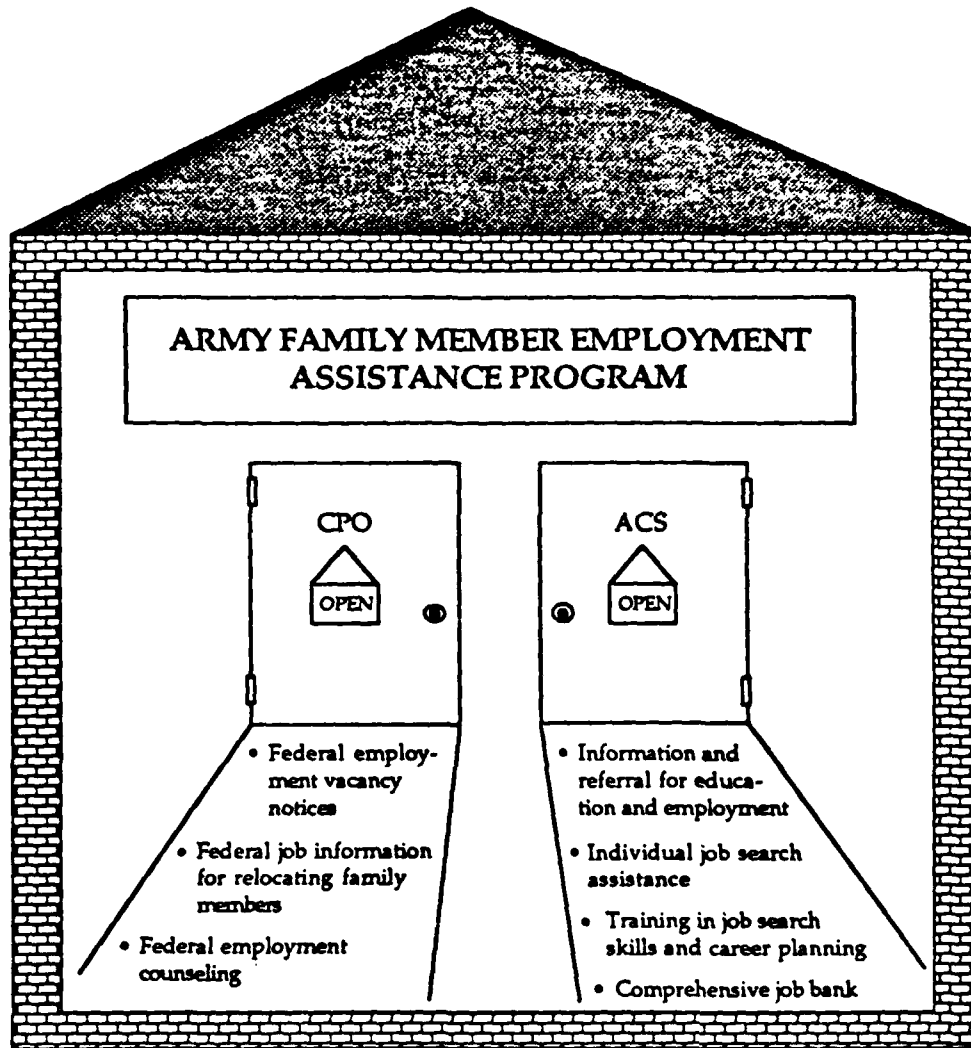
# HOW DOES THE ARMY HELP?

Several laws, policies and programs exist to assist family members through the employment maze.



More information on the details of each can be obtained from local Civilian Personnel Offices (CPO) or Army Community Service (ACS).

# TWO KEY ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE



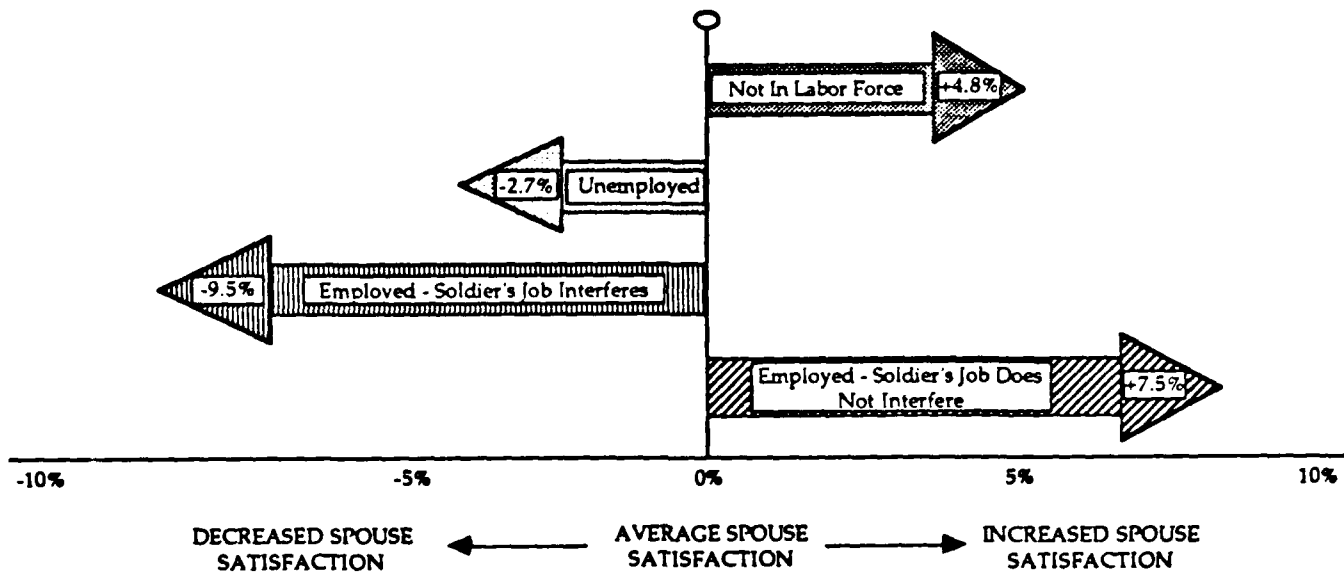
- There are approximately 155 Army Civilian Personnel offices (CPO)
- Family Member Employment Assistance Programs (FMEAP) are available through Army Community Services (ACS) at approximately 105 installations around the world

## AND SO DO FRIENDS

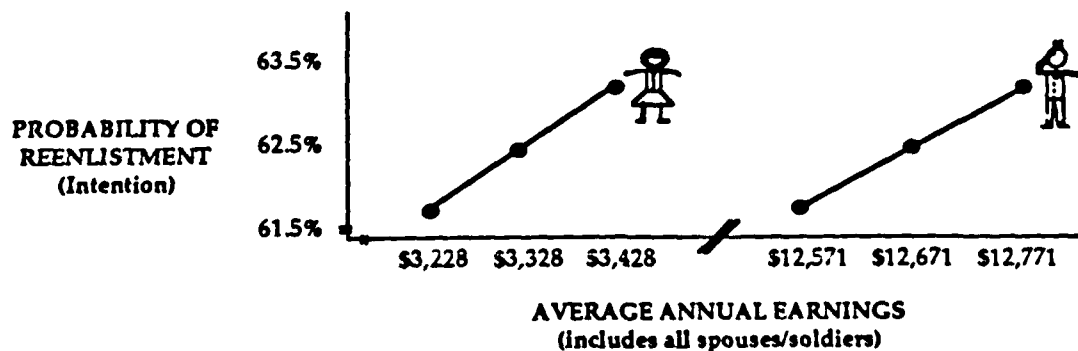
- Informal networks of military and civilian friends and acquaintances are important sources for job seekers

# PRELIMINARY DATA SUGGEST SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS MAY HELP THE ARMY RETAIN QUALITY SOLDIERS

SPOUSES WITH GOOD JOB OUTCOMES ARE MORE SATISFIED WITH THE MILITARY AS A WAY OF LIFE



ARMY POLICIES THAT LEAD TO INCREASED SPOUSE EARNINGS SHOULD INCREASE REENLISTMENT



Preliminary results suggest that a \$100.00 increase in spouse earnings has the same effect as a \$100.00 increase in soldier pay.

# THERE ARE STILL SEVERAL IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED ABOUT SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

- How and to what extent do employed and/or career-oriented spouses influence service members' decisions to remain in the Army?
- How do employed spouses affect soldiers' individual performance and that of the unit?
- How do Army policies and programs affect spouses who want to be employed and/or have a career?
- What policies could be modified to enhance employment opportunities for Army spouses?
- What services should an "ideal" spouse employment program provide to meet the special needs of Army spouses?
- What is the benefit of these programs to the Army compared to the cost?



*The Army Family Research  
Program is continuing to work to  
answer these questions.*