NONTRADITIONAL ADULT MASTERS DEGREE STUDENTS AND THEIR CHOICE OF PROGRAM OF STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The present study examines nontraditional, adult graduate students' demographic profile and relates this to their enrollment in a graduate program of study. We survey 407 students enrolled in either a MBA, MHA, MSL or a combination program offered by a Southern university at two different campuses. Our findings show greater diversity than earlier research and greater diversity when compared to other area institutions. Our findings are useful to academicians and employers wanting to know the demographic profile of nontraditional business, health care, and leadership graduate students and how this relates to their program of study.

INTRODUCTION

According to the American Council on Education (2006), it is estimated that more than 40 percent of students enrolled in degree granting programs in higher education are nontraditional, adult students, age 25 or older. Of these students, 6 million are entering graduate school as working adults. Yet, there has been surprisingly little research done on understanding the demographics and profiles of the working adult graduate student (Aslanian, 2001) or their choice of program of study. This research is needed as these students have a distinctly different profile than those students pursuing a graduate degree immediately following completion of an undergraduate degree, with an increasing number of colleges offering courses and programs aimed at these nontraditional students.

The primary rationale of the study is to investigate potential relationship(s) among student demographics and the program of study of adults entering an evening graduate health administration, leadership, or general business degree program. Understanding the demographics and profiles of these adult students is valuable information for university administrators and program directors allowing them to concentrate their marketing and recruitment efforts on "…developing and maintaining a strategic fit between the institution's goals and capabilities and its changing marketing opportunities" (Kotler and Fox, 1985). It may

also allow those responsible for instruction to better craft the curriculum to meet the needs of this population. Furthermore, it may allow employers to better understand which types of employees are seeking additional education, what the managerial workforce will look like in the future, and anticipate changes in organizational behavior and psychology. Thus, the specific goals of this study are to (a) identify and put forth a profile of these adult students and their characteristics, and (b) explore the potential relationship among demographic variables on the program of study choice of these students.

To induce our study, we surveyed all nontraditional adult graduate students in the College of Business at a ***Southern Association of Colleges and Schools*** accredited private university with an established academic reputation in excess of one hundred years, pursuing a program of study of either a Master of Health Administration (MHA), Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science in Leadership and Organizational Change (MSL), MBA/MHA combination, or MBA/MSL combination with respect to personal demographics. We then use multinomial logistic regression (MLR), to identify potential relationships among selected demographic variables and the program of study (e.g. MHA, MBA, MSL). By collecting and examining this original data, we endeavor to add to the body of knowledge regarding adult student profiles and their relationships to programs of study that have been overlooked in previous research specifically related to mature students pursuing graduate education in business disciplines.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As early as the 1960s, researchers began to realize there was a difference between traditional and nontraditional college students. Houle (1961) was the first to identify differing motivations of adult students. These orientations were named "Houle's Typology." Prior to Houle's research, no previous research examined constructs outside the field of education (Courtney, 1992). The majority of work by other researchers on adult students extended Houle's work on motivational factors. These relate to factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (e.g. Deci, 1971; Vallerand, 1997), the interaction of participants (e.g. Grotelueschen and Caulley, 1977), and the "chain of responses" (e.g. Cross, 1981), but are not of direct interest to the present study.

As the number of nontraditional students began to grow, interest increased in identifying traits and profiles of the nontraditional student (Courtney, 1992). As exemplified by other research, i.e. Gerlich, Turner, and Gopalan (2007), we feel it judicious for our study to examine the possible effects of race on other potentially economically driven decisions of students, such as the decision to enroll in a program of graduate study.

Aslanian and Brickell (1980) presented a study of nearly 2,000 students age 25 and older currently involved in continuing education as nontraditional students. While the focus of the

study was to indentify triggers resulting in adults continuing their education, there also was significant information on the profiles of these students.

Findings from Aslanian and Brickell's (1980) study indicated that the largest percentage of nontraditional students were age 25 to 39 (50%), and age 40-59 (29%). Marital status revealed 67 percent of the students were married, 20 percent were divorced or separated, 9 percent were widowed and 12 percent were single. Number of children showed 23 percent had no children at home, 16 percent had one child, 26 percent had two children, and 33 percent had three or more children. Race was largely white (87%), with 8 percent black, 2 percent Hispanic, and 2 percent other. Sex was fairly evenly split with 48 percent male and 52 percent female.

Building on the previous study, Aslanian (2001) surveyed 1,500 adults aged 25 or older that were involved in continuing education as a nontraditional student. In this study, graduate adult students were separated yielding specific results for this segment. These results indicated that 19 percent of the students were age 25-29, 15 percent were 30-34, 15 percent were 35-39, 20 percent were 40-44, 15 percent were 45-49, 15 percent were 50-54, and 4 percent were 55 or older. There were 69 percent females and 31 percent males, and 90 percent were white with 3 percent African American, and 6 percent other. The respondents indicated marital status of 67 percent married, 24 percent single, 8 percent divorced, and 1 percent widowed.

More recently, The National Center for Educational Statistics surveyed more than 17,000 adults enrolled in a university or degree program for work related reasons, although the sample was not segmented to show only students in graduate school (O'Donnell, 2005). Demographic factors for this group showed the majority of students (49.4%) were age 16-24, 27.7 percent were 25-34, and 22.9 percent were 35-64. Gender was relatively even with 44.3 percent males and 55.7 percent females. Race indicated 70.2 percent white, 12.7 percent black, and 17.1 percent other. From the respondents, 33.3 percent were married, and 60.8 percent were single or unmarried living with a partner and 5.8 percent were widowed. Finally, 79 percent indicated having no children.

Similarly, the American Council on Education (2006) captured demographic and other data on adult learners. This longitudinal study indicated that adult learners were expected to grow from 28 percent of the student population in 1970 to a projected 40 percent in 2014. Full time graduate students age 25 or older grew from 20.2 percent of the U.S. student population in 1970 to 28.7 percent in 2002, while part-time graduate students age 25 or older held relatively steady from 52.0 percent to 49.4 percent. Adult college students in general have also changed. In 1970, females age 25 or older were 10.2 percent of the student population but are projected to be 24.0 percent in 2010. Male students age 25 or older were 17.6 percent of the student population in 1970 but are projected to be 14.8 percent in 2010. Ethnicity has also changed over time. Students age 25 or older in 1964 were 1 percent African American and 15.6 percent of the total student population was white. This increased to 6.6 percent and 31.5 percent, respectively, in 2002. Overall, the research shows a changing demographic mix in adult students.

Secondary data was obtained in order to examine the demographics of select populations in the U.S., state, and local areas to allow a comparison of the demographic profile of the residents. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), demographics indicate the U.S. population consists of 79.7% white and 12.9% black residents, while the state in this study has 73.7% white and 21.6% black residents, respectively. Education-portal.com (2010) reports that students currently enrolled in the state's university system show a much lower population of non-white students with 9.6% and 10.8% black that the state's two flagship university campuses.

While each of these studies' demographic data of adult students is worthy of note, most do not specifically target working adults returning to graduate school, and none specifically focus on master's degrees in healthcare administration or business related fields. Thus, additional research is needed to identify specific traits found in this population segment and relate them to choice of programs of study. Additional research is also needed in attempting to understand why the private university sample in this study had a much larger proportion of non-white students as compared to the state's demographics and demographics from other nearby state universities.

METHODOLOGY

As our overall interest is in understanding the demographic profile and in discerning if there are differences between the demographic profile and the program of study of adults enrolling in an evening graduate degree program, we conducted a survey in 2009 on enrolled adult students currently attending an evening graduate degree program at a Southern university. The university's College of Business offers five graduate degrees: Master of Health Administration (MHA), Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science in Leadership and Organizational Change (MSL), and two combination dual degrees of MBA/MHA, and MBA/MSL.

All five of these School of Business graduate degrees are part-time, evening programs and are offered on two campuses located in two different metropolitan areas. The university does not have a full-time master's degree program. The MBA, MHA, and MSL degree are 36-hour master's degrees and the MBA/MHA and MBA/MSL degrees are 54-hour programs. Students attend classes in the evenings and/or online and typically take a load of two courses per semester, three semesters per year. With this schedule, students are able to complete an MBA, MHA, or MSL degree in 24 calendar months, and the MBA/MHA or MBA/MSL dual degrees in 36 months. Students in these programs may speed up or slow down their progress; however, they are allowed no more than seven years to complete their program.

For our demographic profile we follow Creswell (2005) and include: gender, age, marital status, race, ethnicity, income level, and number of children currently in the household. For our multinomial logistic regression, we used the above variables for the demographic profile as our independent variables. The dependent variable was the program of study (e.g. MHA, MBA,

MSL, or combination). Respondents self-reported their program of study and demographic information.

RESULTS

Descriptive characteristics

The final sample number of students participating in the study was 407. All of the 407 surveys returned were complete and useable. At the time of this study, there was a population of 652 students enrolled in one of the five graduate degree programs included in this study. This yielded a response or capture rate of 62 percent. All of the respondents were students pursuing a Masters of Health Administration, Masters of Business Administration, Masters of Science in Leadership and Organizational Change, Masters of Business Administration/Master of Health Administration, or Masters of Business Administration/Masters of Science in Leadership and Organizational Change degree.

Table 1 details the demographic characteristics of the sample. The sample consisted of 118 males and 289 females. The majority of the respondents (339) fell in the age groups between 26 and 50. The variable "marital status" revealed 137 were single, 213 were married, and 54 were divorced. The racial makeup of the sample consisted of 205 white students (50.4%), 185 black or African-American students (45.5%), and 17 Asian students (4.2%). The vast majority of the sample (98%) was reported as non-Hispanic ethnicity. The sample reported income between $40,001 and $60,000 the most frequently (29.2%), followed by $60,001 to $80,000, (19.0%). The largest percentage of the sample (46.9%) had no children at home. Homes with one or two children were reported in 20.6 percent and 20.9 percent of the sample, respectively, and 11.6 percent of the sample reported three or more children in the home. Finally, the sample consisted of 143 MBA's, 123 MHA's, 31 MSL's, 80 MBA/MHA's, and 30 MBA/MSL's.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics (gender, age, marital status, race, ethnicity, income level, number of children, and program of study) of the Sample

Demographic And Program Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent
Gender	n=407	
Male	118	29.0%
Female	289	71.0%
Age	n=407	
22-25	35	8.6%
26-30	67	16.5%
31-35	75	18.4%
36-40	83	20.5%
41-45	71	17.4%
46-50	44	10.8%

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics (gender, age, marital status, race, ethnicity, income level, number of children, and program of study) of the Sample		
Demographic And Program Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent
51-55	28	6.9%
56-60	3	.7%
61-65	1	.2%
Marital Status	n=407	
Single	137	33.7%
Married	213	52.2%
Divorced	54	13.3%
Widowed	3	.7%
Race	n=407	
White	205	50.4%
Black	185	45.5%
Asian	17	4.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.0%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Ethnicity	N=407	
Hispanic	8	2.0%
Non-Hispanic	399	98.0%
Income	n=407	
$20,000 or less	28	6.9%
$20,001 - $40,000	66	16.2%
$40,001 - $60,000	119	29.2%
$60,001 - $80,000	81	19.9%
$80,001 - $100,000	61	15.0%
>$100,001	52	12.8%
# of Children in the Household	n=407	
0	191	46.9%
1	84	20.6%
2	85	20.9%
3	35	8.6%
4	10	2.5%
5+	2	.5%
Program of Study	n=407	
MBA	143	35.1%
MHA	123	30.2%
MSL	31	7.6%
MBA/MHA	80	19.7%
MBA/MSL	30	7.4%
Note. Income is individual income, not household income.		

Descriptive statistics were also used to examine any differences in the sample by gender. The program of study variable was compared by gender to determine the profile of students for each program. Table 2 shows these results and demonstrates that the MBA consists of a larger percentage of males and the MHA and MBA/MHA have a larger percentage of females. The other programs are approximately evenly spread among males and females.

Table 2 : Demographic Characteristics (age, marital status, race, ethnicity, income level, number of children, and program of study): Total Sample and by Gender

Demographic Variables	Male Frequency	Male Percent	Female Frequency	Female Percent	Total Sample Frequency	Total Sample Valid Percent
Age	n=118		n=289		n=407	
22-25	12	10.2%	23	8.0%	35	8.6%
26-30	19	16.1%	48	16.6%	67	16.5%
31-35	27	22.9%	48	16.6%	75	18.4%
36-40	23	19.5%	60	20.8%	83	20.4%
41-45	18	15.3%	53	18.3%	71	17.4%
46-50	8	6.8%	36	12.5%	44	10.9%
51-55	10	8.4%	18	6.2%	28	6.9%
56-60	1	.8%	2	.7%	3	.7%
61-65	0	.0%	1	.3%	1	.2%
Marital Status	n=118		n=289		n=407	
Single	37	31.4%	100	34.6%	137	33.7%
Married	75	63.5%	138	47.8%	213	52.3%
Divorced	6	5.1%	48	16.6%	54	13.3%
Widowed	0	.0%	3	1.0%	3	.7%
Race	n=118		n=289		n=407	
White	66	55.9%	139	48.1%	205	50.4%
Black or African American	44	37.3%	141	48.8%	185	45.5%
Asian	8	6.8%	9	3.1%	17	4.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%
Ethnicity	n=118		n=289			n=407
Hispanic or Latino	1	.9%	7	2.4%	8	2.0%
Non-Hispanic or Latino	117	99.1%	282	97.6%	399	98.0%
Income	n=118		n=289		n=407	
$20,000 or less	10	8.5%	18	6.2%	28	6.9%
$20,001 - $40,000	19	16.1%	47	16.3%	66	16.2%
$40,001 - $60,000	23	19.5%	96	33.2%	119	29.2%
$60,001 - $80,000	25	21.2%	56	19.4%	81	19.9%
$80,001 -$100,000	17	14.4%	44	15.2%	61	15.0%
$100,001 and over	24	20.3%	28	9.7%	52	12.8%

Table 2 : Demographic Characteristics (age, marital status, race, ethnicity, income level, number of children, and program of study): Total Sample and by Gender						
Demographic Variables	Male Frequency	Male Percent	Female Frequency	Female Percent	Total Sample Frequency	Total Sample Valid Percent
Number of Children in Household	n=118		n=289		n=407	
0	52	44.2%	139	48.2%	191	46.9%
1	21	17.8%	63	21.8%	84	20.6%
2	30	25.4%	55	19.0%	85	20.9%
3	9	7.6%	26	9.0%	35	8.6%
4	5	4.2%	5	1.7%	10	2.5%
5+	1	.8%	1	.3%	2	.5%
Program of Study	n=118		n=289		n=407	
MBA	59	50.0%	84	29.1%	143	35.1%
MHA	16	13.6%	107	37.0%	123	30.2%
MSL	15	12.7%	16	5.5%	31	7.6%
MBA/MHA	20	16.9%	60	20.8%	80	19.7%
MBA/MSL	8	6.8%	22	7.6%	30	7.4%

In Table 3 we examined the demographic variables by program to determine if there were any significant differences across degree programs. Age was evenly distributed across programs with no significant differences. In all five programs, most students ranged in age from 22 to 50. The MBA had the highest concentration (22.3%) of students in the age range 26-30. The MHA had the highest concentration in the age group 41-45 with 24.4 percent. The MSL and MBA/MHA both had the largest age group of 36-40 with 25.5 percent and 26.1 percent, respectively. Finally, the MBA/MSL age group most represented was 31-35 (17.5%).

Marital status was also compared by program. For MBA, 50.3 percent of the students were single compared with 19.5 percent of the MHA, 38.7 percent of the MSL, and 26.3 percent and 26.7 percent for the MBA/MHA and MBA/MSL, respectively. Similarly, the MHA and MBA/MHA had the highest representation of married students with 63.4 percent and 64.9 percent, respectively. There were 25.8 percent divorced students in the MSL program.

Race was evenly distributed across the programs. There were few Asian students, 17, and these were most represented in the MBA and MHA programs. The MBA consisted of 48.3 percent white and 46.8 percent black or African American. The MHA was 48.7 percent white and 48.0 percent black or African American. The MSL had 45.2 percent white and 48.3 percent black or African American. The MBA/MHA consisted of 61.2 percent white and 35.0 percent black or African American. Finally, the MBA/MSL was 43.3 percent white and 53.4 percent black. There were no representations of American Indian or Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. Ethnicity revealed only 3.3 percent of the sample were Hispanic or Latino (8 respondents), and these eight were represented in every program except for the MSL.

Income was next compared against the five programs. For the MBA, the largest income group was $40,001 to $60,000 with 34.2 percent of the sample. The MHA group had 26.0 percent of the respondents with incomes of $40,001 to $60,000 and 26.9 percent of incomes of $60,001 to $80,000. The MSL group reported the largest income groups of $20,001 to $40,000 (22.6%), and $40,001 to $60,000 (22.6%). The dual degrees MBA/MHA and MBA/MSL had the largest income group of $40,001 to $60,000, 26.2 percent and 33.3 percent respectively.

Finally, the number of children living in the respondents' household was compared by program. The MBA had a large majority of zero children (60.8%). The sample showed MBA students reported 15.4 percent with one child and 16.8 percent with two children. The MHA program also had the largest group (39.8%) with zero children. There were also 22.0 percent with one child, 21.1 percent with two children, and 13.0 percent with three children in the MHA program. The MSL had a majority of 58.1 percent with no children and 22.6 percent with one child. The MBA/MHA had 31.3 percent with zero children, 27.4 percent with one child, and 28.7 percent with two children. Finally, the MBA/MSL had 39.9 percent with zero children, 20.0 percent with one child, and 26.7 percent with two children. The data from this study indicate that demographic factors of gender, age, and marital status are fairly consistent the findings of Aslanian (2001) and Aslanian and Brickell (1980).

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics (age, marital status, race, ethnicity, income level, number of children, and program of study): Total Sample by Program

Demographic Variables	MBA	Percent of Program	MHA	Percent of Program	MSL	Percent of Program	MBA/MHA	Percent of Program	MBA/MSL	Percent of Program
Age	n=143		n=123		n=31		n=80		n=30	
22-25	24	16.8%	2	1.6%	3	9.7%	5	6.3%	1	3.3%
26-30	32	22.3%	19	15.4%	4	12.9%	9	11.3%	3	10.0%
31-35	28	19.6%	16	13.0%	6	19.4%	14	17.5%	11	36.7%
36-40	25	17.5%	20	16.3%	8	25.8%	21	26.1%	9	30.0%
41-45	19	13.3%	30	24.4%	5	16.1%	14	17.5%	3	10.0%
46-50	10	7.0%	17	13.8%	5	16.1%	10	12.5%	2	6.7%
51-55	5	3.5%	16	13.0%	0	.0%	6	7.5%	1	3.3%
56-60	0	.0%	2	1.6%	0	.0%	1	1.3%	0	.0%
61-65	0	.0%	1	.8%	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%
Marital Status	n=143		n=123		n=31		n=80		n=30	
Single	72	50.3%	24	19.5%	12	38.7%	21	26.3%	8	26.7%
Married	55	38.5%	78	63.4%	11	35.5%	52	64.9%	17	56.6%
Divorced	14	9.8%	21	17.1%	8	25.8%	6	7.5%	5	16.7%
Widowed	2	1.4%	0	.0%	0	.0%	1	1.3%	0	.0%
Race	n=143		n=123		n=31		n=80		n=30	
White	69	48.3%	60	48.7%	14	45.2%	49	61.2%	13	43.3%
Black or African American	67	46.8%	59	48.0%	15	48.3%	28	35.0%	16	53.4%
Asian	7	4.9%	4	3.3%	2	6.5%	3	3.8%	1	3.3%

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics (age, marital status, race, ethnicity, income level, number of children, and program of study): Total Sample by Program										
Demographic Variables	MBA	Percent of Program	MHA	Percent of Program	MSL	Percent of Program	MBA/MHA	Percent of Program	MBA/MSL	Percent of Program
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%
Ethnicity										
Hispanic or Latino	5	3.5%	1	.8%	0	.0%	1	1.2%	1	3.3%
Non-Hispanic or Latino	138	96.5%	122	99.2%	31	100%	79	98.8%	29	96.7%
Income										
<$20,000	22	15.4%	2	1.6%	2	6.5%	1	1.3%	1	3.4%
$20,001 - $40,000	23	16.1%	18	14.6%	7	22.6%	14	17.5%	4	13.3%
$40,001 - $60,000	49	34.2%	32	26.0%	7	22.6%	21	26.2%	10	33.3%
$60,001 - $80,000	24	16.8%	33	26.9%	6	19.3%	12	15.0%	6	20.0%
$80,001 - $100,000	16	11.2%	21	17.1%	4	12.9%	17	21.2%	3	10.0%
>$100,001	9	6.3%	17	13.8%	5	16.1%	15	18.8%	6	20.0%
No. Children in Household										
0	87	60.8%	49	39.8%	18	58.1%	25	31.3%	12	39.9%
1	22	15.4%	27	22.0%	7	22.6%	22	27.4%	6	20.0%
2	24	16.8%	26	21.1%	4	12.9%	23	28.7%	8	26.7%
3	8	5.6%	16	13.0%	1	3.2%	8	10.0%	2	6.7%
4	2	1.4%	4	3.3%	1	3.2%	1	1.3%	2	6.7%
5+	0	.0%	1	.8%	0	.0%	1	1.3%	0	.0%

A multinomial logistic regression (MLR) was used to test for potential relationships among demographic variables and the likelihood of choosing the MBA, MHA, MBA/MHA, or MBA and MBA/MSL graduate programs. Multinomial logistic regression is useful for analysis in which one wants to be able to classify subjects based on values of a set of indicator variables (Spicer, 2005). MLR was chosen as the methodology for this study since the dependent variable is categorical rather than dichotomous, resulting in multiple regressions being an inappropriate methodology for this analysis. MLR is similar to logistic regression, but it is more general because the dependent variable is not restricted to two categories. MLR produces Exp (B) (Exponential Beta) which is also known as the odds ratio. Odds ratios that are positive indicate that for every unit increase in the variable being measured, the odds of choosing the category being measured increases by that amount. Wright (1995) recommends a minimum of 50 cases per independent variable for reliable results using MLR. The MSL and MBA/MSL categories had fewer than 50 respondents each (31 and 30, respectively) and were, therefore, combined into a single variable called MSL for this analysis.

In using MLR, the researcher must choose a base category for each analysis. With the dependent variable (e.g. program of study), there are four categories. Using MBA as the base category in the first analysis, we analyzed the comparisons of MBA vs. MHA, MBA vs. MSL,

and MBA vs. MBA/MHA. The next analysis was run with MHA as the base category giving the analysis of MHA vs. MSL, and MHA vs. MBA/MHA. The final run selected MSL as the base category which gave the analysis of MSL vs. MBA/MHA. These multiple iterations allowed the examination of the six comparisons possible within four categories of the dependent variable.

Similarly, with the categorical independent variables, multiple runs with MLR were necessary to examine all possible combinations. Age and income were entered into the equation as continuous variables for ease of analysis and interpretation. Both were entered as midpoints of the ranges and dummy variables were not needed for the analysis. The categorical dependent variables "Number of children" and "Marital Status" were entered as dummy variables before being entered into the model. With multiple combinations possible, multiple iterations were run to evaluate each possible outcome. In addition, some of the categories for "Number of children" and "Marital Status" has fewer than 50 cases, and were combined. "Number of children" was combined into four categories: zero, one, two, and three or more. "Marital Status" was combined into three categories: single, married, and divorced or widowed.

For "Number of children," zero was the first base category examining the relationship between zero vs. one, zero vs. two, and zero vs. three or more. The next MLR run selected one as the base category giving the comparison of the group one vs. two, and one vs. three or more. The final run selected two as the base yielding the final possible combination of two vs. three or more.

Ethnicity was removed as a variable as it contained only eight non-Hispanic respondents. In addition, race was combined into two categories: white and non-white also due to the very low or no representation of Asian, American Indian, and Native Hawaiian in the sample.

The MLR analysis results indicated that the model fit the data ($p \leq .000$), with the demographic variables explaining between .104 and .260 percent of why individuals chose different programs of study. Table 4 shows the model information and Pseudo R-Square results.

Table 4: Model Fitting Information and Pseudo R-Square Results

Model Fitting Information	-2 Log Likelihood	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
		Chi Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	938.03			
Final	825.21	112.83	27	.000
Pseudo R-Square				
Cox and Snell	.242			
Nagelkerke	.260			
McFadden	.104			

The independent variable "gender" was significant in some MLR rotations. The odds of a male choosing MHA over MBA were 85 percent lower than a female choosing MHA over MBA. Similarly, the odds of a male choosing MBA/MHA over the MBA were 69 percent lower than a female choosing MBA/MHA over MBA. Finally, the odds of a male choosing MSL over

MHA were 5.61 times higher than a female choosing MSL over MHA. This was expected with the large number of females compared to males within the MHA program.

The independent variable of age was also a strong predictor. For every increase in age, or the older a student, the odds are 1.06 times higher of choosing MHA over MBA. For every increase in age, students have six percent lower odds of choosing MSL over MHA.

The independent variable marital status was a strong predictor in some comparisons. The odds of married students choosing MSL over MHA were 65 percent lower than the odds for divorced students. In addition, the odds of married students choosing MBA/MHA over MSL were 5.05 time higher than the odds for divorced students.

Regarding the independent variable race, the odds for whites were 1.88 times higher of selecting MBA/MHA over MBA than the odds for non-whites. The odds of whites choosing MBA/MHA over MSL were 2.33 times higher that the odds for non-whites.

Finally, the independent variable "Number of Children Living in Household" yielded some significant findings. The odds of students with one or two children selecting MBA/MHA over MBA were 3.11 and 2.82 times higher, respectively, than the odds for students with zero children. The odds of students with two children selecting the MBA/MHA over the MHA was 2.43 times higher than the odds for students with zero children. Conversely, the odds of students with two children choosing the MBA/MHA over the MHA were 56 percent lower than the odds of students with zero children. Finally, the odds of students with one and two children vs. students with zero children were 2.79 and 2.82 times higher (respectively) of choosing the MBA/MHA over the MBA/MSL. Tables 5 through 7 show the detailed results of the MLR analyses.

Table 5: Multinomial Logistic Regression, Odds Ratio, and Likelihood Ratio Tests for Demographics Impact on Program Choice with MBA as Base

Variable	*B*	SE	Wald	*p*	Odds Ratio
MHA Intercept	-2.95	.95	9.68	.002	
Male vs. Female	-1.91	.36	28.80	**≤.000**	**.15**
Age	.06	.02	8.62	**.003**	**1.06**
Single vs. Divorced	-.17	.50	.11	.737	.85
Married vs. Divorced	.58	.42	1.97	.161	1.79
Single vs. Married	-.69	.41	2.82	.093	.50
White vs. non-white	.05	.29	.03	.871	1.05
Income	.01	.01	3.01	.083	1.01
1 Child vs. 0	.31	.39	.64	.422	1.37
2 Children vs. 0	.15	.41	.14	.714	1.16
3 Children vs. 0	.68	.49	1.97	.160	1.98
2 Children vs. 1	-.31	.39	.09	.429	.74
3 Children vs. 1	.41	.52	.64	.424	1.51
3 Children vs. 2	.55	.51	1.15	.284	1.73

Note: MBA is base; MHA intercept