

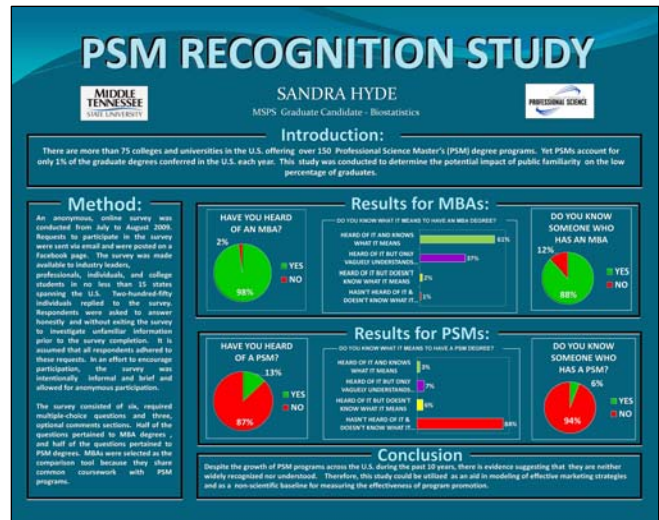
PSM Degree Awareness and Perceptions

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Professional Science Master's degree programs (PSMs) are relatively new programs that have been emerging at American colleges and universities during the past decade. An effort has been made to estimate the public's familiarity with these types of degrees. An anonymous, online survey was created containing six multiple-choice questions and three optional comments sections. Half of the survey pertained to a currently popular master's degree in the U.S., the MBA. The second half of the survey pertained specifically to PSM degrees.

MBA degrees were chosen for comparison as some of the coursework is common to both degrees. The survey was designed to be relatively informal and anonymous to encourage participation; it is assumed that all respondents answered honestly. No information was presented within the survey about either MBA or PSM degrees beyond their titles.

A request was made within the survey introduction asking participants not investigate, or look up, information about the programs prior to completing the survey, but there is no measure by which to gauge compliance with this request. Although it is unknown who, specifically, has replied, the survey was available to business leaders, professionals, individuals, and students in no less than fifteen different states spanning the U.S. The link to the online survey was included in



emails and was posted on a popular social-networking site, and respondents were encouraged to ask others to participate, if they were willing to do so.

Results: Of two-hundred survey respondents, to date, 98% have heard of MBA degrees, and 87% know someone who has been awarded an MBA degree. Of the participants who provided optional comments, nearly 64% believe there is a benefit to having an MBA degree, and 58% replied that they feel they fully understand what the degree is. Conversely, just 13% of the same respondents have heard of PSM degrees, and only 6% replied that they know someone who has been awarded a PSM degree. Less than 3% replied that they believe they fully understand what a PSM degree is, and less than 10% commented that they believed there is a benefit to having a PSM degree.

In conclusion, there is evidence suggesting that PSM degrees and programs are still not widely-recognized in the U.S. The results of this study can be used to support the need for effective PSM marketing, to help model effective marketing strategies, to provide a non-scientific baseline for monitoring program awareness, and to provide a baseline for monitoring the effectiveness of marketing efforts on program awareness.