



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CAREER OUTCOMES BETWEEN ONLINE AND TRADITIONAL MBA GRADUATES

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ABSTRACT

Both students and schools would do well to take stock of the relative merits of these two teaching methods in this age of rapidly expanding access to online courses. Data from 500 respondents (250 in each area) encompassing demographics, industry, job title, skill development, and work satisfaction are the basis of the study. Results show that there are notable disparities in the skills acquired by the two groups; graduates from online programs do better in digital literacy, while those from more conventional programs show greater strength in networking and communication. A traditional Master of Business Administration degree was associated with somewhat greater work satisfaction and a better likelihood of promotion to a senior management position. Having a good work-life balance was more important to online MBA grads. Prospective students, educators, and employers may use these findings to inform the development of new learning models and approaches to management in the workplace.

Keywords: Online, Traditional, Education, Management, Job satisfaction,

I. INTRODUCTION

Especially in the field of business education, the environment of universities has changed dramatically in the last few years. The fast growth and acceptance of online Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs is one of the most striking changes; these programs are now competitive with their on-campus equivalents. The worldwide upheaval produced by the COVID-19 epidemic, improvements in digital learning technology, and a greater need for flexible learning settings have all contributed to the meteoric rise in popularity of online MBA programs (Arbaugh, J.B. 2002). With the extra benefit of being accessible remotely, these schools claim to provide academic rigor, instructor caliber, and curriculum depth on par with conventional programs. Nevertheless, even with these similarities, there is still a crucial topic that is always being examined: the results of graduates' careers. The major goal of many students who devote a great deal of time, energy, and resources to getting an MBA is to improve their professional trajectories, which might include things like compensation, employment prospects, career changes, and advancement chances. This begs the critical question: Are the professional advantages of online MBA programs comparable to those of on-campus schools (Beech, N. 2006).



While on-campus networking events, immersive experiences, and prestigious brands have long given conventional MBA schools their distinction, online MBA programs are quickly making their mark in the business world. Modern employers are more receptive to online credentials, particularly those bestowed by respectable organizations (Bocchi, J. Eastman 2004). Still, some people don't believe an online MBA is worth it, especially when it comes to a graduate's chances of getting a job, a raise in income, or other professional benefits. So, it is very essential and pertinent to compare the career results of online MBA graduates to those of conventional MBA graduates. In order to make a better educated decision, prospective students would benefit from knowing whether there are significant disparities in the two groups with respect to employment rates, industries joined, leadership positions obtained, or typical salary levels (Boyd, D.P. 2001). Additional benefits include helping schools better tailor their curriculum to meet the needs of employers.

Beyond the form of education, a number of variables (such as previous job experience, industry contacts, personal motivation, geographic location, and access to career support services) impact the career paths of MBA graduates. The learning experience, networking opportunities, and perceived legitimacy of the MBA certification may be impacted by the style of delivery, which in turn shapes these results (Bubna-Litic, D. 2003). Elite business schools and other traditional MBA programs frequently include robust alumni networks, recruiting activities on campus, and practical learning opportunities like internships and case studies. In today's fast-paced and cutthroat employment market, these factors might give you the upper hand. Alternatively, working professionals who are looking to advance within their current organizations rather than seeking entirely new roles or industries may be interested in online MBA programs due to the different kind of advantage they offer, such as greater flexibility, the ability to continue working while studying, and often lower costs (Chang, I-C. 2007).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ramos Salazar, Leslie et al., (2022) If students' social presence in online MBA courses improves their chances of getting a job, nobody knows. To identify what factors enhance MBA students' social presence and career planning self-confidence, this research investigated mediation models based on general self-efficacy and goal orientation. From an AACSB-accredited school of business, 278 online MBA students were surveyed. There was a correlation between students' confidence in their career planning abilities and their perceived general self-efficacy, as well as their goal orientation, according to the regression analyses. Indirectly mediating the relationship between social presence and career planning were goal orientation, perceived general self-efficacy, and online self-efficacy, according to the mediation analyses. We provide some implications for teachers of corporate communication.

Said, Karim & Alsultanny, Yas. (2019). This article examines the correlation between MBA students' nationality and their aspirations for the future using data collected from two representative samples: one from a prestigious French business school and another from a Bahraini university that attracts students from the Arabian Gulf. Our main results show that



graduate students' reasons for going to school, their views on the program's anticipated results, and their future plans for employment are unaffected by their country. However, other results show that there are some variances depending on country; the most notable of these is the choice of program requirements in regard to students' intended careers and the skills they want to gain.

Maurice, Grzeda & Miller, Gloria. (2009). Online MBA schools have expanded their student body to include working professionals, who are often cited as the ideal demographic to target, thanks to technological advancements in education. While there has been some study on the MBA's worth, it has not zeroed in on the unique challenges faced by North American mid-career learners. This research presents the findings of a survey that inquired about the anticipated career outcomes, reasons for selecting the online format, and skills that online MBA students intended to gain. Program designers may enhance their pedagogies and provide more relevant curricula if they had a better grasp of the needs of mid-career learners taking MBA courses online.

Pola, Bensen et al., (2007) The standard, all-encompassing Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree is giving way to increasingly targeted concentrations in recent years. By contrasting ordinary MBA degrees with MBA degrees with specialty, the writers investigate company recruiting strategies and MBA school curriculums in this article. The authors conduct an empirical study to determine whether employers value a general MBA or a specialized MBA more. There was a mismatch between the needs of businesses and the offerings of business schools, according to a review of 758 job ads and 27 MBA programs at different institutions.

Wellman, Mark et al., (2006) The worth of an MBA degree is still up for debate. In order to settle this debate, this research used human capital theory to look at a large, representative, longitudinal sample of people with and without MBAs to see how the degree affected their professional performance. Salary, promotions, and management accomplishment are the objective metrics by which we evaluate professional success. Even after accounting for factors such as work type, an MBA degree was still associated with a substantial boost in compensation, promotions, and management rank. The findings highlight the need to include various structural and human capital characteristics into any valuation of an MBA degree assessment in order to get a more comprehensive understanding of the elements that impact professional achievement. Furthermore, the correlation between pre-MBA human capital (such as undergraduate GPA and GMAT score) and professional success outcomes was somewhat moderated by MBA school tier, indicating that employers do in fact care about MBA school rankings. We present our results, talk about what they mean for businesses, prospective students, and business schools, and point out where the field needs further study.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Both descriptive and analytical methods are used in the investigation.

Sources of Data

Primary Data: Info gathered by use of Google Forms and email surveys that are arranged as online questionnaires (Dunning, K.A. 2000).

Secondary Data: Education portals, MBA alumni groups, LinkedIn job histories, and published publications provided more data (Zhao, J.J. 2006).

Sampling Technique

Both groups were well represented across sectors and employment levels via the use of stratified random sampling (Thompson, E.R. 2000).

Sample of the study

There was a fair and balanced representation of the two groups under inquiry in the sample of 500 respondents used for this research (Tallent-Runnels, 2006). There were a total of 500 participants; 250 had earned their MBAs via online programs and 250 through more conventional means (Kathawala, Yunus (2002).

Data Analysis Techniques

In this investigation, descriptive statistics were used.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Category	Online MBA Graduates (%)	Traditional MBA Graduates (%)
Gender		
Male	60.0	55.0
Female	40.0	45.0
Total	100.0	100.0
Industry Sector		
Technology	40.0	35.0
Healthcare	20.0	25.0

Finance	25.0	20.0
Manufacturing	10.0	15.0
Others	5.0	5.0
Total	100.0	100.0

Men make up 60% of Online MBA grads, while women make up 55% of Traditional MBA grads (Table 1), with a little larger percentage of females in the Traditional MBA group (45%) than in the Online MBA cohort (40%). Out of all the industries represented among online MBA graduates, 40% work in technology (McEwen, B. C. 2001). This might be because tech-savvy individuals tend to work in this area, and online learning is a good fit for their flexible work arrangements. Healthcare (25%) and Manufacturing (15%), on the other hand, are more populated by Traditional MBA graduates, suggesting a need for or desire for more organized, in-person training in these fields (Kyle, R 2005). With 25% of online MBA graduates and 20% of traditional MBA grads working in finance, the distribution is about equal. There is little change in less prevalent industries, since the 'Others' category stays at 5% for both groups (Lorange, P. 2005).

Table 2 Current Job Title of online and traditional MBA graduates

Current Job Title	Online MBA Graduates (%)	Traditional MBA Graduates (%)
Senior Management	25.0	35.0
Mid-Level Management	45.0	40.0
Entry-Level Positions	30.0	25.0
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 2 shows that there are significant disparities in the career advancement of online MBA graduates compared to traditional MBA graduates, based on their current job titles (Gosling, J. 2004). When compared to traditional MBA graduates, those who earned their degrees online are more likely to hold mid-level management jobs; 45% of online MBA graduates fall into this group (Mihail, D.M. 2006). It is worth noting that 25% of traditional MBA graduates work in entry-level positions, while 30% of online MBA graduates do the same. This suggests that online MBA graduates may have less work experience or are moving into management positions more slowly (Parry, L.E. 2007).

Online MBA graduates make up only 25% of the workforce, in contrast to 35% of traditional MBA graduates who occupy senior management positions (Pfeffer, J. 2004). What this means is that graduates from more conventional colleges may be able to climb up the corporate ladder more quickly or have better professional networks to rely on (Powell, G.N. 2003).

Table 3: Skills developed during the MBA program

Skill	Online MBA Graduates (%)	Traditional MBA Graduates (%)
Leadership Skills	70.0	85.0
Digital Literacy	90.0	70.0
Analytical Thinking	80.0	85.0
Networking Skills	60.0	80.0
Communication Skills	75.0	85.0

Table 3 compares and contrasts the primary competencies honed by MBAs from Online and Traditional schools (Rapert, M.I.2004). Leadership (85%) and communication skills (75%) are only a few of the important soft skills that traditional MBA graduates excel in compared to their online MBA peers. Networking (80%) and leadership (70%) are some areas where traditional MBA graduates excel (Richards-Wilson 2006). The opportunity for peer participation and the intensive, in-person learning environment provided by conventional MBA programs may explain these variations. The contrast between conventional MBA graduates (70% digital literacy) and online MBA graduates (90% digital literacy) is consistent with the technology-driven character of online education. Traditional graduates (85%) and online graduates (80%) both show a high degree of analytical thinking, although traditional graduates are somewhat ahead (Ryan, S. 2001).

Table 4: Job satisfaction levels among MBA graduates

Satisfaction Factor	Online MBA Graduates (%)	Traditional MBA Graduates (%)
Overall Job Satisfaction	80.0	85.0
Satisfaction with Salary	70.0	75.0



Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance	85.0	80.0
Job Security	75.0	80.0

According to Table 4, traditional MBA graduates expressed somewhat greater happiness with their jobs (85%) than their online MBA peers (80%), indicating a little more optimistic outlook on their career success (Simpson R. 2005). In a similar vein, conventional graduates are more likely to be satisfied with their salaries (75% vs. 70%), which may be an indication of superior pay packages associated with campus-based networking and recruiting chances. Thanks to the time management and flexibility abilities they developed while studying remotely, online MBA graduates report higher levels of satisfaction with work-life balance (85%). Also, compared to online graduates (75%), conventional graduates (80%) feel somewhat more secure in their jobs (Smith, Lois. 2001).

V. CONCLUSION

This research sheds light on the disparities between online MBA and traditional MBA graduates in terms of career advancement, skill development, and work satisfaction, offering significant insights into their respective career outcomes. While those who get their MBAs in the traditional classroom setting are more likely to advance in their careers and show off their communication and networking chops, those who earn their degrees online are more likely to be tech savvy and happy with their work-life balance. These results highlight how education is dynamic, with different delivery methods giving distinct advantages. Recognizing these distinctions and adapting their programs to accommodate the different demands of students is vital for educational institutions as online learning continues to gain significance. Employers may use this information to better match their recruiting and professional development plans with the skill sets of both traditional and online MBA graduates, while prospective students can utilize this information to make choices depending on their career goals. Last but not least, this research adds to the continuing discussion over how business schools will shape the careers of the future.

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