

Using Administrative Data to Evaluate Veterans' Participation in Workforce Services and Civilian Employment

Using Administrative Data for Program Evaluation
and Research Conference

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Grace Roemer • Linda Rosenberg

Presentation Overview

- **Describe use of administrative data in two veteran-focused studies for the U.S. Department of Labor**
 - **Veterans' Supplemental Study of the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs Gold Standard Evaluation**
 - **Evaluation of the Army UCX Claimants' Initiative**
- **Provide lessons learned from using administrative data for these studies**



Interest in Veterans' Reemployment

- **Concerns heightened as**
 - Large number of service members were returning from Iraq and Afghanistan
 - Veteran unemployment rates were high
- **Challenges to veterans' reemployment in civilian workforce**
 - Navigating civilian labor market
 - Translating military job skills to civilian jobs
 - Addressing disabled veterans' employment barriers

Opportunities to Use Administrative Data

- **Leveraging existing program data sets can be more cost effective than other data collection methods**
 - However, might require complex process of collecting and linking across multiple data sets
- **Programs explored with administrative data**
 - Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult and Dislocated Worker programs
 - Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES)
 - Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)
 - Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service Members (UCX)




Veterans' Supplemental Study



Motivation and Design

- **Objective was to study veterans' service receipt and employment experiences**
- **Examined 28 nationally representative Local Workforce Investment Areas participating in the evaluation**
- **Veteran study included**
 - **Qualitative analysis of site visit data**
 - **Descriptive and correlational analyses using administrative data from multiple sources**

Benefits and Challenges of the Data Sets

-  **States report a lot of data on characteristics, service use, and outcomes**
-  **Integrated data across workforce programs not reported for most local areas in the study**
-  **To collect WIA and ES data to link, we could have negotiated agreements with the 19 states included in the study**
 - Not an insurmountable effort, but time consuming and costly
 - In some states, multiple agencies involved

Study's Administrative Data Sources

- For most states, data are available through two different DOL data sets



- The Labor Exchange Reporting System (LERS) for ES and JVSG data
- WIA Standardized Record Data (WIASRD) for the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs

- Workforce Investment Streamlined Performance Reporting (WISPR) System provides integrated data for two states

- Pennsylvania and Texas



How Study Used Administrative Data

- **For most Local Workforce Investment Areas in the study without integrated data, we**
 - Reported separately the LERS and WIASRD data
 - Could not describe the full set of services each veteran received through the public workforce system
- **Used integrated WISPR data to**
 - Analyze the veterans who were customers of the American Job Centers, all the services they received, and their outcomes
 - Compare veterans and nonveteran customers and subgroups of veterans
 - Conduct correlations between all services received and outcomes

Texas Veterans Received More Core Career Services than Nonveterans

Type of service received	Veteran customers (%)	Nonveteran customers (%)
Job search assistance	89	73
Workforce information services	82	61
Career guidance	29	22
Referral to employment	13	1
Intensive services	21	28
WIA-funded training	4	4

Source: WISPR data for program year 2012, quarter 4.

WISPR Data Enabled Correlational Analyses



Earnings positively correlated with

- Receipt of WIA-funded training
- Referral to employment and referral to federal contractor jobs



Earnings negatively correlated with:

- Referral to federal government jobs and receipt of other staff-assisted core services (Pennsylvania)
- Supportive services including needs payments, job search assistance, and intensive services (Texas)

Evaluation of the Army UCX Claimants' Initiative



Motivation and Design

- **Objective was to study veterans' service receipt and employment experiences**
- **Focused on four states participating in Army UCX Claimants' Initiative**
 - Georgia, Illinois, North Carolina, and Texas
 - Initiative promoted collaboration and information sharing across partners to improve service delivery for UCX claimants
- **Veteran study included**
 - Qualitative analysis of interviews, grantee plans, and reports
 - Descriptive analysis using Georgia and Army administrative data
 - Lessons learned from sharing state and military data

Benefits of the Data Sets

-  **Army data contain detailed information about military experiences, military separation, and veterans' characteristics**
-  **State data report on veterans' post-separation experiences in civilian employment and workforce services**
-  **Linking Army and state data let us**
 - Look at veterans with a military attachment to Georgia who stayed there
 - Analyze larger sample than public use or specific state data sets
 - Associate an individual's civilian experiences with military characteristics

Challenges of the Data Sets

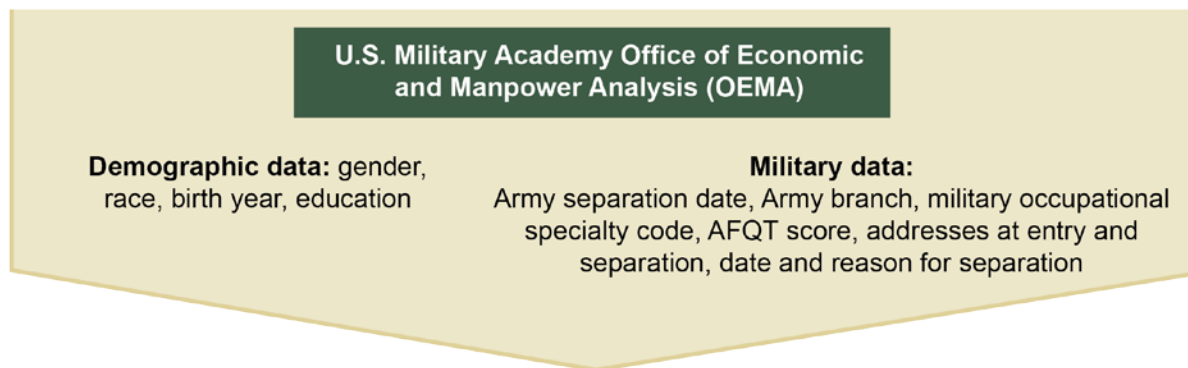
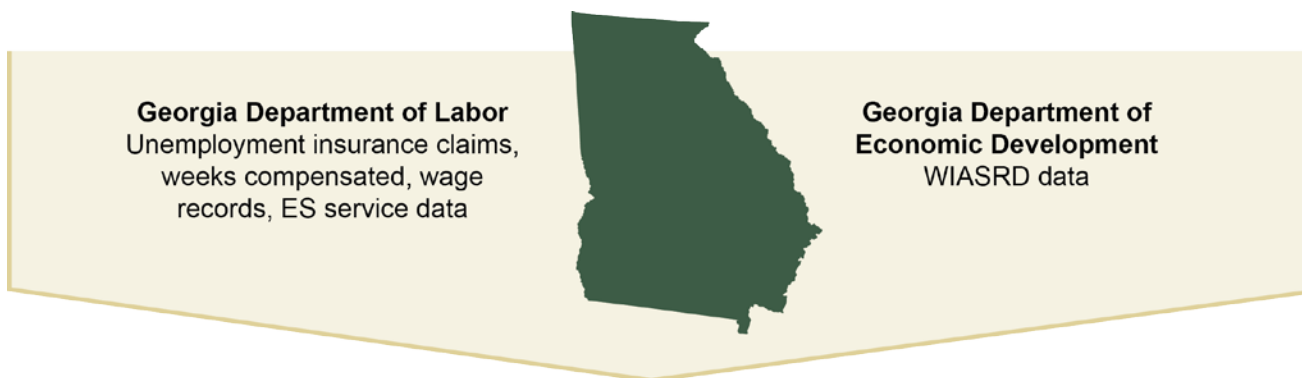
 **Required sustained effort despite limited agency staff time**

 **Differing priorities of agencies involved in data sharing**

 **Confidentiality requirements**

 **Aligning multiple data sets**

Study's Administrative Data Sources



How Study Used Administrative Data

- **We linked state and military data sets to describe**
 - Target population of the initiative
 - Time lag to registration for workforce services
 - UCX benefit duration
 - Likelihood of obtaining employment before benefits run out
 - Employment and earnings outcomes
- **Described findings by demographic and military characteristics**

Findings Leveraged State and Military Data

- **Over 35,000 Army veterans separated with an attachment to Georgia**
 - Almost 10 percent received UCX
 - Almost 8 percent received workforce services (without UCX)
- **Veterans who received UCX and were still unemployed when benefits ran out tended to be male, under age 35, and deployed for 24 months or less**
- **Almost half found employment within four quarters of initiating UCX**
 - Younger veterans and those with rank of Private/Private First Class tended to be employed, rather than not employed
 - No clear employment trends by total months deployed

Cross-Cutting Lessons Learned



Challenges and Opportunities

- **Linked data facilitate richer analysis**
- **Challenges obtaining and linking veterans' data**
 - Data sharing and linking take a long time
 - Coordination across multiple agencies with different resources and priorities
 - Technical complexities of linking data sets
- **Opportunities to mitigate challenges**
 - Effective organization and management
 - Common data definitions across programs
 - Integrated data at source

For More Information

- **Veterans' Supplemental Study**
 - Linda Rosenberg (LRosenberg@mathematica-mpr.com)
 - [Providing Services to Veterans through the Public Workforce System: Descriptive Findings from the WIA Gold Standard Evaluation](#)
- **Evaluation of the Army Unemployment Compensation for Ex-service Members Claimants' Initiative**
 - Grace Roemer (GRoemer@mathematica-mpr.com)
 - The Army UCX Claimants' Initiative: A Formative Case Study (forthcoming)