

## DISCUSSION

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These three papers represent an important contribution to the burgeoning manpower field, but are too dissimilar to be compared except in a very general fashion. In both comparative and absolute sense I find I am in substantial agreement with the authors of these papers. Having duly performed this rite of expiation I am now free to enter my reservations, observations and caveats in the time honored manner of discussants. Since I am not a statistician either by training or inclination, my comments will necessarily represent a "consumer's" viewpoint.

Weinstein and Jurkowitz have made a substantial contribution to a facet of manpower development that to date has not received broad study; the presumed convergence of military and civilian occupational structures. This convergence, has resulted from important changes that are occurring in both the military and civilian sectors. Some have observed that the military has undergone a "civilianization" and that, by the same token, there is a militarization of society.

They make a number of assumptions which need to be more explicit in order to determine the validity of their conclusions. Firstly, they assume that income gain in post-military experience is derived from pre-service occupational experiences. This suggests persons are paid on the basis of skill or merit alone without reference to labor market factors. In this same connection their aggregated career groups tend to dampen out the often important labor market factors for particular occupations at particular moments. Thus, in Category III, Policy, presumably one would find the person whose military training prepared him to be primarily a "traffic cop" as well as other more skilled crime investigators. I would not consider such occupations homogeneous; neither have they received the same amount and type of military training. I do not think these two illustrative occupations fare equally well in post-service labor markets.

It may well be that the scope, amount and type of military training is more important than pre-service training. One could have wished that they had controlled for military training.

The relatively short time span after military service is another facet of the study that might lead to invalid conclusions. Is post military income derived in the first two or three years significantly different from that obtained after 10 years? Is employer liability and responsibility to ex-servicemen a unique factor in these early post-service years?

Furthermore, I think it particularly important to carry this type of study forward over a longer time span to test the assumption that the infantry is a proper benchmark against which to measure other military occupations. It may well be that the infantry is composed of untrained and uneducated or those who don't qualify for more esoteric skills. It may also be true that the infantry contains many generalists who were assigned to that branch because of the service demands at the time. In many cases it is simply a matter of when you arrive at the distribution point rather than

what training you have had. This may simply reflect my myopia acquired in World War II.

Other methodological considerations bear mention. Does the fact that the universe is drawn from the standby reserve affect either the type of service experience or the characteristics of people? What were the questions asked of respondents during the telephone interview? Since the adequacy of the sample is crucial in this type of study one would have preferred more information. As a matter of preference I would have elected to explore more of the qualitative aspects rather than confine myself exclusively to this more limited design. The authors have produced a rigorous methodology but in the process have overlooked important nuances and overtones.

Finally, the cost benefit technique as applied to this and other studies should be mentioned. Such studies are currently in vogue. They have forced a quantification of many phenomena which have often been treated on a general or impressionistic basis. But simply to total up annual income is not cost-benefit analysis nor should one infer that all this is human capital and as such related to human investment theory. Too many technical and other considerations are simply not treated.

Goldstein's paper reviews the conceptual, theoretical and practical problems associated with "under-utilized" human resources. I was impressed reviewing this paper, that we will continue to have considerable difficulty measuring the extent and quality of under-utilization. Although there has been some experimentation we have not yet developed even partial measures of underemployment - something the "Gordon Committee" recommended in 1962.

Involuntary part time employment and unemployment are fairly well measured. In 1968, Goldstein notes there were about one million persons who averaged a little over two days work per week although they wanted full time work. We have less of a measurement problem here and more of a public policy problem.

I would underscore his concern with involuntary non-participants in the labor force. He emphasizes repeatedly that men of working age without jobs face particularly difficult problems in our society. In a job oriented economy where role, status, rewards, and even emotional and mental health depend on one's job it is disheartening among both white and nonwhite men under 55.

Of all the categories of "sub-employed" or underutilized that of "underemployment" represents the most challenging phenomenon to both data producers and data consumers. To begin with, there is the tricky problem of whether to measure underemployment against actual or potential skill level. For example, there are people in the labor force who have four or more years of college education, but are employed in occupations that do not require a college education. Very appropriately, this is a matter of concern especially when we suspect the reason for such under use of college training may be discrimination in employment. On the other hand should this be a matter of concern if there is no

discrimination? Goldstein doesn't quite take a stand here, but seems to imply that this is underutilization and a matter for concern. I am not that sure.

His discussion of underemployment highlights another important policy problem, that is, should our active manpower policy strive to create just jobs for our citizens or should we embark on the more complicated task of providing jobs which will challenge individuals to realize their every potentiality? I would agree with what I consider the implied thrust of his analysis - we must provide jobs that will use all human capacities.

Mill's paper is less a report of new methods and measures for construction industry than a careful delineation of the deficiencies of data currently available. He has performed a very useful service by reminding scholar and practitioner that interpretations of the construction industry work force are made on the basis of very skimpy data. It is remarkable how much we do not know about construction industry manpower.

Questions concerning the adequacy of our skilled manpower are rather continuously surfaced. Although it is true the construction labor force is quite flexible, there are many employers who cannot obtain qualified craftsmen when they need them in some occupational categories. What we don't know, is the magnitude of the shortage that may be related to qualitative factors. It is within the realm of possibility that the paradox of simultaneous unemployment and labor shortages may be at least partially explained by the fact that many of the construction unemployed do not measure up to the minimum standards employers specify.

Reviewing expansion and contraction in the construction industry Mills points out that many persons in the industry do not spend full time there, and we do not yet use this force efficiently throughout a calendar year. He speculates there may be two construction labor forces; one fairly regularly employed as a cadre and another following the work wherever it is. Following this reasoning I think there may be a third force consisting of those partially trained persons who enter the industry by obtaining a work permit in very tight labor market situations. It would be interesting to know to what extent expansion in the construction industry may be due to changing standards and the use of temporary work permits.

Limitations of existing data sources are adequately portrayed but the reader who is looking for new methods will be disappointed. One new source which has great promise he feels, is collectively bargained trust funds. Although only about half the employers in construction are covered by such funds he suggests that by coupling fund data to social security data much could be learned about construction work force mobility. In the event that trustees of such funds could be persuaded to make records available for analysis this might prove to be a fruitful source.

I cannot argue with Mill's conclusion that we need to tap new sources of data at the same time that we extract even more from data already available. Data now inaccessible to scholars should be made available. No one can argue against this. It would be useful, however, to specify more precisely why we need these data; are we interested in changing public policy; are we concerned with efficient allocation of manpower within our labor markets; or are we interested in evolving new manpower theory. Sharpening the focus would have added considerably to the value of this excellent paper.