

# Profile of entrants to the Postgraduate program in Administration in Santa Catarina

Ana Luiza Leite <sup>a</sup>,

<sup>a</sup> Affiliation: Faculty of Business Administration, Santa Catarina State University in Florianopolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil, [analeite@edu.udesc.br](mailto:analeite@edu.udesc.br)

**Abstract.** *Stricto sensu* graduate studies (Master and Doctorate) are recent in Brazil, especially in the field of Administration. Coherence between the objectives of the courses and the desired profile of the student has become necessary to enable training for professional practice and technical-scientific activities. The objective is to characterize the profile of students entering postgraduate programs in Administration, future professors, and researchers in the area. We opted for the use of multiple case studies from institutions that offer Master and Doctorate programs (both academic and professional) in the state of Santa Catarina, Brazil. Data collection is used through data from the Open Data Set made available by Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel – Capes (2019). Data analysis was performed in a descriptive and interpretative manner. In summary, the results show that most Master's and Doctorate's graduate students in Administration are aged between 20 and 39 years old, just as the female audience is predominant.

**Keywords.** Higher Education Institutions, Postgraduate, Profile, Administration.

## 1. Introduction

The *stricto sensu* graduate education in Brazil is relatively recent, with its institutionalization commencing with the creation of CAPES in 1951, an entity aimed at executing the national policy for postgraduate education (SILVA; CARVALHO, 2007). *Stricto sensu* graduate programs in Administration began only in 1967, with a single master's program established by Fundação Getúlio Vargas in Rio de Janeiro (FGV-RJ) (CIRANI; SILVA; CAMPANARIO; 2012). Gradually, courses in the field of administration were developed in states such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, among others. In Santa Catarina, the first *stricto sensu* graduate program in Administration was offered by the Federal University of Santa Catarina only in 1998. Thus, the current thirteen *stricto sensu* graduate programs in Administration in Santa Catarina (including academic master's, professional master's, and doctorate) are less than 25 years old.

With the expansion of programs, Brazil has experienced an exponential increase in the number of graduates. National postgraduate programs awarded degrees to 12,351 master's and 3,915 doctors in 1998 — the first year recorded in the GeoCapes Platform. In 2019, this number had risen to 68,877 master's degrees, including 53,515 graduates from academic master's programs and

15,362 graduates from professional master's programs, as well as 24,280 doctoral degrees (GEOCAPES, 2020). Similarly, from 1996 to 2014, *stricto sensu* programs in administration witnessed significant growth compared to other programs in different fields, with a 486.96% increase in the number of master's courses and a 600% increase in doctoral programs (CGEE, 2016). In the country, the private system played a crucial role in the growth of postgraduate education, as a significant portion of private courses is concentrated in the Southeast region, representing over 50% of *stricto sensu* graduate programs in Administration nationwide (CIRANI; SILVA; CAMPANARIO; 2012).

It is important to note that the distribution of courses across Brazilian regions is unequal, which may compromise the goals of a field in keeping up with regional development (CIRANI; SILVA; CAMPANARIO; 2012). Even within the state of Santa Catarina, there is an inequality in the provision of *stricto sensu* graduate programs in Administration, with the majority located near the coastal region.

Literature on postgraduate education predominantly focuses on discussions regarding public policies in higher education, program structures, course implementation, graduation rate analysis, and course evaluations (SILVA, BARDAGI, 2015). The growth of postgraduate education in Brazil and the demand from postgraduate students

for career interventions have heightened interest in understanding the choices, expectations, and challenges these students face (SILVA, BARDAGI, 2015). In other words, understanding the motivations for pursuing *stricto sensu* programs is a significant task for higher education institutions, as it allows for an interpretation of course demand and student expectations (FERREIRA; LOUREIRO, 2013).

The objectives of these programs should align with the desired profile and social demand, enabling advanced professional practice and preparing professionals to engage in technical-scientific and innovative activities (TAKAHASHI et al., 2010). The teaching profession has been identified internationally as relatively homogeneous, with educators typically coming from majority groups, often in contrast to the student population (KEANE; HEINZ, 2015).

In this context, this article derives from a research study aiming to characterize the profile of students entering *stricto sensu* graduate programs in Administration, who are prospective educators in the field. As profiling students is a relatively underrepresented area of study (SILVA, BARDAGI, 2015), this research addresses initial questions for understanding the identification process, including aspects related to the duration of stay within the institution (VOGT; LOURENÇO, 2017).

## 2. Referential Background

### 2.1 Postgraduate in Brazil

The Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), a Foundation linked to the Ministry of Education (MEC), plays a fundamental role in the expansion and consolidation of *stricto sensu* postgraduate education (master's and doctorate) in all states of the Federation. In 2018, CAPES issued an ordinance regarding the possibility of *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs in the distance learning mode. It is noteworthy that a postgraduate program consists of a maximum of two programs, one at the master's level and the other at the doctoral level, which can be offered in the face-to-face or distance learning modalities in accordance with current regulations. Distance learning postgraduate courses tend to follow the current norms applicable to all *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs.

The main critical events in the field of administration postgraduate education occurred in the 1990s when Brazil underwent a period of state apparatus reform that restructured various economic, social, and educational sectors (BAUER; DARBILLY, 2020). These reforms introduced market logics into public agencies, significantly altering their structure and imposing the requirement for satisfactory results and performance. In the field of postgraduate education, this meant the introduction of rankings among programs and through the classification of journals in Qualis CAPES (BAUER;

DARBILLY, 2020). Consequently, programs became more concerned with publications than with other elements that make up the training of postgraduate students, resulting not only in a reconfiguration of organizations' positioning within this analyzed space but also significant changes in their internal characteristics (BAUER, DARBILLY, 2020).

While doctoral programs directly refer to the goal of training researchers for scientific work, aiming for knowledge expansion and the creation of new knowledge, master's programs may be linked to one of the three objectives of postgraduate education: training teachers for education, training researchers, and preparing professionals for the job market (OLIVEIRA, 1996). The development of master's programs in the field of Administration was predominantly characterized as the first stage for the academic qualification necessary for student development (TEIXEIRA, OLIVEIRA; DE FARIA, 2008).

The Professional Master's degree emerges in Brazil as a response to specific demands from society for professionals with qualifications suitable for work (BARROS; VALENTIM; MELO, 2005). This type of master's degree seeks to address two challenges: (i) the growing demand for postgraduate education, and (ii) demands from the public and private sectors (BARROS; VALENTIM; MELO, 2005). Likewise, it raises points of tension, namely: (i) the existence of critical discourse in contrast to students' instrumental expectations; (ii) time dedication and maintenance of employment relationship; and (iii) practice-oriented training in relation to the demand for teaching training (WOOD JR.; PAULA, 2004).

With these characteristics, the Professional Master's degree points to a difference in the candidate's profile compared to the Academic Master's. Regarding the differences in the concept of the two courses, there is a distinction in the focus of education: the Academic Master's program forms a researcher (focus on academia), while the Professional Master's program forms a professional researcher (focus on the market) (TAKAHASHI et al., 2010). It is important to emphasize that research is relevant to both types of courses; hence, the differences between them regarding this issue are not clear (TAKAHASHI et al., 2010).

Governmental policies and practices, as well as societal actions, can be decisive for the advancement of postgraduate education, which can contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the improvement of workforce quality in the job market (IKEDA; CAMPOMAR; VELUDO-DE-OLIVEIRA, 2005).

### 2.2 Profile and motivation

Teixeira, Oliveira, and De Faria (2008), when identifying and analyzing the profile of graduates

from the Professional Master's program in Administration at PUC Minas University, considered aspects such as sociodemographic characteristics, integration into the job market, the relationship between professional activity and research work, and the dissemination of the thesis.

Schwartzman (2010) highlights that the average age of students in *stricto sensu* programs is 34 years, with a medium to high family income, and a predominant female audience. Felli et al. (2011) indicate that nurses begin their master's studies immediately after completing their undergraduate education and pursue a doctorate after the age of thirty. It is observed that among nurses, a significant number achieve doctoral qualifications between the ages of 40 and 50, possibly related to the higher proportion of women, who likely pursue postgraduate studies later in life, after fulfilling family and domestic commitments (FELLI et al., 2011). In the field of education, a higher number of female graduates (68%) was observed, a trend attributed to the historically greater presence of women in the field of Education (GONÇALVES; RESENDE, 2020). The highest demand for a master's in education was in the age group of 41 to 45, indicating that postgraduate education did not immediately follow completion of undergraduate studies. People pursuing a master's already had experiences and expertise in the field, seeking to deepen their knowledge and enhance their professional skills (GONÇALVES; RESENDE, 2020). The age of postgraduate students tends to decrease if, in the initial years of postgraduate studies, students are often already teachers. That is, it is not uncommon to enter a master's program immediately after completing undergraduate studies and, after completing the master's, progress to a doctoral program (BERTERO, 2007).

Mattos (2011) found that the extension of schooling becomes a possible choice among young people nearing completion of their undergraduate courses due to a perceived narrowing of job opportunities. The possibility of receiving a scholarship during Master's and Doctoral activities can also be identified as a decision-making factor for younger students entering postgraduate education, especially at the master's level (MATTOS, 2011).

Regarding the audience of professional master's programs, it constitutes a heterogeneous group from various educational backgrounds (BARROS; VALENTIM; MELO, 2005). Professional experience, an important characteristic recognized as essential for students seeking Professional master's in administration, is formally required by only a minority of programs (TAKAHASHI et al., 2010). In the Professional Master's program, the initial focus of student interest appears to be more centered on the practical application of sought knowledge—applying knowledge, technologies, and innovations—rather than on methodological and technical improvement, focused on specialization and research (TAKAHASHI et al., 2010).

In the Academic Master's program, the expected candidate is both an experienced professional and a student with a higher education background seeking to deepen their knowledge to re-enter the job market or to teach (TAKAHASHI et al., 2010). Although the profiles are distinct, the destinations of graduates from Professional and Academic Master's programs are the same: research, teaching, or working in a company (TAKAHASHI et al., 2010).

Menter et al. (2006) indicate three reasons to improve the representativeness of the teaching profession: (i) a commitment to a particular set of social values regarding citizens' full access to various services, (ii) the potential negative educational impact of the absence of teachers from certain groups on students from these groups, and (iii) concerns about the supply of teachers in countries with significant shortages. Much of the research on the benefits of a diverse teaching profession focuses on the potential for teachers from underrepresented groups to act as positive role models for students from various sociodemographic backgrounds (KEANE; HEINZ, 2015).

Barbosa et al. (2009) found that the factors motivating medical professionals to choose postgraduate education were: technical-scientific improvement, career advancement as a lecturer, personal satisfaction, and knowledge recycling. After completing the course, students reported increased confidence in their job performance, highlighted better remuneration, emphasized greater technical knowledge, and indicated that completing the course helped them obtain new employment (BARBOSA et al., 2009). Barbosa et al. (2009) emphasized that a significant portion of students, albeit mistakenly, pursue Master's and Doctoral courses to enhance their qualifications and obtain titles, sometimes without an interest in teaching and research practices.

Among the reasons for choosing a master's in nursing, Ferreira and Loureiro (2013) highlight three major categories: the need for further education, career progression prospects, and personal motivation. According to Baruch and Peiperl (2000), enrolling in a Master's in Administration program enhances professional status and adds value to organizations. Motivations include the desire for changes in professional careers, acquiring business knowledge to stimulate professional experience, boosting self-esteem, improving salary levels, and progressing faster in professional careers (BARUCH; PEIPERL, 2000; BARUCH; LEEMING, 2001).

The fact that students are already or aspire to be educators in the future is also one of the reasons they seek to enter a *stricto sensu* program in Administration (VOGT; LOURENÇO, 2017). One of the reasons for choosing a specific institution is its location or because students have already completed their undergraduate studies at the

university (VOGT; LOURENÇO, 2017). The image an individual has of the institution, its faculty, and its nature as an institution also appear as reasons that lead individuals to seek admission to a *stricto sensu* program in Administration (VOGT; LOURENÇO, 2017). The search for a specific advisor who is part of the program and the program's reputation, as attributed by CAPES, become legitimizing factors for the program and may be related to aspects of organizational image (VOGT; LOURENÇO, 2017).

Professional master's programs represent a significant portion of Brazilian postgraduate education, and it is relevant to conduct research to clarify and consolidate their concept and what is expected of the professionals they graduate (TAKAHASHI et al., 2010). The need for professional development and the desire for career advancement are perceived as the main reasons for pursuing a master's degree, although few students have scholarships, time off from professional duties, or reduced working hours to complete the course (GONÇALVES; RESENDE, 2020).

The pursuit of postgraduate education is seen as a quest for further specialization, continuation of studies, a more competitive curriculum, a possibility of better remuneration, and not necessarily a career choice towards teaching and research (SILVA, BARDAGI, 2015). This mismatch may lie in the dissatisfaction with courses and programs and the request for closer alignment between research and practice (SILVA, BARDAGI, 2015). Understanding the characteristics of students, their personal goals, and career aspirations is a significant direction for future studies in the field of postgraduate education (SILVA, BARDAGI, 2015).

### 3. Method

Given that this research focuses on the phenomenon of identifying profiles of *stricto sensu* postgraduate students in Administration, the objective is to delve into this phenomenon using a multiple-case study approach involving institutions offering both academic and professional Master's and Doctoral programs in the state of Santa Catarina. Multiple-case studies allow for comparisons and the attainment of more robust results (GODOY, 2006).

In this case, the research was conducted in six higher education institutions. Considering the purpose of this study, the selection criterion for these institutions was the existence of a postgraduate program offering Master's and Doctoral courses in Administration with a minimum rating of 4 in the CAPES evaluation. Additionally, the location of the institutions in the same context was a selection criterion. Thus, all the institutions are situated in the state of Santa Catarina, with five located in the coastal region and one in the far west.

CAPES evaluation	University	Doctorate Academic	Master Academic	Master Professional
5	FURB	0	1	0
4	UNOESC	0	0	1
4	UNOESC	1	0	0
5	UDESC	0	0	1
4	UDESC	1	1	0
4	UFSC	1	1	0
5	UNIVALI	1	1	0
4	UNISUL	1	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>

Fig. 1 - Analysis group description

For this research, all students enrolled in the postgraduate programs in Master's and Doctoral in Administration at the six selected higher education institutions were selected through a census approach, along with faculty members, with the reference year being 2019. Data collection was conducted using secondary data from the Open Data Set provided by CAPES (2021). The data analysis was descriptive and interpretative.

### 4. Results

The majority of *stricto sensu* postgraduate students in Administration are aged between 20 to 39 years, and there is a predominance of female students, consistent with the study by Schwartzman (2010). Table 2 below presents the analyzed courses and the number of students by gender in 2019:

UNIVERSITY	PROGRAM	FEMALE	MALE
FURB	academic master's	21	11
UNOESC	professional master's	28	27
UNOESC	academic doctorate	12	8
UDESC	professional master's	21	19
UDESC	academic master's	15	13
UDESC	academic doctorate	26	27
UFSC	academic doctorate	37	19
UFSC	academic master's	17	10
UNIVALI	academic master's	9	25
UNIVALI	academic doctorate	21	25
UNISUL	academic master's	16	24
UNISUL	academic doctorate	0	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>223</b>	<b>214</b>

Fig. 2 - Number of enrolled students by course and gender in 2019

Source: Compiled by the author based on Capes open data, 2019.

It is noteworthy that at FURB, the number of female students is almost twice that of males in the master's academic program. Conversely, at UNIVALI, in the same course, the male gender is almost triple the number of female students. Regarding professional master's courses, there is a

balance between genders. In the academic doctoral courses offered, a greater discrepancy between genders is observed in UFSC, with a higher number of female students, as well as in UNISUL, which has only male students. However, when examining the faculty of these programs, it is evident that only 38 professors are female, while 79 are male. Therefore, it is expected that in the coming years, as these students enter the job market as professors, there will be a better gender balance in teaching in these programs, given that approximately 25% of the faculty completed their latest education at the university where they currently teach.

Unlike the case of nurses, as exposed by Felli et al. (2011), most students enrolled in the Academic and Professional master's in administration are in the 30 to 39 age group. This may indicate that postgraduate education did not occur immediately after completing undergraduate studies, and individuals seeking the master's program already had experiences and backgrounds in the field (GONÇALVES; RESENDE, 2020). However, in the Academic Master's, most females fall within the 20 to 29 age group. Regarding the Doctorate, female individuals are mostly in the 30 to 39 age group, a time when family and domestic commitments are generally fulfilled (FELLI et al., 2011).

Data also shows that, overall, most individuals pursuing *stricto sensu* postgraduate studies in Administration in Santa Catarina are between 20 to 39 years old. The faculty of these institutions mostly consists of professors aged 40 to 59 years (65 professors). It is worth noting that there is only one professor aged 25 to 29 years, and 38 professors are over 60 years old. In other words, professors in *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs enter the job market at an older age due to the need for prior education. It is also observed that there are active professors despite being eligible for retirement. The education backgrounds of these faculty members are diverse, including accounting, communication, economics, production engineering, electrical engineering, engineering/technology/management, interdisciplinary studies, sociology, tourism, and administration. Regarding the prior education of students, it is not available. Additionally, in the Professional Master's, work experience in the field is recognized by the two professional Master's programs in Santa Catarina, although it is not formally required (TAKAHASHI et al., 2010).

Only three students from the analyzed courses participated in exchange programs in 2019 in the format of a Sandwich Doctorate: one doctoral student from UDESC went to Portugal, one from UNIVALI went to Canada, and one from UFSC went to the Netherlands. It is noteworthy that there were no international students enrolled in the analyzed courses in 2019.

## 5. Conclusions

The present study aimed to characterize the profile

of incoming students in *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs in Administration, along with a brief introduction to the current faculty in the field. Through a multiple-case study of institutions offering both academic and professional Master's and Doctoral programs in the state of Santa Catarina, aspects related to age range, gender, type of course, and type of education of the faculty were identified.

The majority of *stricto sensu* postgraduate students in Administration are between the ages of 20 to 39, and the female audience predominates. There are courses where the number of male students is significantly higher, and others where the number of female students is superior, depending on the institution. However, concerning the faculty of these programs, there is a predominance of 79 male professors compared to 38 female professors. It is noteworthy that approximately 25% of the faculty completed their latest education at the university where they currently teach.

The internationalization of these programs was found to be low, as there are no enrolled international students and only a few students are engaged in exchange programs, similarly, there are few professors who received their education in other countries.

This research is limited to analyzing only a few characteristics of *stricto sensu* postgraduate students and faculty in Administration due to the current availability of data. For future research, it is proposed to conduct a survey with these professionals to gather more comprehensive information about their profile, such as race, income, family composition, prior education, and place of origin.

## 6. Acknowledgement

This is preliminary research carried out by the researcher at the beginning of her dissertation to evaluate the potential research object.

## 7. References

- [1] Silva, M. O., & Carvalho, D. B. B. (2007). A pós-graduação e a produção de conhecimento no Serviço Social brasileiro. *Revista brasileira de pós-graduação*, 4(8).
- [2] Cirani, C. B. S., Silva, H. H. M. da, & Campanario, M. A. (2012). A evolução do ensino da pós-graduação estrito sensu em administração no Brasil. *Revista de administração contemporânea*, 16(6), 765-805.
- [3] Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior - CAPES. (2020). *GeoCapes*. Retrieved from <http://geocapes.capes.gov.br/geocapesds/>

- [4] Silva, T. C., & Bardagi, M. P. (2015). O aluno de pós-graduação stricto sensu no Brasil: revisão da literatura dos últimos 20 anos. *Revista Brasileira de Pós-Graduação*, 12(29).
- [5] Ferreira, M. F., & Loureiro, C. (2013). Motivos para a procura de mestrados: estudo exploratório com enfermeiros. *Revista de Enfermagem Referência*, 3(9), 67-74.
- [6] Takahashi, A. R. W., et al. (2010). Mestrado profissional e mestrado acadêmico em administração: convergências, divergências e desafios aos programas de pós-graduação stricto sensu no Brasil. *Administração: ensino e pesquisa*, 11(4), 551-578.
- [7] Keane, E., & Heinz, M. (2015). Diversity in initial teacher education in Ireland: the socio-demographic backgrounds of postgraduate post-primary entrants in 2013 and 2014. *Irish Educational Studies*, 34(3), 281-301.
- [8] Vogt, S., & Lourenço, M. L. (2017). Identidade e cultura organizacional: o processo de identificação dos alunos de programas de pós-graduação stricto sensu em administração em instituições públicas e privadas. *Educação, Ciência e Cultura*, 22(1), 61-79.
- [9] Bauer, A. P. M., & Darbilly, L. V. C. (2020). Poder, conflitos e as transformações na academia: uma análise do campo de pós-graduação em administração no estado do Rio de Janeiro a partir da abordagem de Pierre Bourdieu. *Revista Capital Científico-Volume*, 18(1).
- [10] Oliveira, B. de. (1996). Inovando na pós-graduação: a experiência do MBA da EAESP/FGV. *Revista de Administração de Empresas (RAE)*, 36(1), 6-12.
- [11] Teixeira, D. J., Oliveira, C. C. G., & De Faria, M. A. (2008). Perfil dos egressos do Programa de Mestrado Profissional em Administração da PUC Minas/FDC no período de 2000 a 2005. *Revista Economia & Gestão*, 8(16), 100-118.
- [12] Barros, E. C., Valentim, M. C., & Melo, M. A. (2005). O debate sobre o mestrado profissional na Capes: trajetória e definições. *Revista Brasileira de Pós-Graduação*, 2(4), 124-138.
- [13] Ikeda, A. A., Campomar, M. C., & Veludo-de-Oliveira, T. M. (2005). A pós-graduação em administração no Brasil: definições e esclarecimentos. *Revista Gestão e Planejamento*, 6(12), 33-41.
- [14] Schwartzman, S. (2010). Nota Sobre a Transição Necessária da Pós-Graduação Brasileira. In: *Plano Nacional de Pós-Graduação – PNPG 2011- 2020* (p. 34-52). Brasília: Capes.
- [15] Felli, V. E. A., et al. (2011). Perfil de egressos da Pós-Graduação stricto sensu na área de Gerenciamento em Enfermagem da EEUSP. *Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP*, 45(SPE), 1566-1573.
- [16] Gonçalves, S. A. F., & Resende, M. R. (2020). EGRESSOS DE UM CURSO DE MESTRADO EM EDUCAÇÃO: PERFIL E DESENVOLVIMENTO PROFISSIONAL DOCENTE. *Práxis Educacional*, 16(42), 440-460.
- [17] Bertero, C. O. (2007). A docência numa universidade em mudança. *Cadernos EBAPE. BR*, 5(SPE), 01-11.
- [18] Mattos, V. de B. (2011). Pós-graduação em tempos de precarização do trabalho: Alongamento da Escolaridade e Alternativa ao Desemprego. São Paulo: Xamã.
- [19] Menter, I., et al. (2006). Widening access to the teaching profession: perspectives from Scotland. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 29(3), 271-285.
- [20] Barbosa, D. M. de M., et al. (2009). Análise do perfil dos egressos do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Medicina (Radiologia) da Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro. *Radiologia Brasileira*, 42(2), 121-124.
- [21] Baruch, Y., & Peiperl, M. (2000). The impact of an MBA on graduate careers. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 10(2), 69-90.
- [22] Baruch, Y., & Leeming, A. (2001). The added value of MBA studies – graduates perceptions. *Personnel Review*, 30(5/6), 589-601.
- [23] Godoy, A. S. (2006). Estudo de caso qualitativo. In: C. K. Godoi, R. Bandeira-de-Mello, & A. D. Silva (Eds.), *Pesquisa qualitativa em estudos organizacionais: paradigmas, estratégias e métodos* (pp. 115–146). São Paulo: Saraiva.
- [24] Centro de Gestão e Estudos Estratégicos – CGEE. (2016). *Mestres e doutores 2015 - Estudos da demografia da base técnico-científica brasileira*. Brasília, DF.