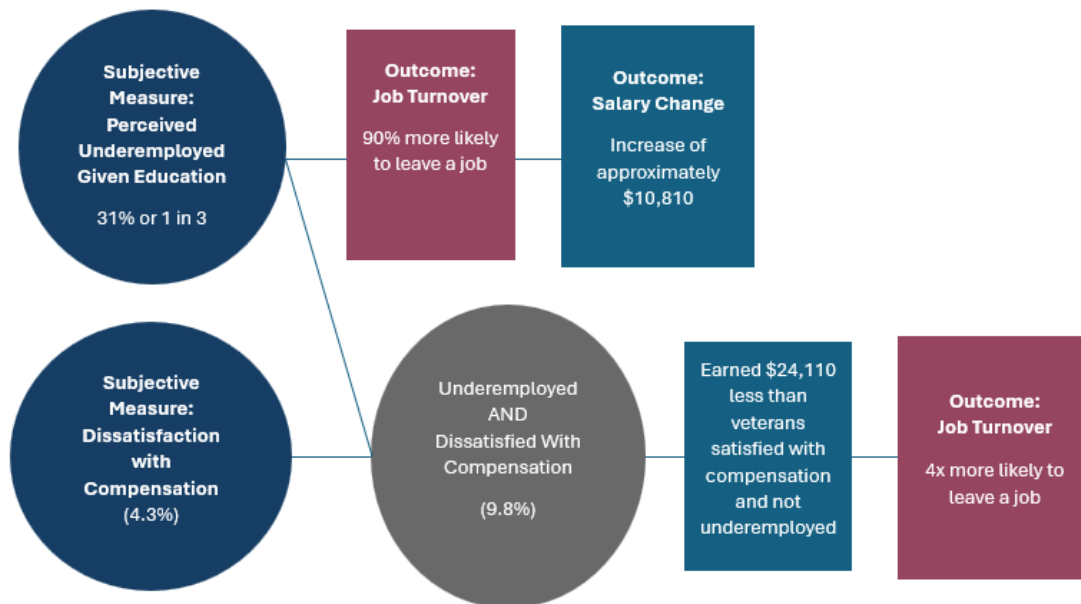


Underemployment, Compensation Dissatisfaction, Job Turnover, and Salary Change

Takeaway: Three years after leaving the military, a subset of post-9/11 veterans continue to experience dissatisfaction with underemployment and compensation. This discontent creates significant challenges for these veterans and influences their job turnover and salary growth. While most veterans report encountering satisfactory employment, those who feel underemployed or underpaid are far more likely to change jobs and often see salary gains as a result.

Factors Influencing Job Turnover and Salary Change

Analyses examined the relationship between the subjective measures of perceived underemployment and compensation dissatisfaction with the outcomes of job turnover and salary change among post-9/11 veterans approximately 3 years after they left military service. Approximately 60% of this group of veterans did not perceive being underemployed due to education, and they were satisfied with their pay and benefits. However, among veterans who reported underemployment and/or compensation dissatisfaction, job turnover was more likely. These findings contribute to an understanding of how veterans' perceptions influence employment outcomes, including salary increases, and, therefore, these findings can inform the development and refinement of transition-support programs.



Research Findings: Underemployment Perceptions and Compensation Dissatisfaction

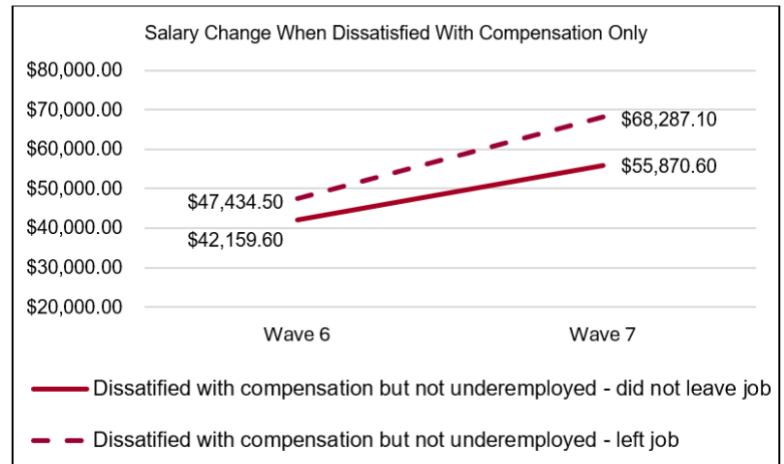
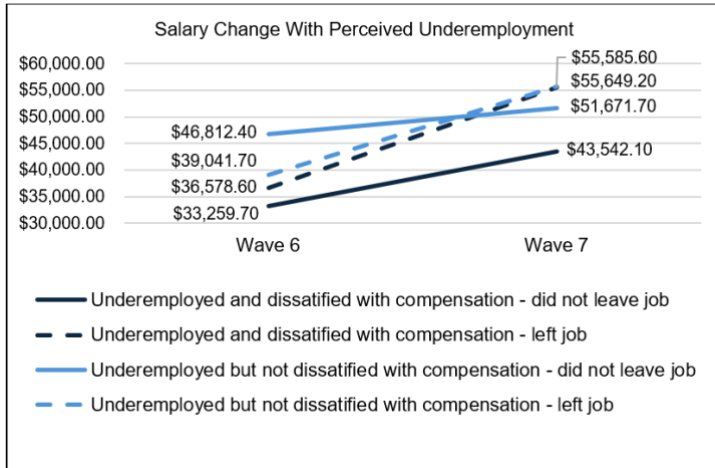
- About 1 in 3 veterans perceive themselves as underemployed, even years after separation.
- Compensation dissatisfaction is less common. Approximately, 4% report dissatisfaction alone, and ~10% report both underemployment and dissatisfaction.

Research Findings: Job Turnover

- Approximately 12% of veterans left their jobs for better opportunities between survey waves.
- Veterans who felt underemployed were 90% more likely to leave their jobs.
- Veterans who reported underemployment and compensation dissatisfaction were 4 times more likely to leave.

Research Findings: Salary Change

- Veterans who reported neither underemployment nor compensation dissatisfaction had higher salaries at baseline, and, in general, they received smaller salary increases when leaving a job (\$56,457 in Wave 6 to \$61,506.70 in Wave 7) or remaining in a job (\$57,564.80 in Wave 6 to \$61,812.50 in Wave 7).
- Veterans who reported underemployment and compensation dissatisfaction earned approximately \$24,110 less at baseline than veterans who did not report underemployment and compensation dissatisfaction.
- Veterans who changed jobs due to perceived underemployment only (not underemployment and compensation dissatisfaction) often saw salary increases of approximately \$10,810.
- Veterans dissatisfied with their compensation saw some of the largest salary increases (see tables below).



Recommendations

Perceived underemployment and compensation dissatisfaction significantly affect veterans' employment stability and earnings. To address these factors and positively impact veterans' job retention and financial well-being, the following actions are recommended:

- Enhance pre-separation transition programs with tailored employment support (e.g., translation of military skills, career coaching, job matching).
- Promote the use of the Post-9/11 GI Bill for further education that aligns with career goals.
- Move beyond offering one-time programs toward a model of ongoing support. Veterans need sustained employment assistance for years post-transition.
- Enact policies that mandate evaluation of transition programs and ensure sustained post-separation support.

Study Summary

The Veterans Metrics Initiative: Linking Program Components to Post-Military Well-Being (TVMI) collected six waves (i.e., 3, 9, 15, 21, 27, and 33 months) of well-being and program utilization data from almost 10,000 post-9/11 veterans who had separated from military service in 2016. Additional waves (i.e., 51 and 78 months) of data were collected independently by the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State through the Veterans Engaging in Transition Studies (VETS), which is part of the VETERANetwork. Veterans from TVMI voluntarily chose to participate in VETS ($n = 3,514$).

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