



SURVEY REPORT



U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

February 2002

Sample Survey of Military Personnel—Spring 2001

Report No. 2002-02

Equal Opportunity

SUMMARY. In the Active component Army, the incident rate of discrimination has remained fairly constant since 1994: 12% for officers and 24% for enlisted personnel in 2001. Among all soldiers in 2001, the rates of specific types of discrimination are the same as in 1997 and 1999: 10% for racial; 7% for age, weight, or other physical characteristic; 6% for gender; 4% for religious; and 3% for national origin. More female than male, and more Black and Hispanic than White soldiers reported they had been discriminated against in the last 12 months. Most soldiers who experienced some form of discrimination did not report it to their chain of command or other military authority, either because they handled it themselves or believed no one would do anything about it. Among officers and enlisted personnel who expressed an opinion on whether their race or gender influences whether they get promoted or are selected for or serve in developmental or key career assignments, most reported that neither race nor gender plays a role. Black and Hispanic soldiers were more likely than White soldiers and female soldiers were more likely than male soldiers to believe that their race or gender does make a difference. Over four-fifths of officers and three-fifths of enlisted personnel reported that the equal opportunity climate in their unit was good or very good. Over nine-tenths of officers and three-fourths of enlisted personnel reported that all soldiers, regardless of gender, race, or ethnic background, are treated the same with respect to who receives the most severe punishment for the same offense. Of those who expressed an opinion, over four-fifths of officers and three-fifths of enlisted personnel reported that military justice was administered fairly in their unit.

BACKGROUND. The *Sample Survey of Military Personnel (SSMP)* for active duty Army personnel was first conducted in December 1943 and is currently conducted twice a year by the Army Personnel Survey Office (APSO), U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI), U.S. Total Army Personnel Command. Since the early 1970s, questions about discrimination and racial conflict have been included in the *SSMP*. The *Spring 2001 SSMP* contains a set of 12 core questions on equal opportunity and discrimination.

SOURCE. The population for the *SSMP* consists of all permanent party, Active component Army personnel (commissioned officers, warrant officers, and enlisted personnel) available for duty. Approximately 10% of officers and approximately 2-3% of enlisted personnel are randomly selected for the

survey. For the *Spring 2001 SSMP*, 4,068 officers and 6,064 enlisted personnel completed the questionnaire and were included in the data file. The survey was conducted from about 15 April through 3 August 2001. The estimated response rate is 50%.

FINDINGS. This *SSMP* report focuses on officers' and enlisted personnel's opinions on equal opportunity, including discrimination, handling of discrimination complaints, equal opportunity climate, racial conflict, military justice, and the influence of race and gender on career assignments and chances for promotion.

Extent of Discrimination. In 2001, 12% of officers and 24% of enlisted personnel reported they were subjected to discrimination, roughly the same rates reported in 1994, 1995, 1997, and 1999 (Figure 1). The highest incidence of discrimination in recent years

was reported in 1992, when 16% of officers and 29% of enlisted personnel reported they were subjected to discrimination. Since 1994, the incidence rates remained relatively constant.

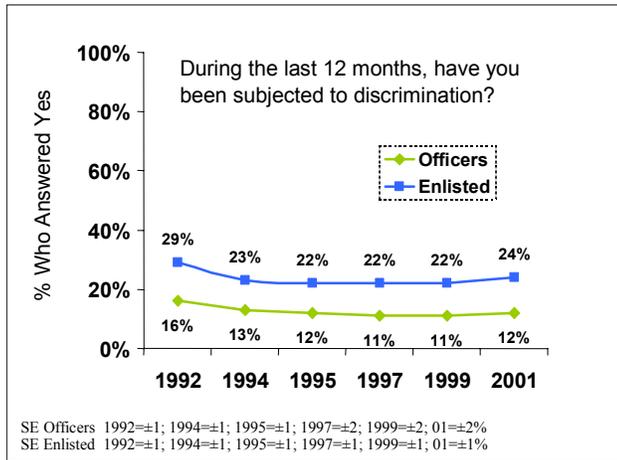


Figure 1. Discrimination

In 2001, 10% of all survey respondents reported racial discrimination, 7% reported they were subjected to discrimination on the basis of age, weight, or other physical characteristic, 6% reported gender discrimination, 4% reported religious discrimination, and 3% reported discrimination on the basis of national origin. The incidence rates are nearly identical to those reported in 1997 and 1999 (Figure 2).

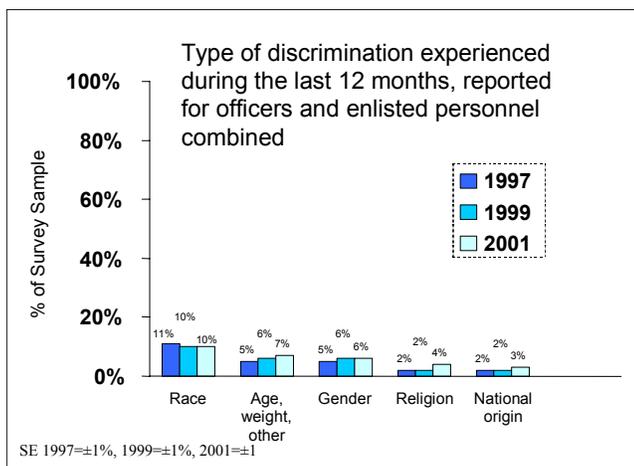


Figure 2. Type of Discrimination

In the 2001 SSMP, more Black (15%) than White (3%) officers reported being subjected to racial discrimination (Figure 3). There are no statistically significant differences in the percentages of White

(9%), Black (12%), and Hispanic (14%) enlisted personnel who reported racial discrimination.

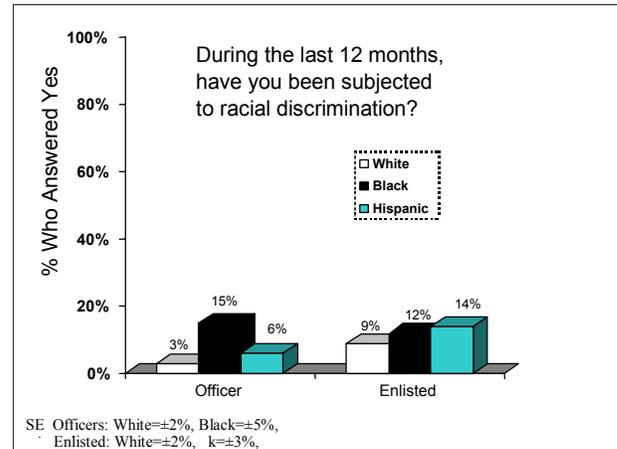


Figure 3. Racial Discrimination

Female soldiers were seven times more likely than their male counterparts to report gender discrimination (Figure 4). Nearly one-fourth of female officers (23%) and female enlisted personnel (22%) reported they were subjected to gender discrimination during the last 12 months, compared with 3% of male officers and enlisted personnel.

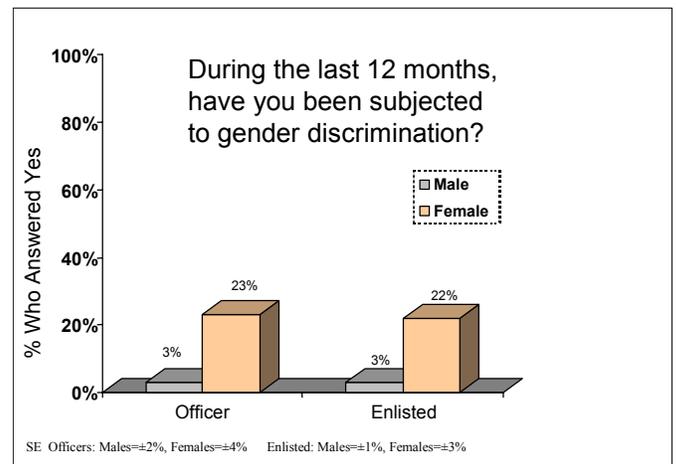


Figure 4. Gender Discrimination

Handling of Discrimination Complaints. Of the 12% of officers who experienced some form of discrimination during the last 12 months, 17% reported the incident to their chain of command or other military authority and 83% did not. Of the 24% of enlisted personnel who reportedly were subjected to discrimination during the last 12 months, 31% reported it and 69% did not (Figure 5).

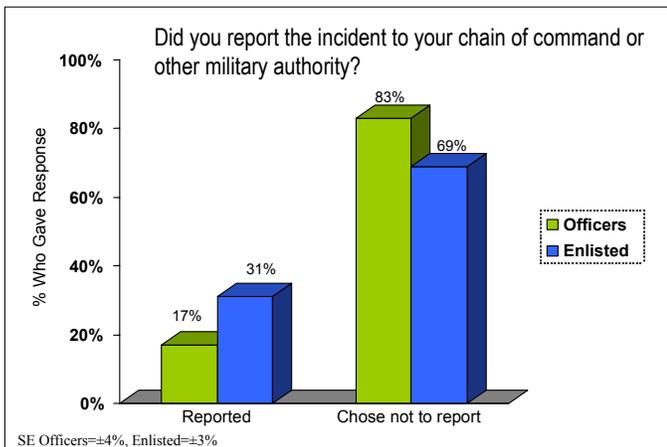


Figure 5. Reported Incident

Half of enlisted personnel (49%) who reported the discrimination incident to their chain of command or other military authority reported that they believed that nothing was done in response to their complaint. One-fourth (27%) felt something had been done (Figure 6). (Data for officers who reported the discrimination incident are not reported because of the large sampling error.) One-fourth (25%) reported that they were not aware of what was done in regard to their complaint.

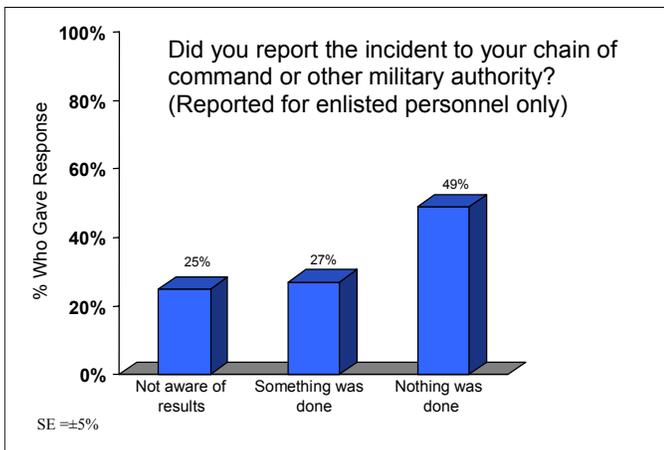


Figure 6. Outcome of Incident

Officers and enlisted personnel who chose not to report a discrimination incident gave similar reasons for their choice. In general, most declined to report it either because they handled it themselves (39% officers, 38% enlisted personnel) or believed no one would do anything about it (33% for both officers and enlisted personnel) (Figure 7).

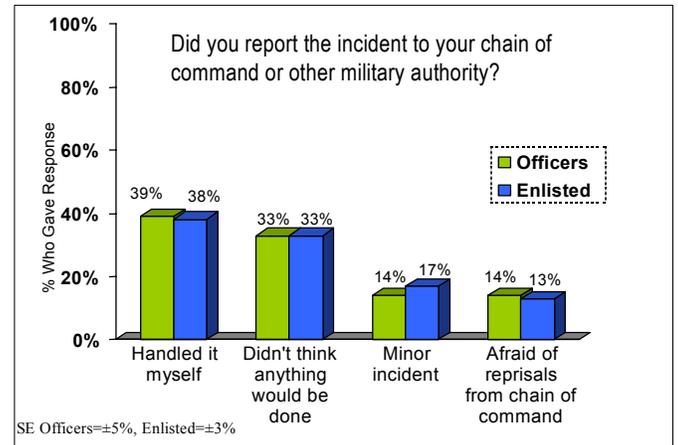


Figure 7. Reasons for Not Reporting Incident

Frequency of Action on Discrimination Complaints. Most officers (72%) and enlisted personnel (74%) were unaware of discrimination complaints made in their unit during the last 12 months.

Among the 28% of officers aware of complaints, 86% reported that their chain of command always or frequently took action on the complaint. Of the 26% of enlisted personnel aware of complaints, over half (55%) felt action was always or frequently taken (Figure 8).

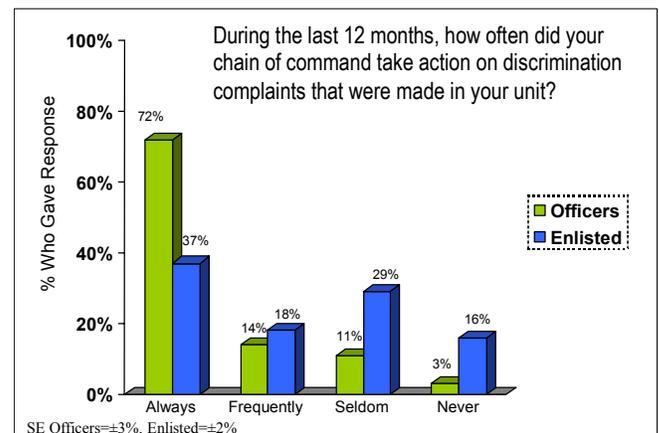


Figure 8. Frequency of Action on Discrimination Complaints

Equal Opportunity Climate. In 2001, 84% of officers described the equal opportunity climate in their unit as good/very good, similar rates were reported in 1997 and 1999 (Figure 9). Sixty-two percent (62%) of enlisted personnel described the climate as good/very good in both 1999 and 2001, slightly lower than the 67% reported in 1997.

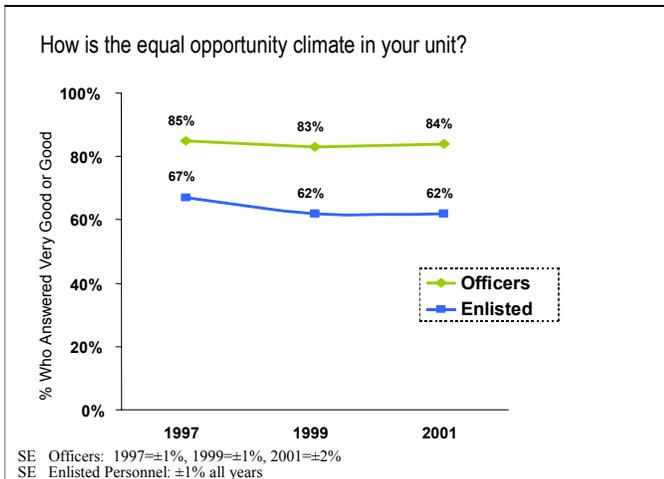


Figure 9. EO Climate Over Time

Male officers (86%) were more likely than female officers (74%), and male enlisted personnel (63%) were somewhat more likely than female enlisted personnel (56%), to report that the equal opportunity climate in their unit is good/very good (Figure 10).

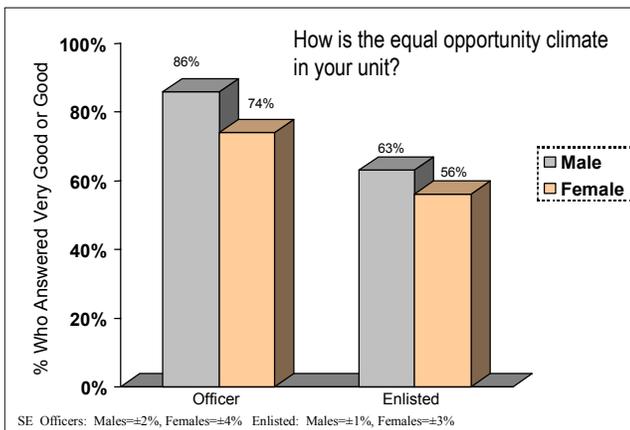


Figure 10. EO Climate Report by Rank and Gender

White officers (86%) were more likely than Black officers (75%), and White enlisted personnel (65%) were more likely than Hispanic enlisted personnel (57%), to describe the EO climate as good/very good (Figure 11). Other differences are not statistically significant.

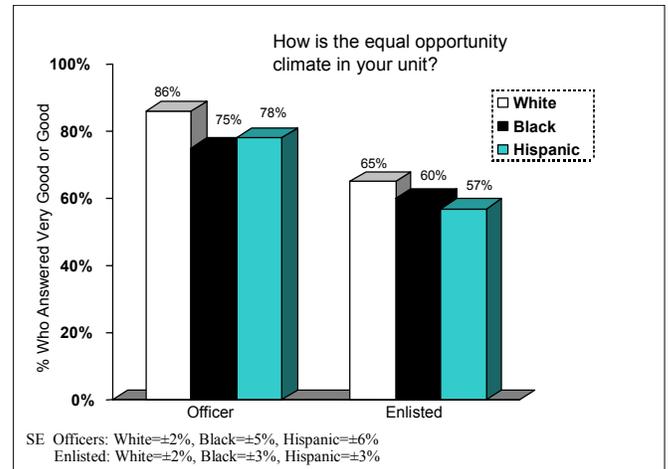


Figure 11. EO Climate Reported by Rank and Race/Ethnicity

Racial Discrimination and Racial Conflict. White officers (86%) were more likely than both Black officers (56%) and Hispanic officers (76%) to believe race does not influence whether they get a fair deal in their unit (Figure 12). More Hispanic officers (76%) than Black officers (56%) reported that race does not influence fairness. White enlisted personnel (68%) were more likely than Black (51%) and Hispanic (57%) enlisted personnel to report that race does not influence their getting a fair deal in their unit.

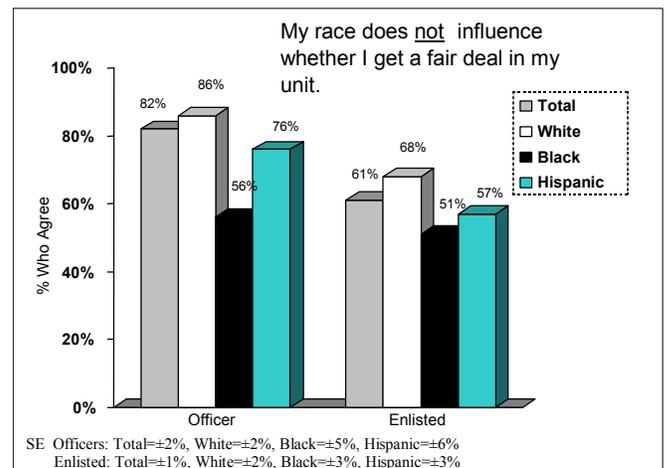


Figure 12. Racial Discrimination

Three percent (3%) of officers reported having been involved in a racial conflict in their unit during the last 12 months, with similar percentages among White, Black, and Hispanic officers (Figure 13). Eight percent (8%) of enlisted personnel reported being involved in a racial conflict. Hispanic enlisted

personnel (13%) were slightly more likely than White enlisted personnel (6%) to have been involved.

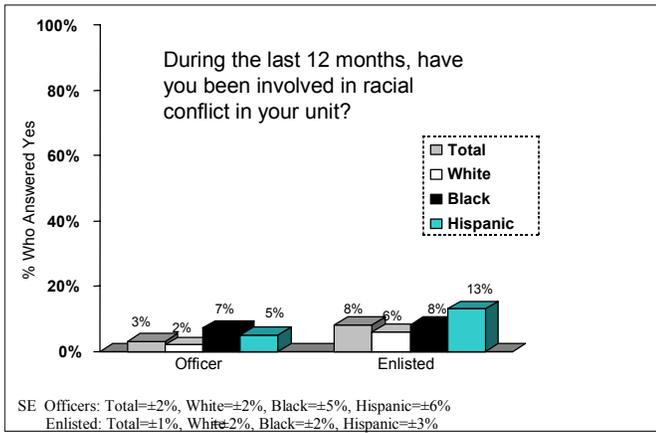


Figure 13. Racial Conflict Reported by Rank and Race/Ethnicity

Military Justice. Over half of officers (57%) and 41% of enlisted personnel reported that military justice was administered fairly in their unit during the last 12 months (Figure 14). Seven percent (7%) of officers and 22% of enlisted personnel disagreed. More than one-third reported they did not know.

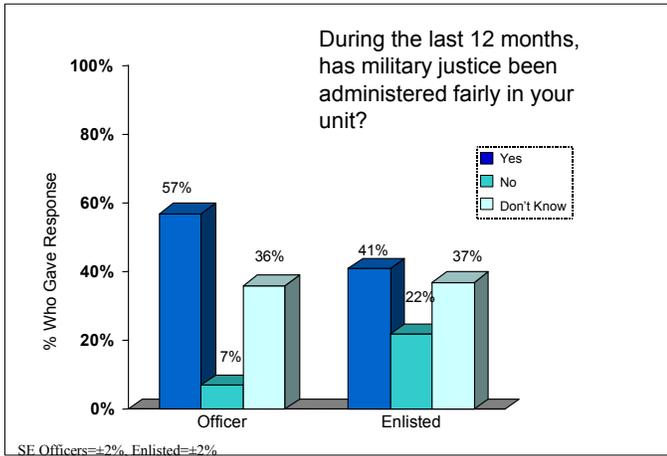


Figure 14. Military Justice

Among officers who expressed an opinion on the administration of military justice, male (89%) and female (83%) officers were equally likely to report that military justice in their unit was fair during the last 12 months. Among enlisted personnel who expressed an opinion, males (67%) were more likely than females (57%) to report fair administration of justice (Figure 15).

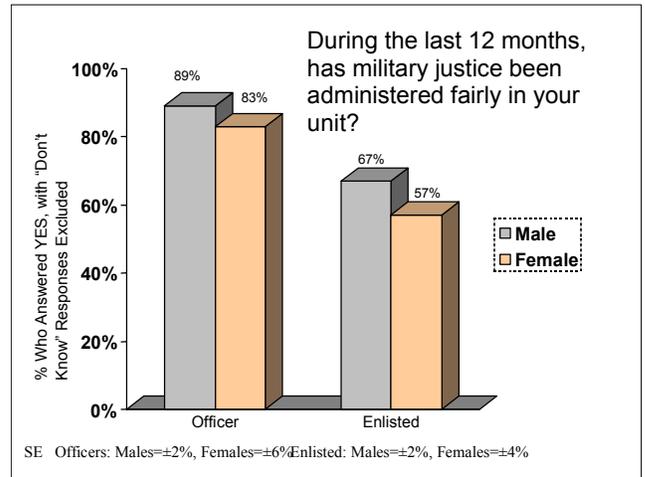


Figure 15. Military Justice Reported by Rank and Gender

Among officers who expressed an opinion on whether military justice was administered fairly in their unit, similar rates of White (90%), Black (86%), and Hispanic (83%) officers reported fair administration of military justice (Figure 16). Among enlisted personnel, more White (70%) than Black (60%) and Hispanic (63%) personnel reported fair administration of justice in their unit.

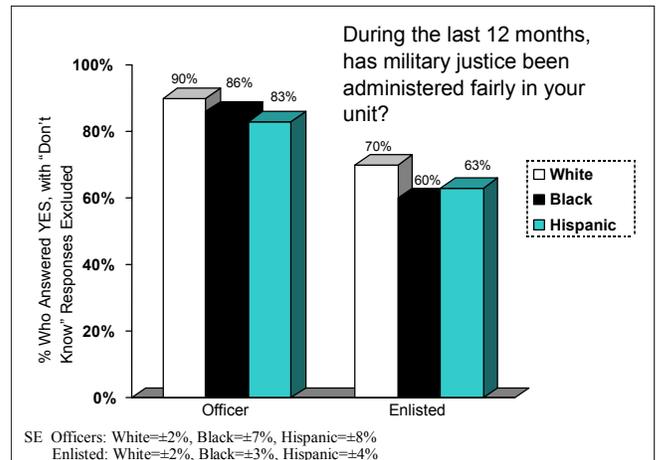


Figure 16. Military Justice Reported by Rank and Race/Ethnicity

Punishment. Over 90% of officers and 75% of enlisted personnel reported that all soldiers, regardless of gender, race, or ethnic background, are treated the same with respect to who receives the most severe punishment.

Of the 10% of officers who believe differential punishment is given, 60% reported that males are for more likely to be punished more severely than others for the same offense (Figure 17). Of the 25% of enlisted personnel who perceive differential punishment, 66% reported that the punishment for males is usually more severe.

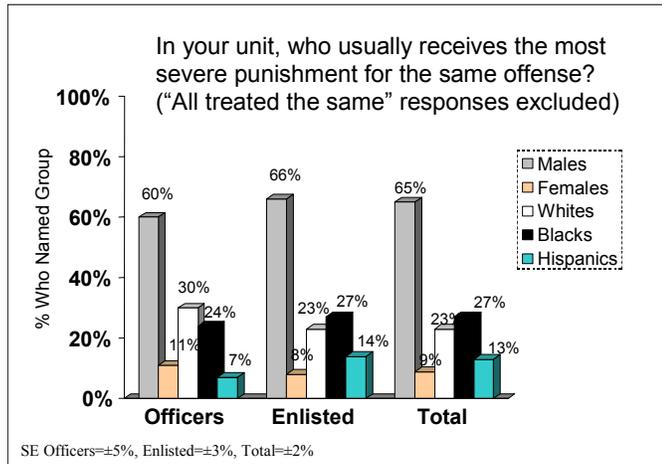


Figure 17. Punishment

Promotion and Career Assignments. About one-fourth of officers (23%) and enlisted personnel (28%) reported that they do not know whether their chances for promotion are the same as or different from soldiers of other races. Of the officers who expressed an opinion, most (69%) reported their chances are the same as soldiers of other races, although more White officers (29%) than Hispanic officers (19%) reported that their chances are worse (Figure 18).

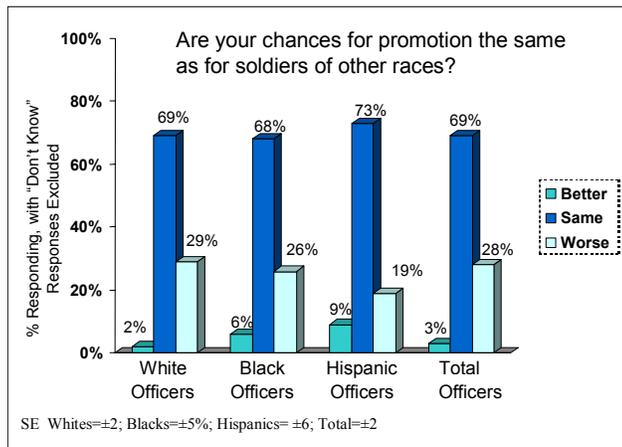


Figure 18. Promotion & Race - Officers

Among those who expressed an opinion on whether race influences their chances for promotion, White,

Black, and Hispanic enlisted personnel gave similar responses (Figure 19). Three-fourths of each group (74%) reported their chances are the same as for soldiers of other races, and about one-fifth of each group felt their chances are worse.

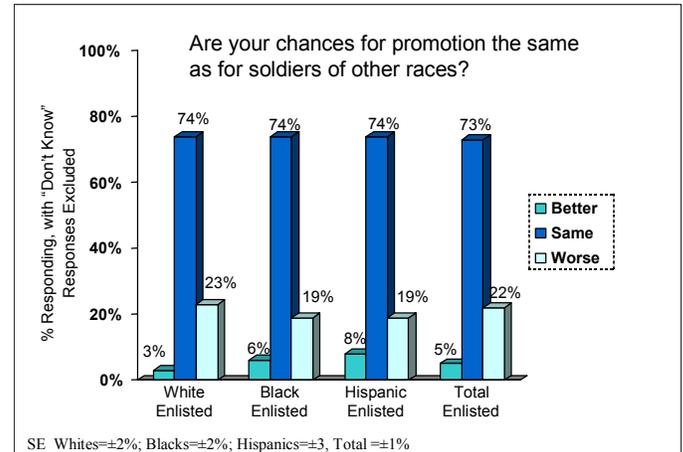


Figure 19. Promotion & Race - Enlisted Personnel

About one-third of officers (29%) and enlisted personnel (35%) reported they do not know whether race influences whether they are selected for or serve in developmental key career assignments. Among officers who expressed an opinion, most reported that race does not play a role (Figure 20). White officers (84%) were more likely than Black (66%) and Hispanic (75%) officers to believe that race has no influence. Black officers (26%) were more likely than White officers (15%) and Hispanic officers (16%) to believe race has a negative influence.

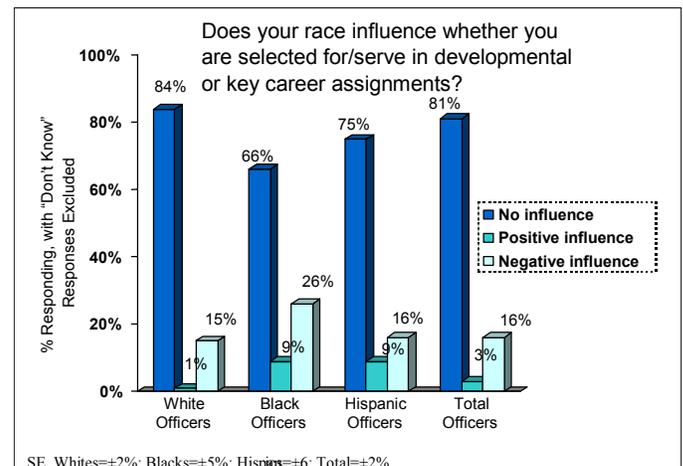


Figure 20. Career Assignments & Race - Officers

Among enlisted personnel who expressed an opinion on whether race influences career assignments, the majority reported that race is not a factor (Figure 21). White enlisted personnel (86%) were more likely than Black (79%) and Hispanic (74%) enlisted personnel to report that race has no influence. Black (9%) and Hispanic (14%) enlisted personnel were more likely than White enlisted personnel (4%) to believe that race has a positive influence on their selection for assignments.

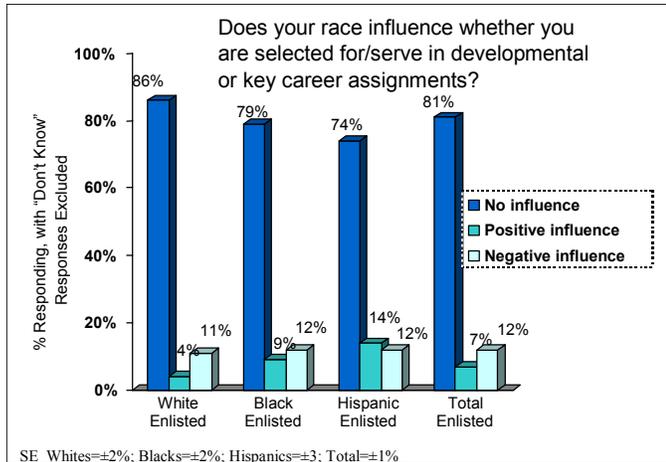


Figure 21. Career Assignments & Race – Enlisted Personnel

One-fourth of officers (23%) and one-third of enlisted personnel (33%) reported they do not know whether their chances for promotion are the same as or different from soldiers of the opposite sex. Among officers who expressed an opinion, most reported their chances are the same as the opposite sex, although more male (31%) than female (20%) officers reported their chances are worse (Figure 22).

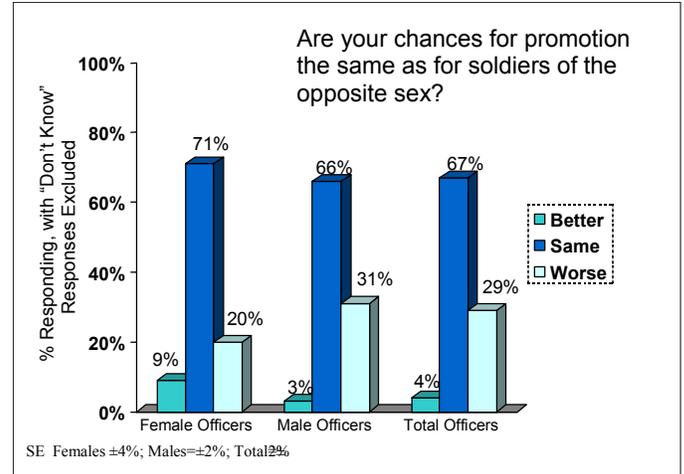


Figure 22. Promotion & Gender - Officers

Among enlisted personnel who expressed an opinion, most reported their chances for promotion are the same as soldiers of the opposite sex, although more male (27%) than female (19%) enlisted personnel described their chances as worse (Figure 23).

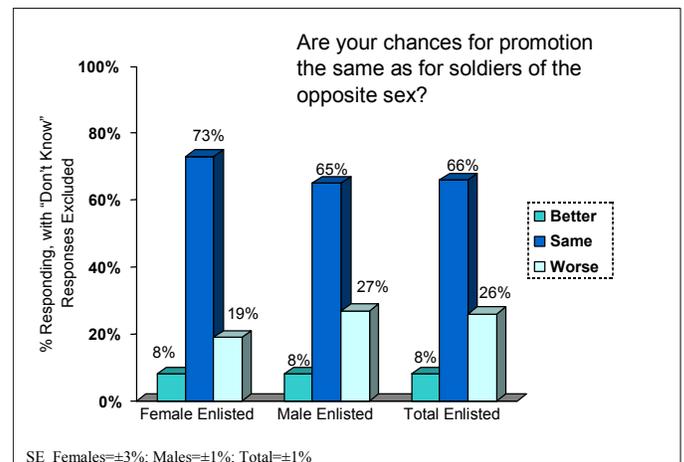


Figure 23. Promotion & Gender – Enlisted Personnel

About one-third of officers (29%) and enlisted personnel (35%) reported they do not know whether their gender influences whether they are selected for or serve in developmental key career assignments. Among officers who expressed an opinion, more female (34%) than male (14%) officers reported their gender has a negative influence. More male (80%) than female (57%) officers believed that gender has no influence (Figure 24).

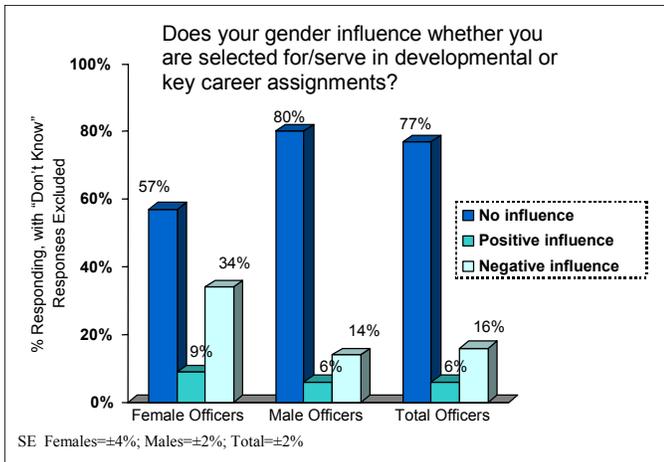


Figure 24. Career Assignments & Gender - Officers

Among those who expressed an opinion on whether gender plays a role in career assignments, more female (17%) than male (10%) enlisted personnel reported that gender has a negative influence. More male (82%) than female (75%) enlisted personnel believe gender has no influence (Figure 25).

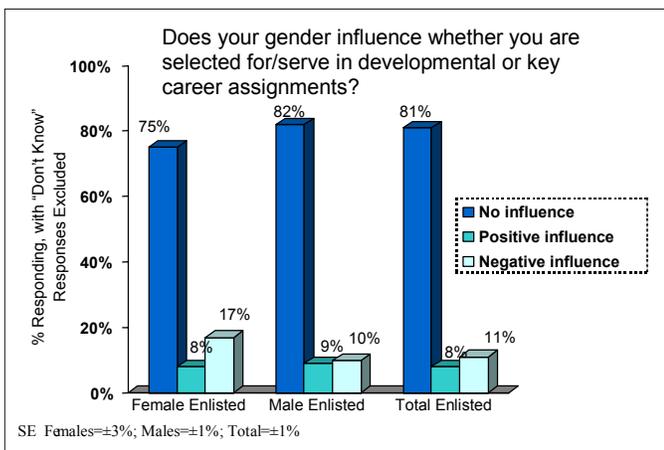


Figure 25. Career Assignments & Gender – Enlisted Personnel

SUMMARY.

- The incident rate of discrimination has remained fairly constant in the Active component Army since 1994: 12% for officers and 24% for enlisted personnel in 2001.
- The rates of specific types of discrimination reported in 2001 are the same as in 1997 and 1999: 10% for racial; 7% for age, weight, or other physical characteristic; 6% for gender; 4% for religious; and 3% for national origin.

- In 2001, more Black (15%) than White (3%) officers reported being subjected to racial discrimination.
- Female soldiers were seven times more likely than their male counterparts to report gender discrimination: 23% of female officers and 22% of female enlisted personnel compared with 3% of male officers and enlisted personnel.
- Most soldiers (83% of officers and 69% of enlisted personnel) who experienced some form of discrimination during the last 12 months did not report it to their chain of command or other military authority, either because they handled it themselves (39% officers, 38% enlisted personnel) or believed no one would do anything about it (33% for both officers and enlisted personnel).
- Half (49%) of enlisted personnel who reported a discrimination incident to their chain of command or other military authority believed nothing was done in response to their complaint. One-fourth (27%) believed something had been done.
- Eighty-six percent (86%) of officers and 55% of enlisted personnel aware of discrimination complaints in their unit reported that their chain of command always or frequently took action.
- Eighty-four percent (84%) of officers and 62% of enlisted personnel described the equal opportunity climate in their unit as good/very good. The rate for enlisted personnel is slightly lower than in 1997.
- Among officers, males (86%) were more likely than females (74%), and among enlisted personnel, males (63%) were somewhat more likely than females (56%) to report that the EO climate in their unit is good/very good.

- White officers (86%) were more likely than Black officers (75%), and White enlisted personnel (65%) were more likely than Hispanic enlisted personnel (57%), to describe the EO climate in their unit as good/very good.
- White (86%) and Hispanic (76%) officers were more likely than Black officers (56%), and White enlisted personnel (68%) were more likely than Black (51%) and Hispanic (57%) enlisted personnel, to believe race does not influence whether they get a fair deal in their unit.

- Three percent (3%) of officers and 8% of enlisted personnel reported having been involved in a racial conflict in their unit during the last 12 months.
- Seven percent (7%) of officers and 22% of enlisted personnel reported that military justice was not administered fairly in their unit during the last 12 months.
- Among officers, equal numbers of males (89%) and females (83%) reported fair administration of military justice in their unit during the last 12 months. Among enlisted personnel, males (67%) were more likely than females (57%) to report fair administration of justice.
- Similar rates of White (90%), Black (86%), and Hispanic (83%) officers reported fair administration of military justice in their unit. Among enlisted personnel, more White (70%) than Black (60%) and Hispanic (63%) personnel reported fair administration of justice in their unit.
- Over 90% of officers and 75% of enlisted personnel reported that all soldiers, regardless of gender, race, or ethnic background, are treated the same with respect to who receives the most severe punishment.
- Of the 10% of officers and the 25% of enlisted personnel who believe differential punishment is given, about two-thirds reported that for the same offense, males usually are punished more severely.
- About two-thirds (69%) of officers reported their chances for promotion are the same as for soldiers of other races. More White (29%) than Hispanic officers (19%) reported their chances are worse.
- Three-fourths (74%) of enlisted personnel, regardless of race, reported their chances for promotion are the same as soldiers of other races, and about one-fifth of each group felt their chances are worse.
- Most officers reported that race does not influence whether you are selected for/serve in developmental or key career assignments. White officers (84%) were more likely than Black (66%) and Hispanic (75%) officers to believe that race has no influence. Black officers (26%) were more likely than White officers (15%) to believe race has a negative influence.
- Among enlisted personnel who have an opinion on whether race influences career assignments, The majority of enlisted personnel reported that race does not influence career assignments. White enlisted personnel (86%) were more likely than Black (79%) and Hispanic (74%) enlisted personnel to report that race has no influence. Black (9%) and Hispanic (14%) enlisted personnel were more likely than White enlisted personnel (4%) to believe that race has a positive influence on career assignments.
- Most officers reported that their chances for promotion are the same as for the opposite sex, although more male (31%) than female (20%) officers reported their chances are worse.
- Most enlisted personnel reported that their chances for promotion are the same as for soldiers of the opposite sex, although more male (27%) than female (19%) enlisted personnel described their chances as worse.
- More female (34%) than male (14%) officers reported that their gender has a negative influence on whether they are selected for or serve in developmental key career assignments. More male (80%) than female (57%) officers believed that gender has no influence.
- More female (17%) than male (10%) enlisted personnel reported that gender has a negative influence on career assignments. More male (82%) than female (75%) enlisted personnel believe gender has no influence.

