



Factors That Lead FSU Accounting Alumni to Success

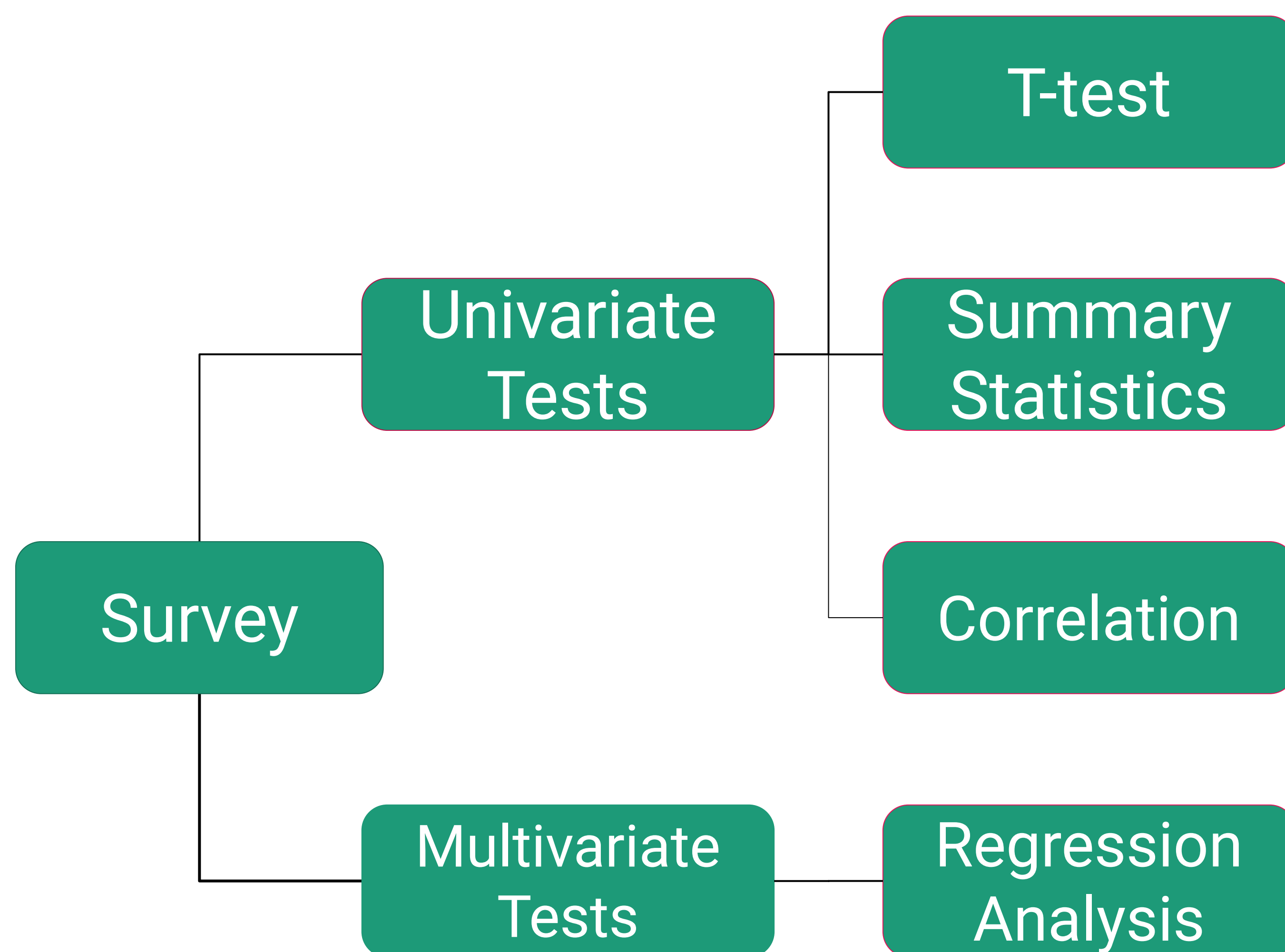


Maiqi Zhang, Paulina Adkins, Dr. Ally Zimmerman
 Department of Accounting, FSU College of Business

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the factors that lead FSU accounting alumni success. Success in the field of accounting can be best distinguished by reaching the position of a partner, as it is a prestigious role that less than 2 percent of all who enter public accounting firms will reach (AICPA, 2017). Other factors signifying success, including income and international experience, were also considered. In the preliminary stages of this study, researchers obtained survey results via Qualtrics with information regarding participants gender, age, race, marital status, involvement in activities during college, career paths and many other factors from voluntary participants. Additional information regarding the participants was also collected from LinkedIn and the official database of the university. During the study, researchers analyzed the outcomes of over 250 FSU alumni who graduated with Bachelors and/or Masters Degrees in Accounting over the periods 1977 to 2022. Univariate tests and multivariate regression analysis were two methods primarily utilized in this study.

Methods

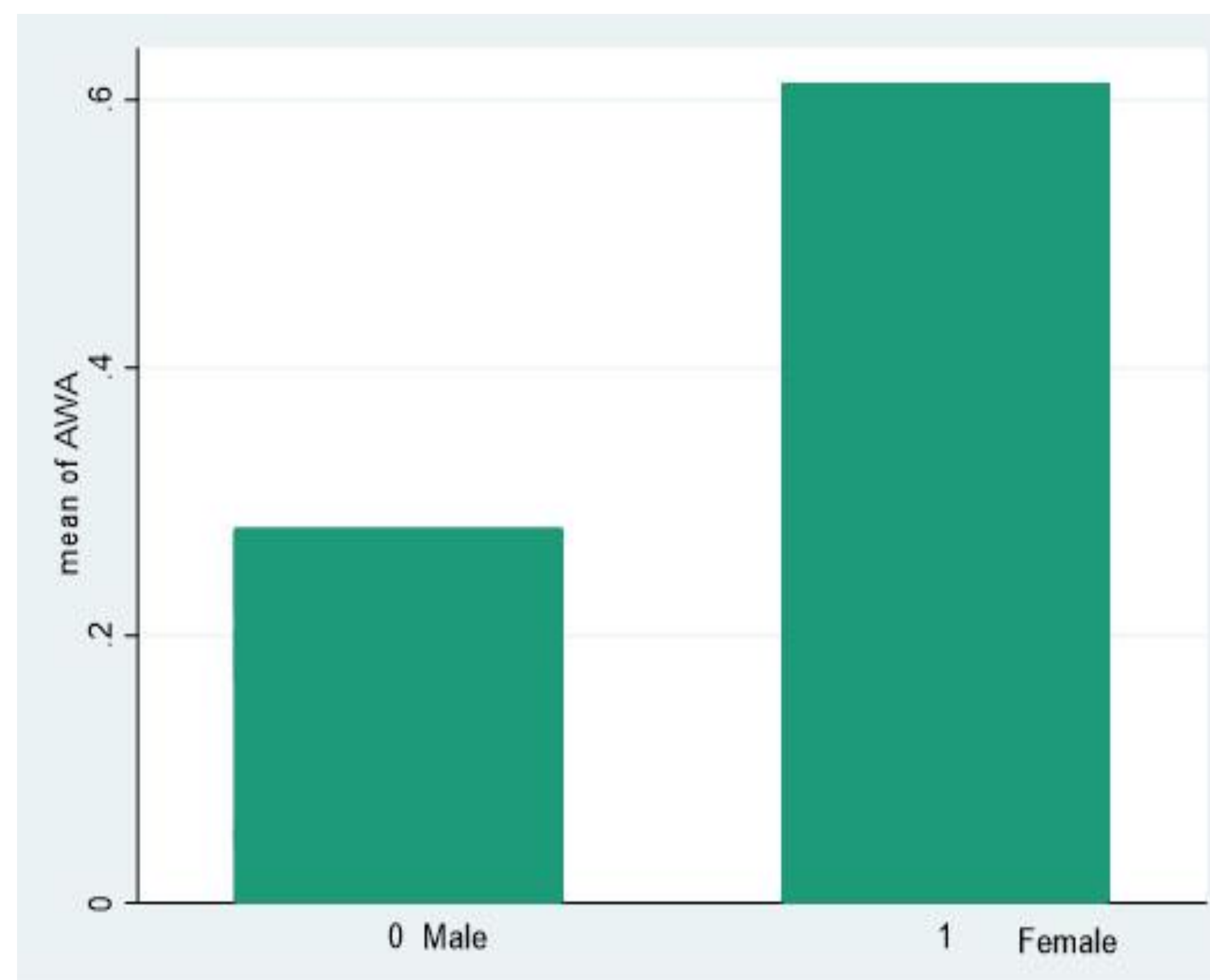


Results

- Females tend to have a lower salary.
- Salary is not significantly impacted by whether individuals are in public accounting or outside of public accounting
- Individuals who spent more years in public accounting tend to become partners
- Individuals who spent more years outside of public accounting tend to become CFOs
- Alternative Work Arrangements are correlated with having a lower salary
- Participating in activities during college yielded a higher salary
- The older you are when you graduate, the less money you tend to make over your career

Results

| | Salary | Partner | CFO |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------|
| FemaleIR | -0.791* | 0.115 | -0.889 |
| | (-1.77) | (0.10) | (-1.20) |
| YrsPublic | 0.052** | 0.189*** | -0.008 |
| | (1.98) | (2.64) | (-0.20) |
| YrsNotPublic | 0.041** | -0.010 | 0.059** |
| | (1.99) | (-0.19) | (2.03) |
| AWA | -0.702* | -1.169 | 0.093 |
| | (-1.68) | (-1.05) | (0.15) |
| CollegeActivities | 0.914* | 1.233 | 0.846 |
| | (1.74) | (1.12) | (1.23) |
| Age | -0.196*** | -0.257 | -0.048 |
| | (-3.48) | (-1.25) | (-0.49) |
| N | 211 | 190 | 182 |
| model | ols | ols | ols |
| cmd | regress | logit | logit |
| vce | ols | oim | oim |
| t statistics in parentheses | | | |
| * p<0.10 | ** p<0.05 | *** p<0.01" | |



Discussion/Analysis

- The data implies that females were likely to make less money than their male counterparts, and that could be associated with having alternative work arrangements, which were also negatively correlated with salary. Females are much more likely to utilize alternative work arrangements, such as maternity leave, which could lead to their wages being lower. Our results align with another study that found AWA participants are less likely to advance in the workplace due to them being viewed as less committed (Almer, Cohen, Singh 2004).
- We believe the age of graduation negatively correlates with salary because if you enter the workforce at an older age, you tend to make less money than if you were to enter the workforce at a younger age. This can be due to individuals spending more time in school rather than more time working, leading to fewer promotions and bonuses. However, extra time in school can lead to more participation in college activities, which could help alumni with salary since extracurricular activities could often expand their skill sets.
- To conclude, factors such as work experience and college activities are likely to lead to FSU accounting alumni's successes as they lead to a higher salary and higher chances of becoming a partner or CFO. Factors such as age and having alternative work arrangements, on the other hand, are likely to hinder alumni successes as they lead to a lower salary.

Future Research

Researchers plan to continue this research in the coming years in order to collect more data that yields more accurate results. Researchers intend to send out the survey again to get more responses from FSU accounting alumni, which will result in a greater sample size. Additionally, researchers will be able to analyze results in greater detail and have a more accurate representation of what factors truly lead FSU Accounting alumni to success.

Acknowledgements

A special thanks to Dr. Ally Zimmerman (Department of Accounting) for leading the research.
 Other group members: Kaitlyn Braica, Christina Davis, Alexandra (Sasha) Epelbaum and Libby Ferguson
 Florida State University for providing additional data and support.
 Allen Blay
 Monika Causholli
 Hye (Grace) Lee

References

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). 2017. Positions in public accounting. <https://us.aicpa.org/career/careerpaths/publicaccounting>
 Almer, E. D., J. R. Cohen, and L. E. Single. 2004. Is it the kids or the schedule? The incremental effect of families and flexible scheduling on perceived career success. Journal of Business Ethics 54 (1): 51–65. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:BUSI.0000043496.47644.38>