
Regional Workforce Study

Rappahannock-Rapidan Region

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WELDON COOPER
CENTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

at the University of Virginia

Survey Expertise

- University of Virginia Center for Survey Research
 - ▶ A full-service academic survey research facility
 - ▶ Specializes in studies for local government and state agencies
 - ▶ Experienced in survey design and social science data analysis
 - ▶ Provide cost-effective and reliable results
 - ▶ Prior experience with labor force studies

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The Purpose....

- To gain a better understanding of the characteristics of the area's labor force
- To provide accurate, reliable workforce skill information
- To better inform economic development in the region

A key issue . . .

- **Commuter characteristics**
 - ▶ Study vs. census definition
 - ▶ Attitudes toward commuting
 - ▶ Preference to work closer to home

Basic Survey Design

- Telephone survey of randomly selected households in:
 - ▶ Culpeper County
 - ▶ Fauquier County
 - ▶ Madison County
 - ▶ Orange County
 - ▶ Rappahannock County
- Primary respondent ($>$ or $=$ 16 yrs), “informant”
- Household inventory—info on all workers in HH
 - ▶ Subjective questions asked only of the primary respondents who are workers
- Certain questions asked only about commuters
 - ▶ Some only asked of primary respondents who were commuters

More about the methods

- Computer-assisted telephone interviews
 - 1,408 completed interviews
- Random sample of listed telephone households in the area
- Proven questionnaire was pre-tested in the area
- Careful interviewer training
- Multiple call-backs, persistent contacts
- Over-sampled smaller counties, for valid comparison
 - Post-weighting used to reflect area population

Survey Questions

- Descriptive information
 - ◆ Background and training
 - ◆ Basic demographics, including length of residence
 - ◆ Employment and benefits information
 - ◆ Employment location
 - ◆ How workers get to work
 - ◆ How long it takes to get there
- Attitudes toward commuting
 - ▶ Reasons for disliking or liking commuting
 - ▶ Willingness for change

Moving Results to Reality....

- Results from this study are generalized to four populations: all adults sixteen years of age and older, the labor force, workers and commuters
- Overall margin of error: 2.6% for all workers
- Some estimates have higher margins of errors
 - ▶ Estimates drawn from items not asked of all workers
 - ▶ Estimates of individual counties
- The smaller sample sizes for commuters result in low case counts in some tables

Profile of Respondents

- Smaller counties were over-sampled, to allow valid comparisons

Jurisdiction	Population	%	Interviews	%
Culpeper	26,543	25.4%	597	22.2%
Fauquier	42,007	40.2%	615	22.9%
Madison	9,875	9.4%	487	18.1%
Orange	20,562	19.7%	504	18.7%
Rappahannock	5,569	5.3%	488	18.1%

(Results then adjusted to population % by post-weighting.)

Characteristics of the Recent Movers

- About 20 percent of the region's residents moved to the region within the past five years
- Reasons to move to the region
 - ▶ Quality of Life most frequently (64.2%)
 - ▶ Other Significant factors
 - ▶ The favorable cost of housing (42.9%)
 - ▶ A family member taking a job in the area (36.6%)
 - ▶ The quality of the area's schools was not a prominent issue (10.2%)

Where they come from . . .

- Recent movers' previous residence

Areas other than Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland or DC	= 31.4%
Northern Virginia area	= 22.9%
Other Virginia areas	= 31.1%
DC or Maryland	= 5.3%

Population Characteristics

- The area's adult population is well educated
 - ▶ Higher percentage hold a four-year college degree (33.6%) than lack a high school diploma (12.2%)
- 69% of adults age 16 or older are in the labor force
 - ▶ Full-time (59.4%)
 - ▶ Part-time (9.6%)

Characteristics of Workforce

- The average worker works 43.5 hours per week
- The median earnings from a worker's primary job is \$37,800
- The service industries account for 40.2% of workforce
- 20.1% of workers report an affiliation with construction or manufacturing
- 9.8% of full-time workers and 13.5% of part-time workers have more than one job

Occupation & Industry Figures

Distribution of Workers across Occupation

REGION

%

Construction & Extraction

13.1

Office & Administrative Support

11.2

Education, Training & Library

9.0

Sales & Related

8.1

Business & Financial Operations

6.1

Distribution of Workers across Industry

REGION

%

Construction

15.1

Public Administration

11.0

Educational Services

10.6

Healthcare & Social Assistance

10.4

Retail Trade

7.9

Characteristics of the Commuters

Defining a commuter....

- US Census definition
 - ▶ Works in a county other than the one in which he or she resides
 - ▶ 55.1% of area workers fit this definition
- This study identifies a commuter as a person who
 - ▶ Works in a county other than the one in which he or she resides
 - ▶ *and*: Journeys 30 minutes or more (one way) to work
 - ▶ 41.9% of area workers fit this definition
- Out of Region Commuter:
 - ▶ Works outside of RRR and journeys 30 minutes or more
 - ▶ 36.3% of area workers fit this definition
- Study definition: *more relevant to study purpose*

Characteristics of Commuters

Proportion of Commuters by Counties

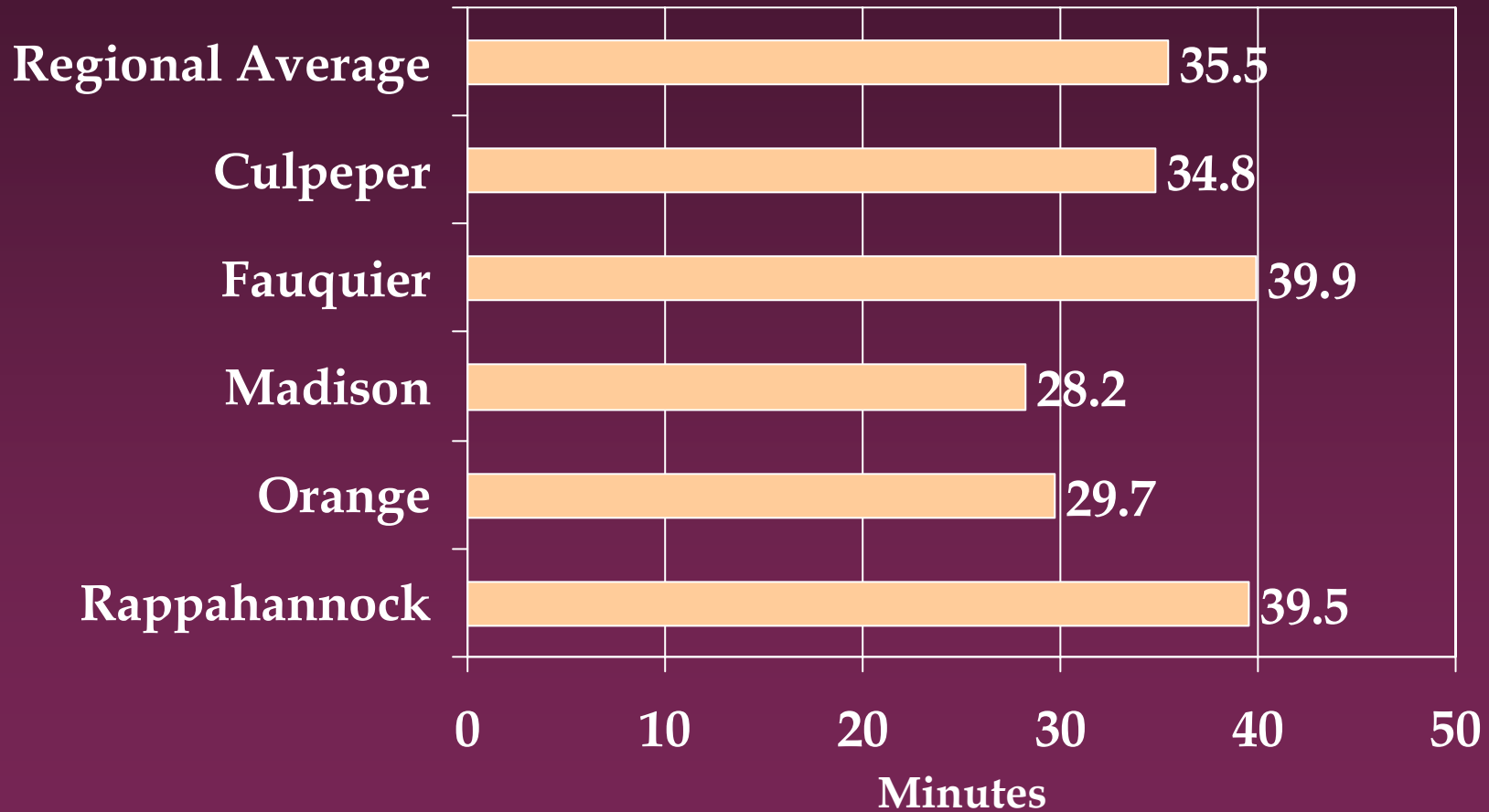
	Culp	Fauq	Mad	Oran	Rapp
Census	49.0%	60.2%	53.3%	51.7%	66.3%
Study	37.9%	50.4%	33.8%	34.0%	43.9%
Out of Region	29.9%	48.6%	23.5%	27.7%	31.7%

Characteristics of the Commuters

Travel Time to Work

- Travel Time to Work
 - ▶ 60% have a travel time to work of 30 minutes or more
 - ▶ 26.9% have a travel more than 45 minutes
 - ▶ Culpeper: 26.3%
 - ▶ Fauquier: 33.5%
 - ▶ Madison: 15.2%
 - ▶ Orange: 18.4%
 - ▶ Rappahannock: 34.3%

Characteristics of commuters: Average Travel Time to Work



Characteristics of the Commuters

Commuters vs. Non-commuters

- Likely male, full-time workers
- More likely to have a specific degree or required certifications
 - ▶ 51.5% vs. 34.9%
- Commuters have far higher earnings from primary jobs
 - ▶ \$47,400 vs. \$27,200
- Commuters are more highly educated
 - ▶ 4 yrs degree or beyond: 36.4% vs 28.4%
- Commuters are most often headed for Northern Virginia (36.3%)
- More likely to be recent movers to the region
 - ▶ 28.3 % vs. 15.1% lived in region 5 yrs or less

Characteristics of the Commuters

Attitude towards Commuting

- Commuters' perspective on commuting
 - ▶ 52.5% dislike commuting
 - ▶ most prevalent among those who commute to Northern Virginia
 - ▶ 50.1% said commuting was beneficial in some way

Characteristics of the Commuters

Views on Commuting

- Dislike Commuting

- ▶ Time involved
- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Cost
- ▶ Stress
- ▶ Safety concerns

- Like Commuting

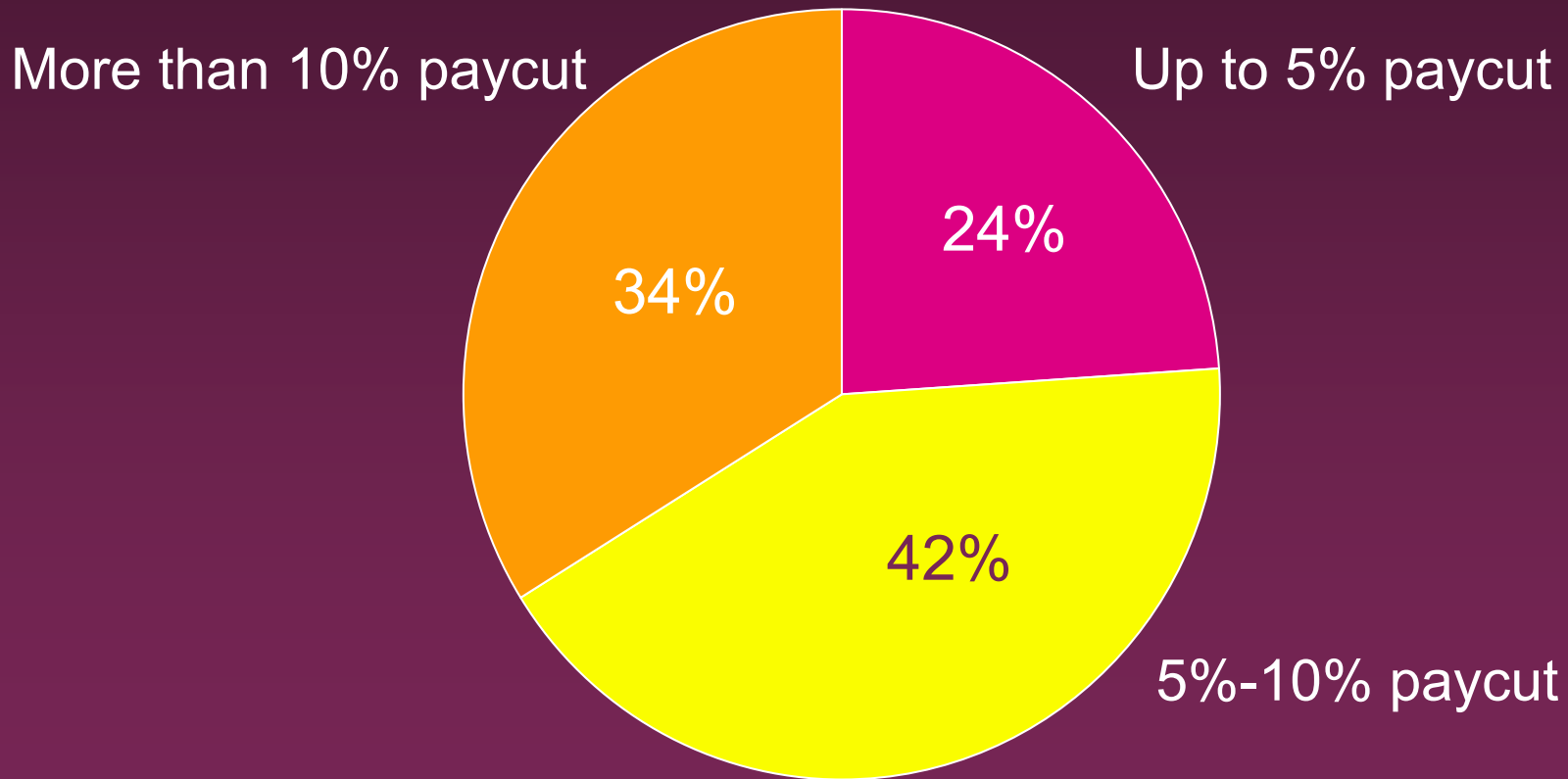
- ▶ Like job
- ▶ Get better pay & benefits
- ▶ Better chance advancing
- ▶ Job not available in local area
- ▶ Relax while commuting

Characteristics of the Commuters Taking a Job Closer to Home

- Key question that we asked of primary respondents who are commuters was:
 - “If you could take a job nearer your home so that you would not have to commute, would you take it even if it meant working for somewhat less money than you now make?”
 - ▶ Yes (28.7%)
 - ▶ Might (17.1%)
- If Yes,
 - “What is the largest percentage cut in wage or salary that you would accept in order to a take a job like that?”

Characteristics of Commuters

Of those willing to take less money...



Characteristics of the Commuters Telecommuting

- Definition of Telecommuters
 - ▶ A wage or salaried employee who at least occasionally works at home, or at a location other than their central work place, during his or her normal work hours
- 16.5% reported some level of telecommuting
- Interest in telecommuting
 - ▶ 50.6% expressed interest in the future (at least occasionally)
 - ▶ Of those expressed interest, 39.7% had some interest to telecommute on a regular basis

Respondents' Comments

- Opportunity to express thoughts on economic development in the area
- Suggestions for the kinds of jobs & businesses most needed
 - ▶ 22.1 % mentioned white collar or professional jobs
 - ▶ with education opportunities & benefits
 - ▶ 20.6% mentioned industry, manufacturing and production
 - ▶ 14.6% mentioned retail and restaurant
 - ▶ Could have considered this from the consumer point of view

Closing thoughts

- The survey provides solid information for regional planning
 - ▶ We tried to balance survey cost vs. survey accuracy
- For more detail: *see bound report*
 - ▶ Much information about each county
- CSR can provide additional analyses if asked
- Interpretation? Plans for action?
 - ▶ That's the job of the people who work on the scene here in the Rappahannock-Rapidan Region . . .

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