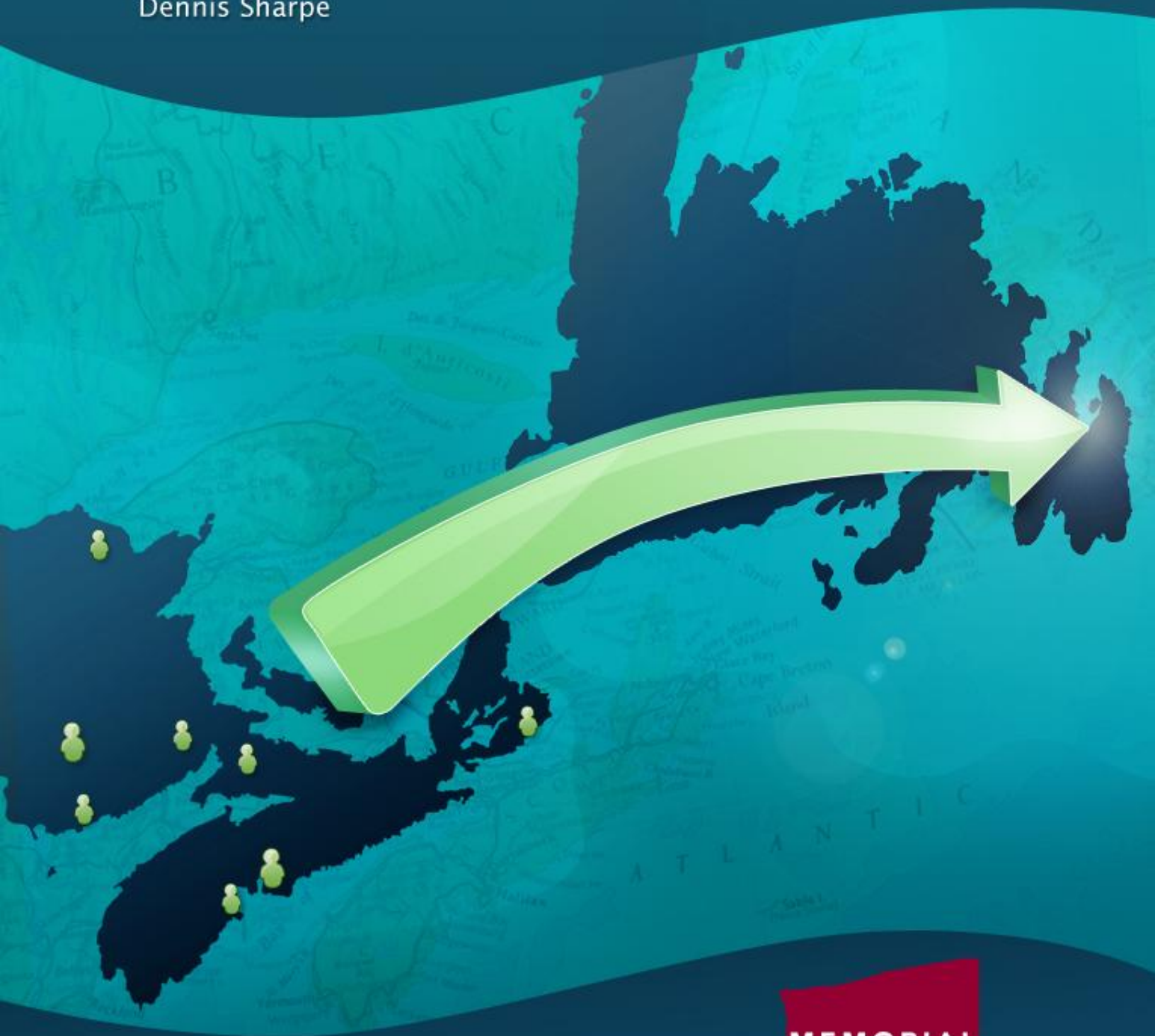


Matriculating Eastward

Maritime Student Migration to Newfoundland & Labrador

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Executive Summary

Since the 1990s, the number of both out-of-province Canadian and international students enrolled at Memorial University of Newfoundland has increased substantially. During this period, the enrollment levels of students from the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island have undergone an increase of approximately ten-fold.

There has been much speculation regarding the factors that have driven the increased enrollment of Maritime students at Memorial. Often, it has been suggested that Memorial's low tuition fees relative to other institutions in Atlantic Canada have had a significant impact upon institutional choices and enrollment patterns in the region. This research study was designed to provide a better understanding of the changes in enrollment patterns amongst Maritime students and to provide a contextualized account of the reasons why these students choose to attend Memorial University. Using a survey of Maritime students at Memorial as well as follow-up interviews, our research focused on student perspectives on their choice of university and experiences since enrolling.

Our findings indicate that Maritime students consult a wide variety of sources before arriving at a choice of university, and frequently consider the option of studying close to their home. They rely on a range of sources including family, friends, educators, co-workers, and Memorial University alumni in addition to utilizing information available from online sources and university promotional materials.

Regarding the issue of educational cost, our findings indicate that the perceived cost of a university education is of great importance to most Maritime students attending Memorial University. It is evident that the university's reputation and the availability of a wide range of program options are key influences in students' choice of institution as well. On the question of tuition fee costs specifically, we note that the cost of fees is an important consideration for most of the Maritime students who choose to enroll at Memorial University.

The results also show that students who relocate to the province in order to study on-campus on a full-time basis have different backgrounds and lifestyles compared to students who stay in their home province and pursue their studies at a distance. For example, distance students tend to be older

and employed full-time during their studies. While they expressed somewhat different priorities in their selection process, the factors influencing the selection of institution were similar for both groups of students.

The distance and migrant students who participated in the study indicated that their experiences at the university were for the most part positive, and they were generally satisfied with their decision to enroll at Memorial. Students who relocated to St. John's to study at the main campus of the university shared overwhelmingly positive views of the city and the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. In many instances, these students expressed openness about the prospect of moving to the province on a more permanent basis for employment following graduation.

In the coming years, an aging population and the shrinking of the youth

cohort will present challenges to the stability and sustainability of enrollment levels at Memorial University. In addition to the institutional pressures associated with a contracting youth population, the resulting decline in the numbers of individuals pursuing and completing a university education may have negative consequences for both labour force participation and productivity growth in Newfoundland and Labrador.

In the coming years, as Memorial University seeks to sustain or grow its enrollment, the advantages of affordability, reputation for quality, and the breadth of programs offered will be central to continuing to attract students in the Maritime region. These positive attributes may also comprise a solid basis for attracting students from other Canadian provinces and internationally.

Section 1:

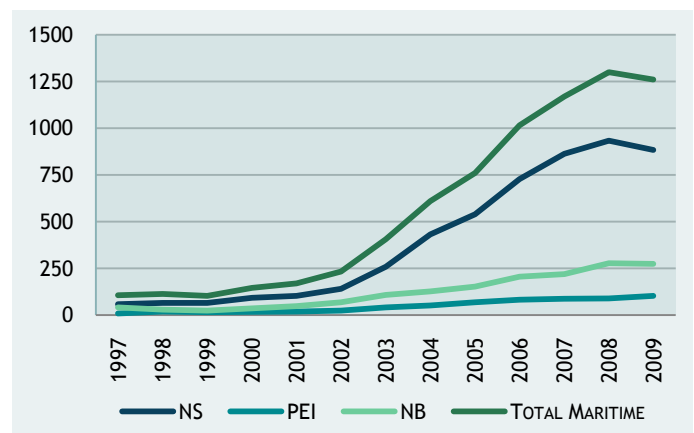
Introduction

1.1 Maritime Student Migration to Newfoundland and Labrador

There has been an upward trend in the enrollment of domestic (i.e., Canadian) students from outside the province of Newfoundland and Labrador at Memorial University of Newfoundland since the mid-1990s. In fact, enrollment of out-of-province students at Memorial increased by over 500% between 1999 and 2009.

As illustrated in Figure 1.1, the largest increases in out-of-province student enrollment over this period included students

Figure 1.1 Maritime student enrollment at Memorial University 1997–2009, full-time undergraduates



originating in Newfoundland and Labrador's neighbouring Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia (1,079%), New Brunswick (800%), and Prince Edward Island (418%).

Growth in out-of-province enrollment is important to the province's sole degree-granting institution for a number of reasons. Chief among these is the demographic shift that is currently underway in Newfoundland and Labrador. According to Statistics Canada's medium population growth projections, the population of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians aged 15 to 19 will decline by almost 16% between 2011 and 2021 – from an estimated 15,300 persons down to 12,900¹. With this projected deep decline in the important secondary

school feeder population, Maritime and other out-of-province students are vital to maintaining or increasing enrollment at Memorial University of Newfoundland².

While the importance of attracting students from outside the province is known and Memorial's recruitment efforts have been directed toward that end for some time, little is currently known about the academic, social, and economic reasons behind the interprovincial migration of students in Canada³. The limited data that is available in this area tends to focus on the patterns of student migration from institution to institution or province to province rather than the underlying reasons for students' migration decisions.

1.2 Local, Provincial and Maritime Context

Memorial University's enrollment data indicate that a total of 14,143 full-time undergraduate and graduate students attended the university in 2010⁴. While the vast majority of these students (10,613) were residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2,342 of the university's full-time students were residents of other Canadian provinces. This included 1,348 students who originated from the nearby Maritime provinces. In comparison, little more than a decade earlier

the population of 'Maritime students' at Memorial numbered just 137 out of a total of 12,864 students⁵.

Enrollment levels across the 16 public universities in the Maritime region grew steadily or remained stable for over two decades prior to 2005–2006. The subsequent decline in enrollment has been, in part, attributed to the migration of Maritimers to Newfoundland and Labrador to attend Memorial University⁶. The impact of this

migration has been most pronounced for the province of Nova Scotia since most of Memorial's Maritime students originate from there.

The reasons for the nearly tenfold increase in the number of Maritime students studying at Memorial University since 1999 have been the subject of much speculation. A 2007 report from the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, for example, identified a correlation between lower tuition fees and the increased enrollment of undergraduate students from the Maritimes at Memorial⁷. This presumed connection

between tuition fee levels at Memorial and the increased Maritime student enrollment has also been the subject of a number of stories in the popular media⁸.

Indeed, differing provincial and institutional policies on setting tuition fees have resulted in notable differences between university tuition fee levels in the Maritime provinces compared to Newfoundland and Labrador. As Table 1.1 shows, the trend in tuition fee levels in Newfoundland and Labrador since the late-1990s contrasts significantly with that of tuition fee trends in the Maritime provinces.

Table 1.1: Comparison of 1999–2000 and 2009–10 University Tuition Fees in the Atlantic Provinces

Province	1999–2000 Fee	2009–2010 Fee	% Change	Adjusted ¹ 1999–2000 Fee	Adjusted ¹ 2009–2010 Fee	% Change
NL	\$3,373	\$2,619	-22.4%	\$4,263	\$2,667	-37.4%
NS	\$4,293	\$5,696	32.7%	\$5,386	\$5,800	7.7%
NB	\$3,375	\$5,479	62.4%	\$4,234	\$5,579	31.8%
PEI	\$3,525	\$4,710	33.6%	\$4,422	\$4,796	8.5%

Source: Statistics Canada's annual survey of Tuition and Living Accommodation Costs for Full-time Students at Canadian Degree-granting Institutions. ¹Adjusted to September 2010 dollars using the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Between 1999–2000 and 2009–10, inflation-adjusted tuition fees rose across the Maritime provinces from a high of 31.8% in New Brunswick to a low of 7.7% in Nova

Scotia. Over the same period, inflation-adjusted fees at Memorial University declined by 37.4%.

As of the 2010–2011 academic year, the average undergraduate tuition fees in Nova Scotia (\$5,495) and New Brunswick (\$5,516) have exceeded the Canadian average of \$5,138. Fees in Prince Edward Island

(\$5,131) were only marginally below the national average. In comparison, tuition fees at Memorial University, at \$2,624, were the second lowest in Canada after those in the province of Quebec⁹.

1.3 Inter-Provincial Student Migration in Canada

Canadian student mobility and migration have gained increasing attention in recent years given that knowledge of how students move across and between education systems and geographical areas can play an important role in the management and improvement of post-secondary education. However, while this information is of value to provinces and post-secondary institutions, most Canadian jurisdictions do not have detailed system information about student pathways into and through post-secondary education¹⁰.

According to results from Statistics Canada's National Graduates Survey, 9% of Canadian students who graduated from a post-secondary institution in 2005 completed their program of study in a different province or territory than where they resided prior to enrolling in their program¹¹. Approximately three-quarters of students who re-located did so specifically to enroll in the program from which they graduated. Among the provinces, students were most likely to leave Nova Scotia (18%), New Brunswick (18%), Newfoundland and Labrador (20%), and Prince Edward Island (36%).

1.4 Factors Impacting Post-Secondary Aspirations and Choices

Unsurprisingly, strong academic performance in high school is a significant predictor of university participation in post-

secondary education, especially in university programs which require higher grades for admission¹². Student choices about post-

secondary education are also strongly correlated with parental educational attainment and family income levels – lower parental educational attainment levels and family incomes reduce the probability of university attendance. Students from more affluent backgrounds are more likely than lower-status youth to pursue post-secondary studies. Higher-status youth are also more likely to attend university rather than other types of post-secondary education such as community colleges or private training institutes.

Proximity to a post-secondary institution is also influential in encouraging secondary students to make the choice to enroll in further studies. Canadian high school graduates who live closer to a post-secondary institution tend to have higher levels of post-secondary participation than those who are further away¹³. Research has demonstrated that rural students have “lower” educational aspirations than urban students. This difference has been, in part, attributed to the socio-economic conditions

and levels of parental educational attainment in rural communities as well as the financial costs and adjustment associated with re-location¹⁴.

Studies of student migration have noted that one's willingness to re-locate for the purposes of pursuing a post-secondary program is influenced by the same sorts of factors which influence post-secondary aspirations and choices in general. In the United States, research indicates that out-of-state student migration is encouraged by large population centers, well-funded post-secondary systems, and family income¹⁵. Student migrants in the U.S. are also likely to follow the migration paths of friends, relatives, and classmates. In a study carried out with youth in Labrador, gender, educational aspirations, family, peer, and educator encouragement, parental education attainment, involvement in school extracurricular activities, and citizenship were found to significantly influence students' willingness to relocate to attend a post-secondary program¹⁶.

1.5 Tuition Fees and University Enrollment

Because so much of the media and public narrative has revolved around the extent to which Memorial University's tuition

fee levels have played a role in the observed increased Maritime student enrollment, a few words about our understanding of the

relationship between tuition fee levels and student enrollment behavior are warranted.

It is frequently noted that access to post-secondary education in Canada, as measured by the overall proportion of participants, has increased over the past two and a half decades in spite of consistent annual increases in the average cost of tuition fees. However, it is generally agreed that there is a certain degree of elasticity in the relationship between the cost of tuition fees and the level of participation in post-secondary education. In other words, it is assumed that if the cost of tuition fees is lowered then college and university participation will increase and vice versa.

Research on the relationship between post-secondary participation and tuition fees has tended to produce mixed results. As the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario recently noted, “Canadian research finds no consistent relationship between tuition fees and [post-secondary] participation¹⁷” In

some cases, higher education researchers have found little or no relationship between tuition rates and student participation rates.¹⁸ In contradiction to these findings, other Canadian and American studies designed to estimate the effect of tuition variations on enrollment behavior have found that higher tuition levels negatively impact university enrollments.¹⁹

While there is some debate on the impact of tuition fee increases on enrollment, there is ample evidence to suggest that downward enrollment pressure resulting from increases in tuition fees tends to be disproportionately shouldered by individuals from lower income backgrounds and/or higher net costs (e.g., rural students, persons with disabilities).²⁰ So, in the absence of additional need-based financial assistance, large increases in fees are likely to specifically and differentially curtail access for some segments of the population.

1.6 Research Objectives

The overarching goal of our research was to gain a better understanding of the underlying reasons why increased numbers of individuals from the Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince

Edward Island are choosing to undertake and complete university studies in Newfoundland and Labrador. Our central objectives were as follows:

1. Explore the types of academic programs selected by Maritime students who enroll at Memorial University of Newfoundland, including those selected by students who migrate to Newfoundland and Labrador and students who choose to study via distance education.
2. Investigate how academic, social, and economic factors, such as background, ability, influence of others, and educational aspirations, influenced Maritime students' decisions to enroll at Memorial University.
3. Examine how Maritime students at Memorial University found out about, considered, and chose amongst options for studies at the post-secondary level.
4. Explore and describe student experiences with and perspectives on migrating to Newfoundland and Labrador as well as where they plan to live and work following graduation.

1.7 Organization of the Report

This report has 5 major sections. Following the Introduction, Section 2 outlines the study methodology and design including the theoretical underpinnings of the research. Section 3 provides a summary of the results of the student survey which was carried out during the fall 2010 semester. Section 4

provides a summary and analysis of in-depth interviews conducted with a sub-group of students during the winter 2011 semester. The final section, Section 5, presents a summary of the research findings and the conclusions that arise from this study.

Section 2:

Study Design and Methodology

The research design for this study is grounded in sociological, social-psychological, and economic approaches to the study of students' post-secondary education choices. This section of the report provides an overview of these theoretical approaches. This section also explains the methodology that was used to collect information from students and includes a description of the sample of students who participated in the survey phase and the interview phase.

2.1 Theoretical Underpinnings

Past research has taken a variety of approaches to studying students' post-secondary education choices. The three basic approaches that have been taken in these studies of student decision-making include:

1. Social Status and Reproduction Studies – analyze the impact of an individual's social status on the development of aspirations for educational attainment and measure inequalities in access to post-secondary education; and

2. Social Psychological Studies of Student Choices – examine the impact of academic program, campus social climate, cost, location, and influence of others on students' choices; students' assessment of their fit with their chosen program/institution; and
3. Economic and Econometric Studies – treat the post-secondary education decisions of students as investment decisions and

assume that students are able to maximize the perceived cost-benefits in their choices; and assume students and their parents have perfect information (i.e., rational choice theory).²¹

The theoretical underpinnings of our study are guided by elements of the first two of these three basic approaches. Specifically, our research study draws on theories of social reproduction and conceptual models of post-secondary education choice.

2.1.1 Social Reproduction Theory

Differences in the post-secondary participation behaviours of youths of differing socio-economic backgrounds have been accounted for using the theories of cultural and social capital. Cultural capital, conveyed from parents to children, is the sum total of all of the intangible goods, such as the milieu and leisure time that fosters intellectual and cultural reflection, that sustain and predict the academic success and ambition of those in the middle- and upper-income strata. This perspective advances that the cultural capital inherited by those in the middle- and upper-class produces a confidence and disposition that is a very strong indicator of academic and social success.²²

Social capital is a form of capital that facilitates the transaction and the transmission of different resources among individuals through their relationships for

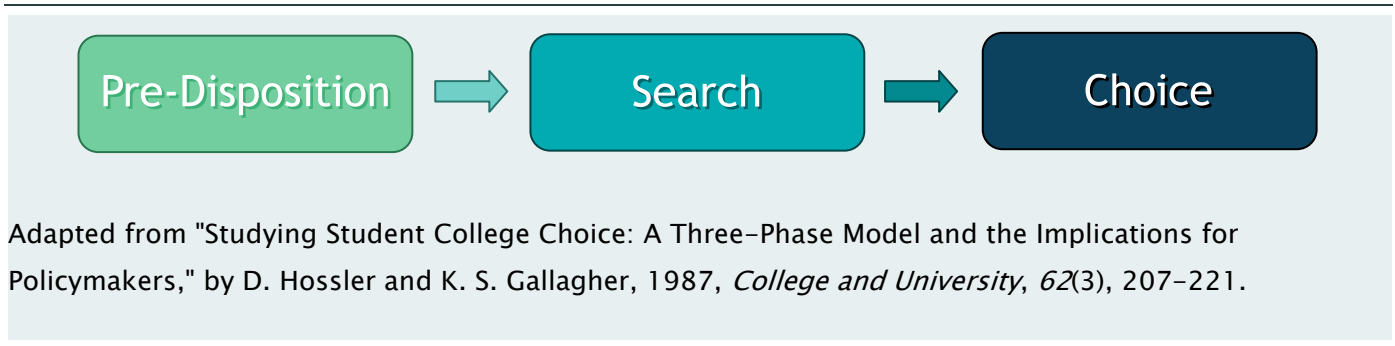
mutual benefit²³. Those individuals who have access to information about post-secondary education through their social networks have greater access to cultural capital and are more likely to be at an advantage in accessing and understanding information and attitudes relevant to making decisions about their post-secondary options. In the case of rural student post-secondary education participation rates, theories of cultural and social capital are a critical tool in examining why we observe lower rates of participation amongst rural populations even where their income is comparable to or greater than their urban counterparts. It has been argued that access to the cultural and educational opportunities offered by urban communities is, in and of itself, a form of cultural capital that, like all capital, defines social difference and disparity.²⁴

2.1.2 Student Choice Models

Researchers have developed a number of models that attempt to explain the stages in students' post-secondary decision-making. At the most basic level, the current study takes into account the conceptual model

developed by Hossler and Gallagher which identifies three key stages of post-secondary choice decisions: predisposition, search and choice.²⁵ This model is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Three-Stage Model of Post-Secondary Choice

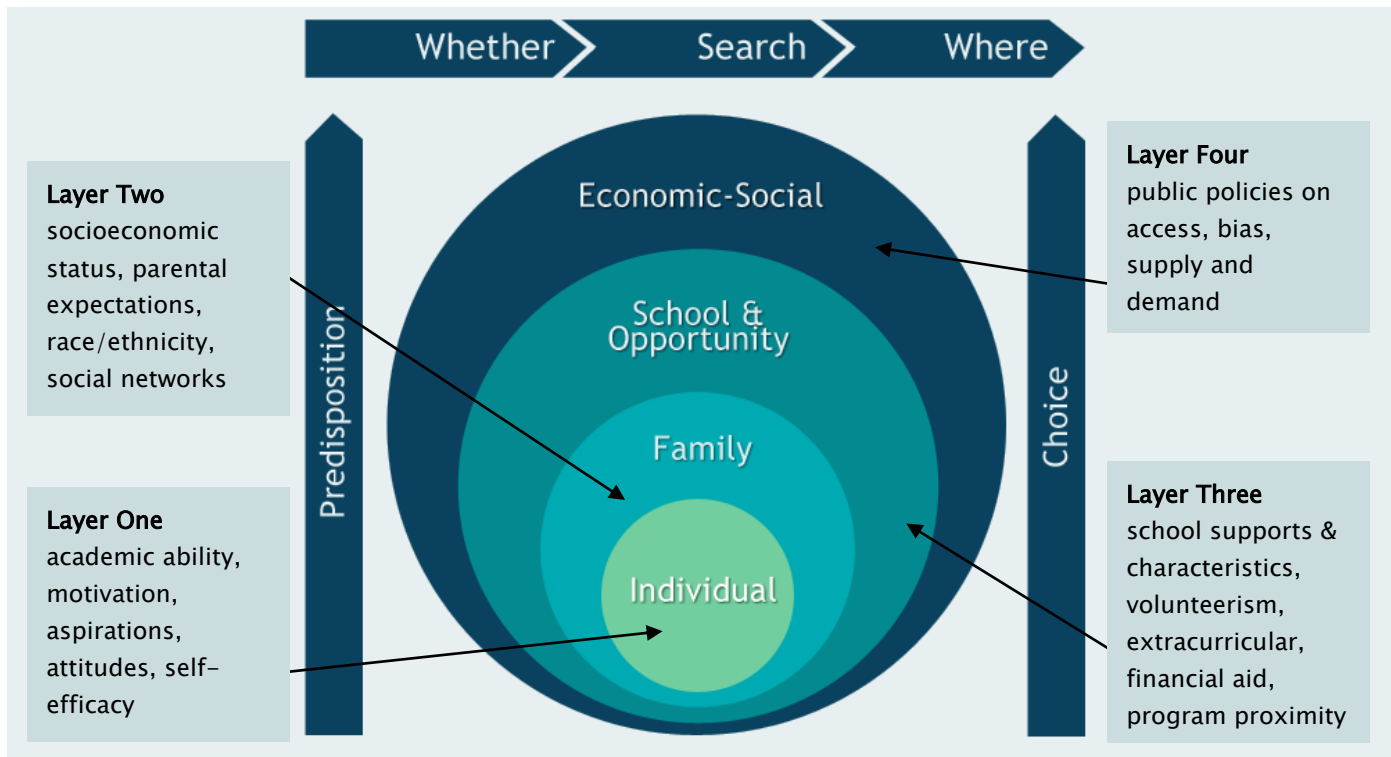


While it is simplistic, this three-stage model is particularly useful in considering the sequencing of factors that impact the decision-making process for students and parents and the role of guidance officials and other external influences. In the predisposition phase, secondary school students begin to see post-secondary education as an important step in achieving their personal and occupational goals. During the search stage, which is heavily influenced by parents, students refine their options, develop preferences and consider their qualifications for admission and options for financing their decision. In the final phase, the choice phase,

students are influenced by factors that are both economic and sociological in nature. Here they evaluate their "choice set" and make a final enrollment decision.

Taking Hossler and Gallagher's model a step further, Dr. Kate Ross at Simon Fraser University²⁶ added to it the key elements of Perna's conceptual model of students' situated context²⁷. This model integrates aspects of the economic theory of human capital and sociological notions of social and cultural capital. It recognizes that multiple layers of context influence an individual's post-secondary decision making. The model is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Perna–Ross Model of Post–Secondary Education Choice



Adapted from "*The Effect of Institutional Merit-based Aid on Student Aspirations, Choice and Participation: A Mixed Methods Approach*", K. U. Ross, unpublished doctoral dissertation, Simon Fraser University.

Within this conceptual model of post–secondary access and participation, Layer One focuses on student attitudes and behaviours that influence decisions to access and participate in post–secondary programs. Layer Two deals with each family’s ability to shape attitudes and provide experiences that promote access and participation. The next layer, Layer Three, represents the effects of educational resources and academic preparation on access and participation. The outermost layer, Layer Four, illustrates the external influences that indirectly impact upon post–secondary participation and access

decisions including social factors, economic conditions, and federal–, provincial–, and institutional–level public policies.

This model provides a framework to better understand the complexity of the process of selecting a post–secondary program and institution, and has implications for who stays in college and university when they get there. The assumption in the framework is that student behaviour cannot be fully understood without attention to the context(s) in which they live. In this way, the model recognizes that post–secondary choices vary between individuals depending

on differences in family resources, cultural and social influences, local school and community characteristics and supports,

economic and social conditions, and public policies.

2.2 Methodology

Data collection for this study was conducted in two phases. The first phase of data collection utilized an on-line survey of Maritime students at Memorial University of Newfoundland. These surveys were completed over a two-month period from September to November 2010. This was followed by a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a sub-sample of students which were completed between January and March 2011.

Approval to conduct this research was sought from and granted by Memorial University's Interdisciplinary Committee on

Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR). Student contact information was provided by the Office of the Registrar at Memorial University which was informed of the researchers' intention to use personal student contact information to recruit participants for research purposes. All of the students who were contacted were informed about the nature of the study and their participation, including the assurance that their contributions would be used to further the understanding of interprovincial migration of students in Canada.

2.2.1 Study Participants

There were approximately 1,560 students from the Maritime provinces enrolled at Memorial University at the beginning of the fall 2010 semester. This included undergraduate and graduate students

enrolled in on-campus and distance education courses on a full-time and part-time basis. The students who were surveyed and interviewed were sub-divided into two groups as follows:

- **Migrant Students** – students who re-located their residence to St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador to pursue full-time on-campus studies; and
- **Distance Students** – students who remained in their home province and were completing their studies via distance education means.

2.2.1.1 Survey Participants

The survey sampling frame consisted of first-year undergraduate students from the Maritime provinces who registered at Memorial University between January and September 2010 and were enrolled during the Fall 2010 semester. This included a number of transfer and second-entry students (i.e., students who had previously completed an undergraduate degree elsewhere). The Migrant Student group was restricted to full-time students while the Distance Student group included both full- and part-time students.

Of the combined population of 449 students, 328 were successfully contacted and surveyed for a response rate of just over 73%. This included 191 of 278 Migrant Students (68.7% response rate) and 137 of 171 Distance Students (80.1% response rate). The lower response rate for the Migrant group is, in part, possibly attributable to difficulty in accessing student contact information from third parties (e.g., from parents) using permanent address and telephone contact information accessed from university registrar files.

2.2.1.2 Interview Participants

For the second phase of data collection, the researchers randomly selected smaller sub-samples of students from the Migrant and Distance groups who had indicated an interest in participating in a

follow-up interview at the time of completing the Phase One survey. A total of 69 students were interviewed. This included 37 students in the Migrant group and 32 students in the Distance group.

2.2.2 Survey Design and Approach

The student survey was designed to elicit information from students regarding their decision to study at Memorial University and some of their experiences since enrolling. The broad thematic areas of the survey included the following:

- academic information, including parental education levels, post-secondary participation of siblings and friends, and past academic performance;
- factors that influenced student decisions to enroll at Memorial University;
- personal sources of financing and financial support;
- employment and living situation;
- personal connections in Newfoundland and Labrador, such as relatives or friends living in the province;
- experiences attending Memorial University; and

- students' plans following graduation with an undergraduate degree.

Additional survey questions were designed for the Migrant Student and Distance Student groups. Students in the Migrant group were asked questions about their experiences with securing accommodations in St. John's. Students in the Distance group were asked about their reasons for studying at a distance and their experiences in distance education courses at the university.

The survey questionnaire was set up and distributed to students using a web-based interface which allowed students to respond to survey questions on-line. Students were initially contacted and invited to participate via email. Those who did not respond to the initial email were contacted via telephone and encouraged to participate.

2.2.3 Student Interviews

In an effort to produce a rich and detailed account of students' insights and perspectives, the interview questions developed by the research team were designed to probe students about their decisions to enroll at Memorial University and their subsequent experiences. All of the

students interviewed were asked to respond to questions that were in line with the following themes:

- timing of their decisions to enroll at Memorial University;
- resources utilized in decision-making;

- other post-secondary options considered;
- factors influencing their choice, including tuition fee costs; and
- experiences at Memorial University since enrolling and reflections on their choice.

Students in the Migrant group were asked additional questions about their experiences in moving to St. John's, barriers they encountered in the re-location process, and sources of assistance and support that they utilized at the university. Students in the Distance group were asked separate

questions about their reasons for undertaking distance studies (as opposed to on-campus) and their opinions of distance education courses (versus face-to-face).

These interviews were conducted by telephone, audio-recorded using a digital recorder, and transcribed upon completion. The interviews were semi-structured and allowed for probing and follow-up questions from the interviewers. The average duration of the interviews was approximately 15 minutes.

Section 3: Survey Results

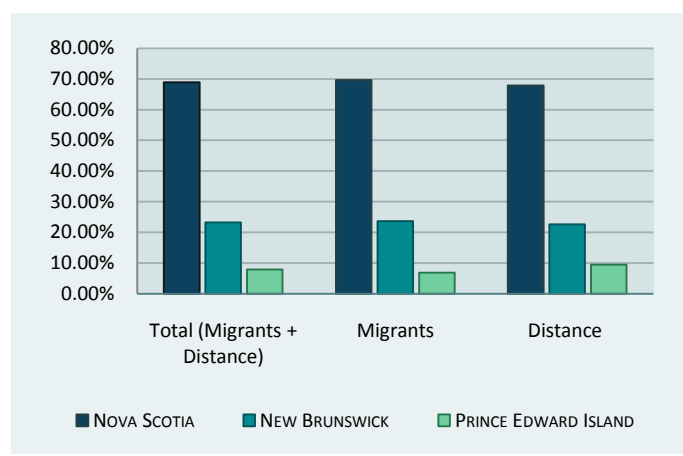
The three Maritime provinces were represented in this sample of students: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. Data from the 328 students who responded to the survey are analyzed in this section of the report.

3.1 Demographic Data: Geography, Gender and Age

3.1.1 Province of Origin

Most of the survey participants came from Nova Scotia (total 226, or 68.9%), followed by New Brunswick students, who represented 76 participants (23.2%). A total of 26 (7.9%) students originated from Prince Edward Island (PEI), making it the least represented Maritime province of the three.

Figure 3.1 Province of Origin



Overall, except in the case of PEI where the distribution was equal, more students were migrants as compared with students taking courses by distance (see Figure 3.1). In all cases the difference in group sizes was small, however. The total number of migrants taking part in the study was 191 and the total number of distance students was 137. Of these, 133 Nova Scotia students migrated

(69.9% of all migrants) to Newfoundland and Labrador to undertake their studies, and 93 were distance students living in Nova Scotia (67.9% of all distance students). There were 45 migrant students (23.6%) and 31 distance students (22.6%) from the province of New Brunswick. Out of the students surveyed from PEI, 13 were migrants (6.8%) and another 13 were distance students (9.5%).

3.1.2 Distance to Nearest University

Eighty-eight of the students who were surveyed (26.8%) lived in a settlement where a university is located. Almost half of them (160 or 48.8%) lived within 20 km of a university. Table 3.1 provides a breakdown of the distances between hometown and nearest university for students surveyed.

The average distance to the university nearest to students' permanent home addresses was 39 km (40 km for migrant students and 39 km for distance students).

For the sample of students surveyed, the average distance to travel from their hometown to Memorial University's main campus in St. John's was 1,522 kilometres.

For students in the Migrant group, the average distance to travel was 1,523 km, only marginally higher than for distance student whose home address was an average of 1,519 km away.

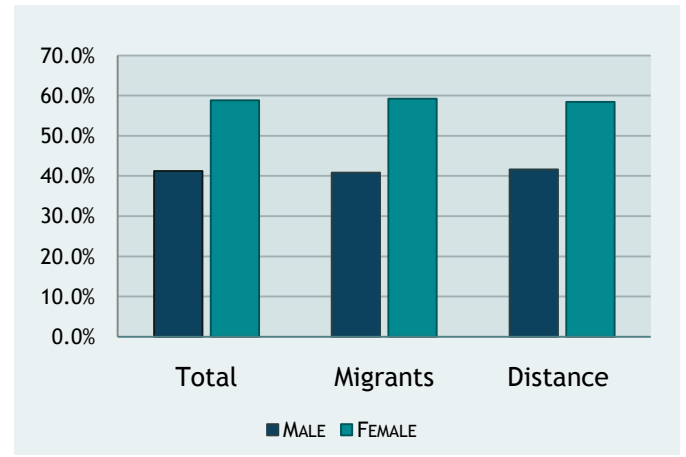
Table 3.1: Distances from Permanent Home Address to Nearest University (kms)¹

Range	Migrant (%)	Distance (%)	Total (%)
0-10	34.5	37.3	35.7
11-20	10.8	16.4	13.1
21-40	19.6	14.2	17.4
41-60	9.8	11.9	10.7
61-100	14.9	8.2	12.2
101-150	8.8	7.5	7.9
More than 150	2.1	4.5	3.0

3.1.3 Gender

Females were more represented than males in this study. The total number of female students was 193 (58.8%), while the total number of males was 135 (41.2%). This unequal representation of genders is consistent with the male to female ratio in the overall undergraduate population at Memorial, which was 59.7% female in the fall 2010 semester.²⁸ A total of 113 students (or 59.2%) in the Migrant group were female and 80 students (or 58.4%) in the Distance group were female (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Gender



3.1.4 Age

Close to half of the students who were surveyed were 19 years of age or younger. However, the age distribution of students in the Migrant Group was quite different from that of the Distance group. The vast majority of the students in the Migrant group (156 or 81.7%) were aged 19 and under. In contrast, very few of the students in the Distance group were 19 or younger. In fact, over half of the distance students (75 or 24.8%) were aged 30 or older (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Age

Age Range	Migrants	Distance	Total
19 and under	156 (81.7%)	3 (2.2%)	159 (48.5%)
20–24	26 (13.6%)	41 (29.9%)	67 (20.4%)
25–29	7 (3.7%)	18 (13.1%)	25 (7.6%)
30–39	2 (1.0%)	39 (28.5%)	41 (12.5%)
40 and over	0	36 (26.3%)	36 (11.0%)

3.2 Stage of Study, Enrollment Status, and Faculty

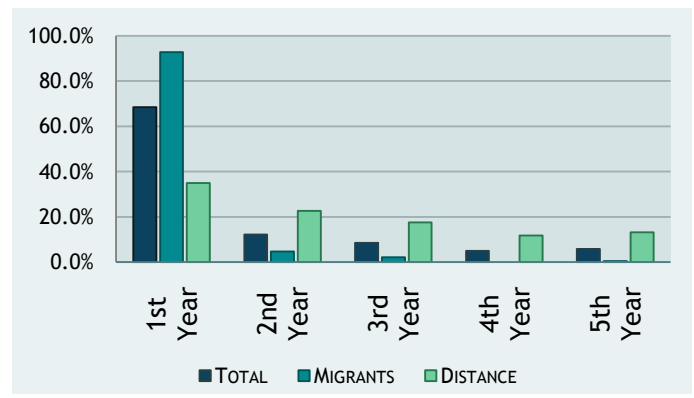
3.2.1 Year of Study

Most students surveyed (225 students or 68.5%) were enrolled in their first year of studies at Memorial University. The second largest group of students were in their second year of studies (40 students or 12.2%), followed by 28 students in year three (8.5%). Only 16 students (4.9%) were in their fourth year, and slightly more (19 or 5.8%) were in year five.

Almost all of the 177 first year students were migrants. Only 48 of the students enrolled in their first year were distance students. Compared to the Migrant group, more students in the Distance group were in their second year of studies. Only 9 of the migrants (4.7%) were registered in their second year as compared to 31 distance

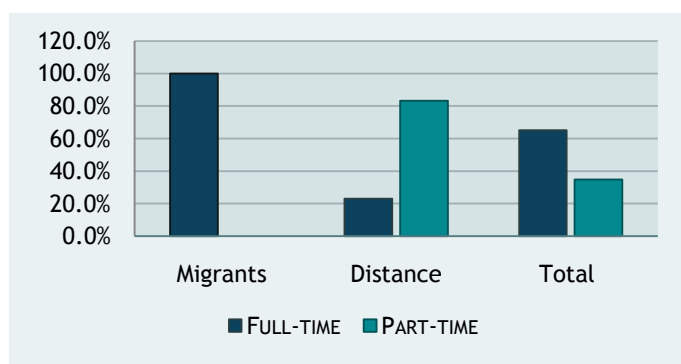
students (22.6%). A similar pattern held for registrations in the third, fourth, and fifth year of studies (see Figure 3.3). Thus, students in later years of study represented a greater proportion of distance students than migrants.

Figure 3.3 Year of Study



3.2.2 Enrollment Status

Figure 3.4 Enrollment Status



Most of the students who completed the survey (214 or 65.2%) were studying on a full-time basis. This figure includes all of the migrant students surveyed (191) as well as 23 distance students (see Figure 3.4).

3.2.3 Faculty

Students who completed the survey were grouped into 1 of 15 categories depending on their declared major (as specified by the university Registrar's Office). These were: 'Arts', 'Science', 'Major Not Specified', 'Marine Institute', 'Business Administration', 'Nursing', 'Engineering', 'Lifelong Learning', 'Major Not Applicable', 'Human Kinetics and Recreation', 'Music', 'Sir Wilfred Grenfell College', 'Pharmacy', and 'Continuing Education'.

Most students (93 or 28.4%) were enrolled in the Faculty of Arts, followed by the Faculty of Science (57 or 17.4%). A total of 35 students (10.7%) were enrolled in programs at the Marine Institute. The same number of students, 35, had a major area of study which was 'Not Specified' in registrarial records. The fourth and fifth highest numbers of enrollments were, respectively, in the Faculty of Business Administration (31 or 9.5%) and in Nursing (18 students or 5.5%). Engineering students represented 16 students (4.9%) and 11 students (3.4%) were enrolled in Education.

Most of the migrants surveyed were in the Faculty of Arts (56 or 29.3%), followed by the Faculty of Science (53 or 27.7%), and the major 'Not Specified' group (10.5%). Most of the students in the Distance group were studying in the Faculty of Arts (37 or 27.0%). Programs at the Marine Institute (34 or

Table 3.3: Students by Faculty/School

	Migrants	Distance	Total
Arts	56 (29.3%)	37 (27.0%)	93 (28.4%)
Science	53 (27.7%)	4 (2.9%)	57 (17.4%)
Not Specified	20 (10.5%)	15 (10.9%)	35 (10.7%)
Marine Institute	1 (0.5%)	34 (24.8%)	35 (10.7%)
Business Administration	19 (9.9%)	12 (8.8%)	31 (9.5%)
Nursing	7 (3.7%)	11 (8.0%)	18 (5.5%)
Engineering	14 (7.3%)	2 (1.5%)	16 (4.9%)
Education	10 (5.2%)	1 (0.7%)	11 (3.4%)
Lifelong Learning	0	9 (6.6%)	9 (2.7%)
Not Applicable	0	9 (6.6%)	9 (2.7%)
Human Kinetics and Recreation	6 (3.1%)	0	6 (1.8%)
Music	4 (2.1%)	0	4 (1.2%)
Sir Wilfred Grenfell College	0	2 (1.5%)	2 (0.6%)
Pharmacy	1 (0.5%)	0	1 (0.3%)
Continuing Education	0	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.3%)

24.8%) comprised the second most chosen area of study for distance students. Like migrants, the third most common choice for distance students was also 'Not Specified',

with 15 distance students (10.9%) picking this option. Business Administration represented a similar proportion of student enrollments from each group, 12 of whom (8.8%) were distance students and 19 (9.9%)

of whom were migrants. Table 3.3 provides a complete breakdown of faculty/school affiliation for the Migrant and Distance groups.

3.3 Family Education Background

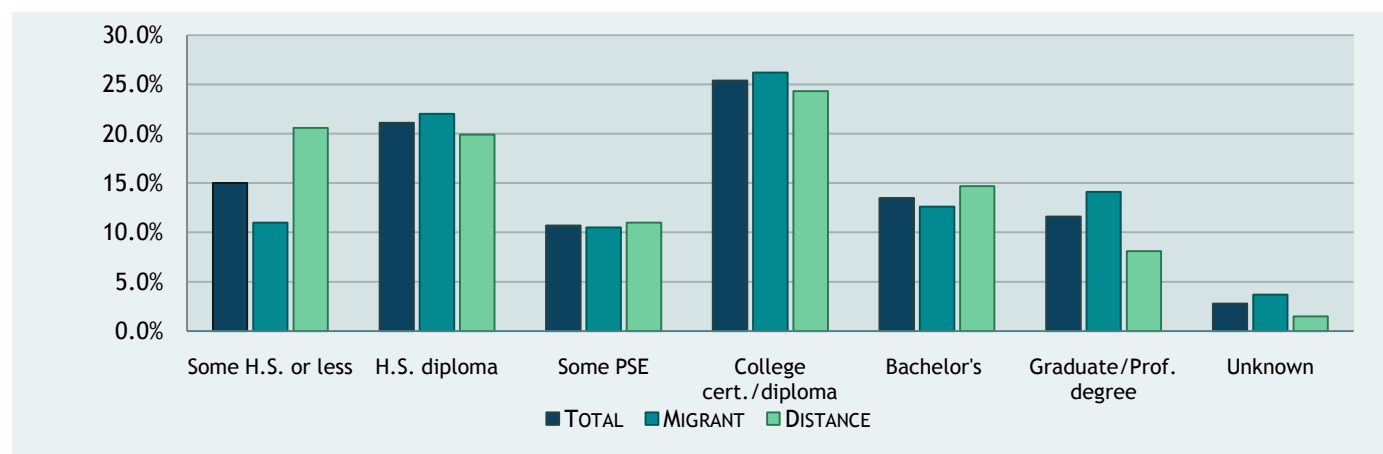
3.3.1 Highest Level of Education Completed by Father

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the highest level of education completed by their father. They were provided with seven options to choose from as follows: 1) 'Some high school or less'; 2) 'High school diploma'; 3) 'Some post-secondary education'; 4) 'Community college certificate or diploma'; 5) 'Bachelor's degree'; 6) 'Graduate or professional degree'; and 7) 'Unknown'. Students were to choose the one option that best described their father's

education level.

Most students indicated that the highest level of education completed by their father was a community college certificate or diploma (83 or 25.4%). This was followed by 69 students (21.1%) who stated that their father had a high school diploma. Next, 49 students (15%) indicated that their father had some high school or less. A total of 44 students (13.5%) indicated that their father had a bachelor's degree, 38 students (11.6%)

Figure 3.5 Father's Level of Education



said their father had a graduate or professional degree, and 35 students (10.7%) said their father had some post-secondary education. Another 9 students (2.8%) did not indicate the qualifications their father had. In summary, less than half of the students

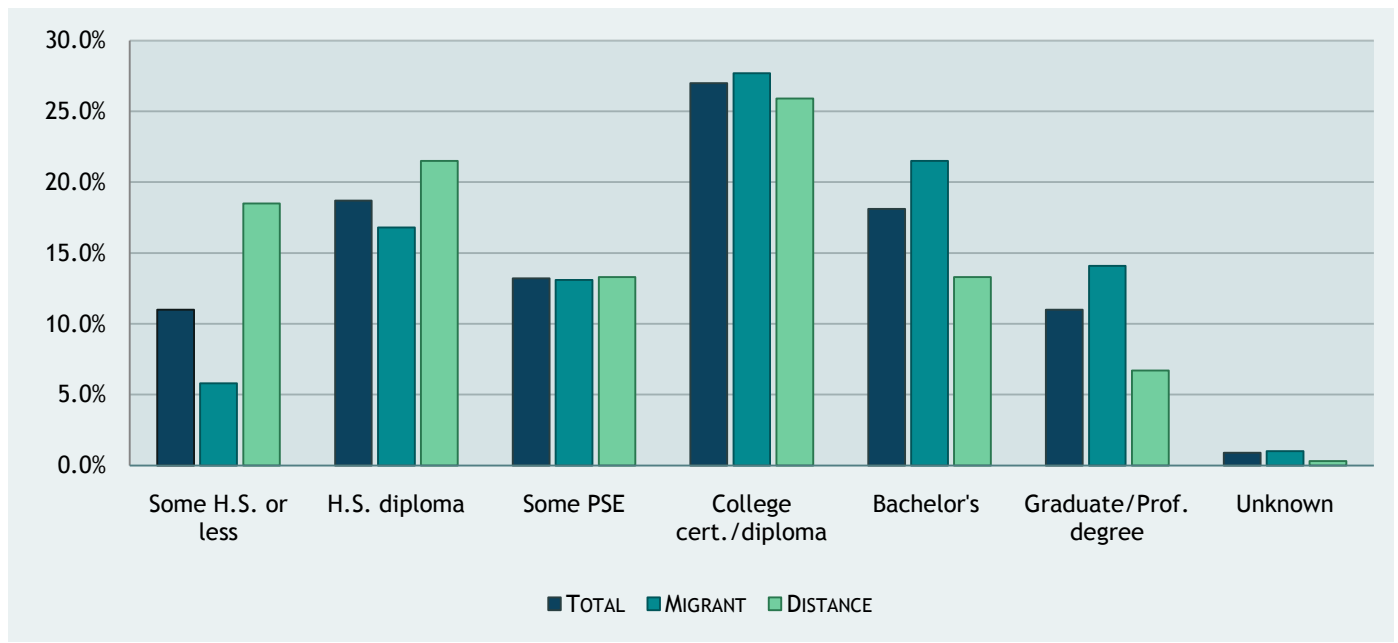
surveyed (35.8%) indicated that their father had participated in post-secondary education, and just 82 (25.1%) of students surveyed indicated that their father had a university degree. See Figure 3.5 for a complete breakdown for this item.

3.3.2 Highest Level of Education Completed by Mother

Students were asked to indicate the highest level of education completed by their mother. As in the previous question, students were asked to choose one of 7 options provided. The answers to this question suggest that most of the mothers of students completed some level of formal education, whether at the college, university, or high school level (see Figure 3.6). As with the fathers, community college certificate or diploma was the most frequently selected

education level for mothers: a total of 88 (27.0%). This was followed by ‘high school diploma’ (61 or 18.7%), and a ‘Bachelor’s degree’ (59 or 18.1%). Just 43 students (13.2%) stated their mother had some post-secondary education, and fewer students still indicated that their mother had some high school or less or had a graduate or professional degree.

Figure 3.6 Mother's Level of Education



3.3.3 First-Generation Status

A growing body of post-secondary education research has compared the educational outcomes of first-generation students with those of continuing-generation students²⁹. The former group comprises students who are of the first generation in their families to attend college or university while the continuing-generation group

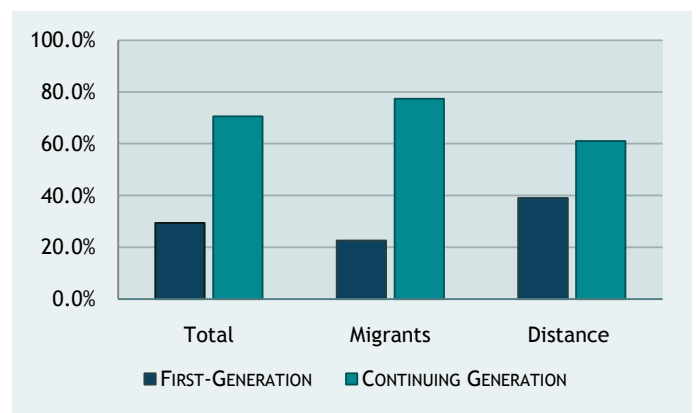
consists of those who have one or more parents with a post-secondary education. Using the responses to the survey questions about parental educational attainment levels outlined above, the researchers defined first-generation status in two ways for the purposes of group comparisons.

3.3.3.1 First-Generation Students (Definition 1)

In the first comparison of first-generation and continuing-generation student status, the continuing-generation group included students who had one or more parents who had completed a post-secondary credential. Students who indicated that neither parent had completed a post-secondary program were defined as first-generation. This included instances where parents had some post-secondary education, a high school diploma, or some high school or less. Following this definition of first-generation status, a total of 96 survey respondents (29.4%) would be considered to be first-generation. Among these, 43 students (22.6%) were migrants and 53 (39.0%) were distance students (see Figure

3.7). Thus, a larger proportion of distance students had parents with less than a university degree or college diploma/certificate. This difference between the migrant and distance groups was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1, N=326) = 10.185, p = .001$.

Figure 3.7 First-Generation (Definition 1)

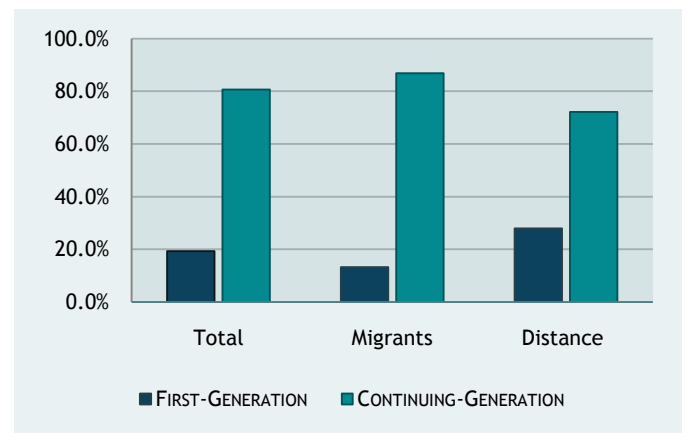


3.3.3.2 First-Generation Students (Definition 2)

For our second comparison, the first-generation group included only students whose parental educational levels consisted of high school completion or lower. Thus, the continuing-generation student group included students who had one or more parents who had completed a post-secondary credential and/or one or more parents with “some post-secondary education”. Using this definition, there were a total of 63 (19.3%) students who were identified as having first-generation status (see Figure 3.8). As with the first comparison, fewer migrants (25 or 13.2%) fell into the first-generation category as compared to distance students (38 or 27.9%). These differences were statistically

significant, $\chi^2(1, N=326) = 11.111, p = .001$. Thus, among the survey group, distance students were more likely to be considered first-generation using either of the definitions of first-generation status applied.

Figure 3.8 First-Generation (Definition 2)



3.3.4 Siblings Currently Attending a Post-Secondary Institution

In addition to parental education levels, the researchers wanted to ascertain whether or not students had siblings who enrolled in post-secondary education. Of the total number of students surveyed, 100 (30.7%) stated that they had brothers or sisters attending a post-secondary institution at the

time that the research was in progress. Of these 100 students, most were migrant students (64) as compared to distance students (36). The difference between the migrants and distance students was not statistically significant (see Figure 3.9).

3.3.5 Siblings who Graduated from a Post-Secondary Program

The researchers also asked students if they had siblings who had already graduated from a post-secondary program. A total of

144 (44.2%) of the students surveyed stated that they had brothers or sisters who are post-secondary graduates (see Figure 3.9).

This represents just under half of all students surveyed. Of these 144 students, 67 were migrants and 77 were distance students. Thus, a greater percentage of distance students had siblings who are graduates of a

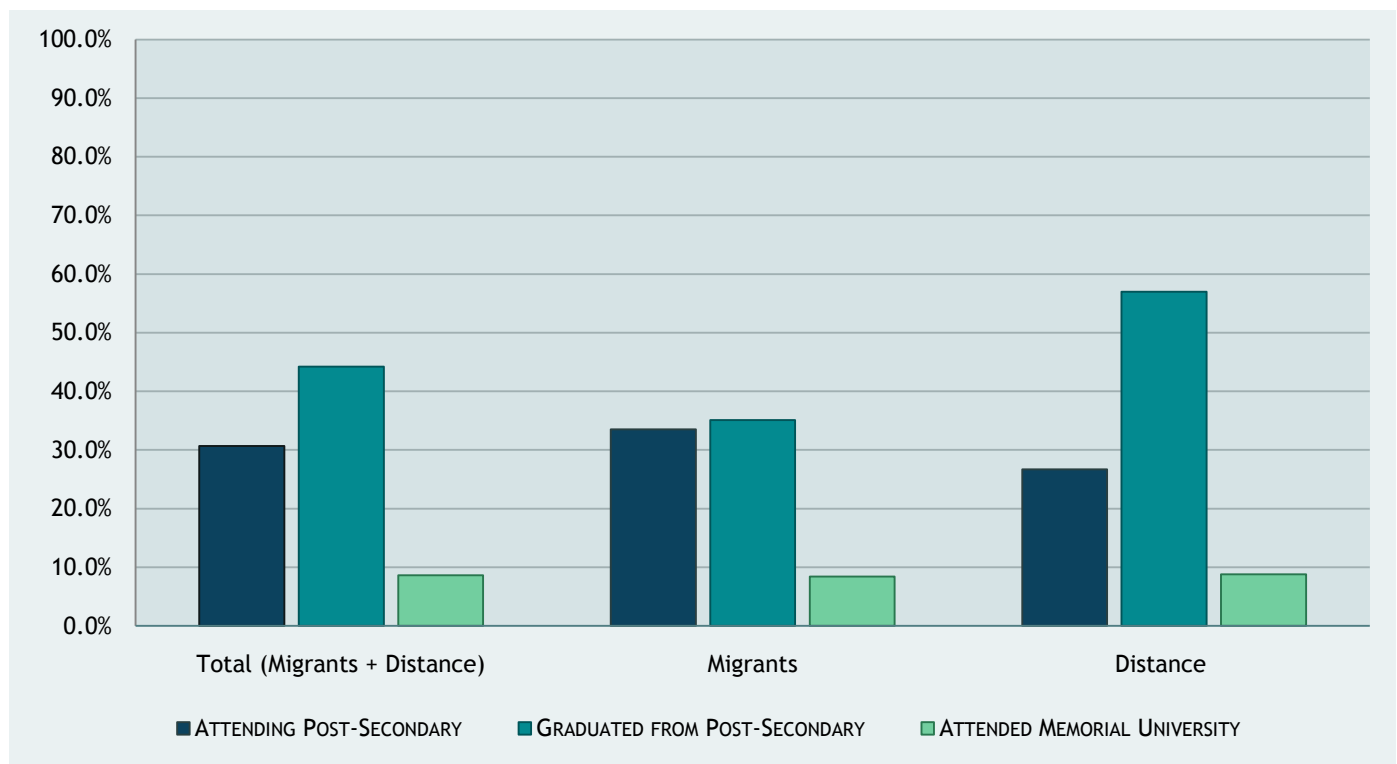
post-secondary program. This difference between the Migrant and Distance groups was statistically significant $\chi^2(1, N=326) = 15.456$, $p = .000$.

3.3.6 Siblings who Attended Memorial University

The researchers also asked whether or not students had siblings who attended Memorial University of Newfoundland specifically. Only a small number of students (28 or 8.6%) indicated that they had brothers

or sisters who attended Memorial University (see Figure 3.9). The proportion of distance students (12 or 8.8%) responded yes to this question was similar to that of migrant students (16 or 8.4%).

Figure 3.9: Post-Secondary Education of Siblings



3.4 Choosing Memorial University of Newfoundland

3.4.1 Factors Influencing Student Choice

Using a Likert-type scale, students were asked to rate 10 factors they considered when choosing a university: 1) 'Total cost'; 2) 'Availability of financial aid based on need' (e.g., student loans); 3) 'Availability of scholarships'; 4) 'Distance of program/institution from your home'; 5) 'Distance from your friends or relatives'; 6) 'Availability of student housing'; 7) 'Availability of the program'; 8) 'Preparation for graduate school'; 9) 'Memorial University's reputation'; and 10) 'Reputation of Newfoundland and Labrador'. Students were to rate these factors on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being 'not important at all' and 5 being 'very important'.

The survey data were analyzed to determine the mean level of importance of each factor rated by students. Overall, the five highest rated influences were: 'Availability of the program' (4.32), 'Total cost' (4.23), 'Memorial University's reputation' (3.95), 'Reputation of Newfoundland and Labrador' (3.41), and 'Preparation for graduate school' (3.15). The five lowest rated influences were: 'Availability of student housing' (3.03), 'Availability of financial aid based on your need' (2.73), 'Availability of scholarships' (2.70), 'Distance of program/institution from

your home' (2.58), and finally, 'Distance from your friends or relatives' (2.34).

There were differences between the responses given by migrants and those given by distance students. The five most important influences for migrant students were: 'Total cost' (4.38), 'Availability of the program' (4.31), 'Memorial University's reputation' (4.00), 'Availability of student housing' (3.83), and 'Reputation of Newfoundland and Labrador' (3.74). In contrast, the top five influences for distance students were: 'Availability of the program' (4.33), 'Total cost' (4.02), 'Memorial University's reputation' (3.88), 'Reputation of Newfoundland and Labrador' (2.95), and 'Preparation for graduate school' (2.87).

Factors relating to finances, in particular, including total cost, availability of need-based financial aid, and availability of scholarships, were ranked significantly higher for students in the Migrant group (see Table 3.3). 'Total cost', for example, was the most important factor for migrants (4.38) but the second most important factor for distance students (4.02). The difference between these average ratings was statistically significant, $F(1,324) = 9.738, p = .002$. 'Availability of the program' was a more important influence for

distance students (4.33) than it was for migrants (4.31), however, this difference between the groups was not statistically significant, $F(1,322)=.017$, $p=.898$. Students in the Migrant group also gave a statistically

higher ranking to the following four influences: 'Distance from your friends or relatives', 'Availability of student housing', 'Preparation for graduate school', and 'Reputation of Newfoundland and Labrador'.

Table 3.4: Student Ranking of Factors Influencing Choice to Study at Memorial University

	Migrants	Distance	Total
Total cost*	4.38	4.02	4.23
Availability of financial aid based on your need**	3.12	2.19	2.73
Availability of scholarships**	3.12	2.11	2.70
Distance of program/institution from your home	2.54	2.63	2.58
Distance from your friends or relatives*	2.53	2.07	2.34
Availability of student housing**	3.83	1.92	3.03
Availability of the program	4.31	4.33	4.32
Preparation for graduate school*	3.35	2.87	3.15
Memorial University's reputation	4.00	3.88	3.95
Reputation of Newfoundland and Labrador**	3.74	2.95	3.41

* $p < .01$, ** $p < .001$

3.4.2 Most Important Factor in Choosing Memorial University

Students were asked from the factors specified above to select the one that was most important to them in their decision to enroll at Memorial University. This was done by selecting one factor out of 11 possible factors including the 10 influences outlined in

the previous section plus the option of 'Other'.

Two factors, 'Availability of financial aid based on your need' and 'Availability of scholarships', were not selected by any students as the most important influence in

their choice to study at Memorial. The nine factors that were represented in student responses included 'Total cost', 'Distance of program/institution from your home', 'Distance from your friends or relatives', 'Availability of student housing', 'Availability of the program', 'Preparation for graduate school', 'Memorial University's reputation', 'Reputation of Newfoundland and Labrador', and 'Other'.

The largest proportion of students – close to half of the total number of students surveyed – chose 'Total cost' as being the most important factor in their decision to enroll at Memorial University. Over a quarter of those surveyed chose 'Availability of the program' as the most important influence in their choice. Overall, the top five factors selected as most important were: 1) 'Total cost' (45.8%); 2) 'Availability of the program' (28.6%); 3) 'Memorial University's reputation' (11.7%); 4) 'Preparation for graduate school' (3.1%); 'Distance of program/institution from your home' (3.1%). The complete breakdown of responses for this question is provided in Table 3.4.

There were differences between the factors that were selected as most important for migrants compared with those chosen as most important by distance students. The factor selected most frequently by migrant students was 'Total cost' (52.1%), which was followed by 'Availability of the program' (18.4%). This order was reversed for distance

students who most often indicated that the most important factor in their decision to enroll at Memorial was 'Availability of the program' (43.0%). 'Total cost' was selected as most important by 37.0% of distance students. The third most commonly selected factor for both migrant and distance students, however, was shared. For both groups this was 'Memorial University's reputation', which was cited slightly more often by migrants (13.2%) as most important as compared to distance students (11.9%).

Table 3.5: 'Most Important' Factor Influencing Choice to Study at Memorial University

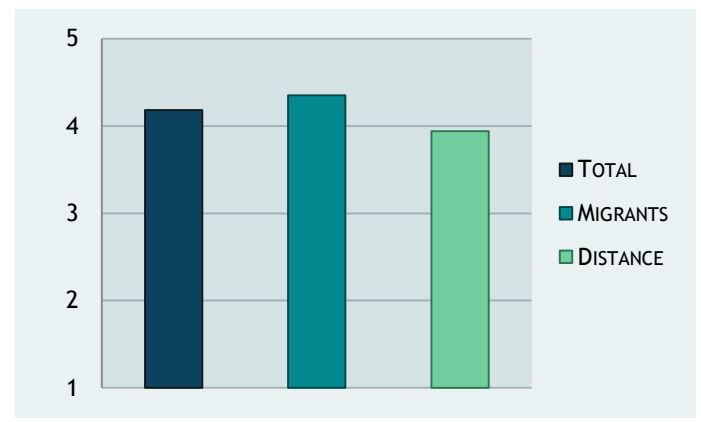
	Migrants	Distance	Total
Total cost	99 (52.1%)	50 (37.0%)	149 (45.8%)
Distance of program/institution from your home	5 (2.6%)	5 (3.7%)	10 (3.1%)
Distance from your friends or relatives	5 (2.6%)	0	5 (1.5%)
Availability of student housing (e.g., residence)	3 (1.6%)	1 (0.7%)	4 (1.2%)
Availability of the program	35 (18.4%)	58 (62.4%)	93 (28.6%)
Preparation for graduate school (e.g., Master's degree)	8 (4.2%)	2 (1.5%)	10 (3.1%)
Memorial University's reputation	25 (13.2%)	16 (11.9%)	38 (11.7%)
Reputation of Newfoundland and Labrador	5 (2.6%)	1 (0.7%)	6 (1.8%)
Other	5 (2.6%)	2 (1.5%)	7 (2.2%)

3.4.3 Importance of Tuition Fees in Choosing Memorial

Survey respondents were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being ‘not important at all’ and 5 being ‘very important’, the importance of tuition fees in their selection of Memorial University. Overall, this item received a rating of 4.18 (see Figure 3.10), meaning that consideration of tuition was of some importance to students. The migrant students tended to rate the importance of the level of tuition fees as more important than distance students did (average of 4.35 for migrants versus 3.94 for distance students). This difference between the two

groups was statistically significant, $F(1,322)=12.916, p=.002$.

Figure 3.10: Importance of Tuition Fees

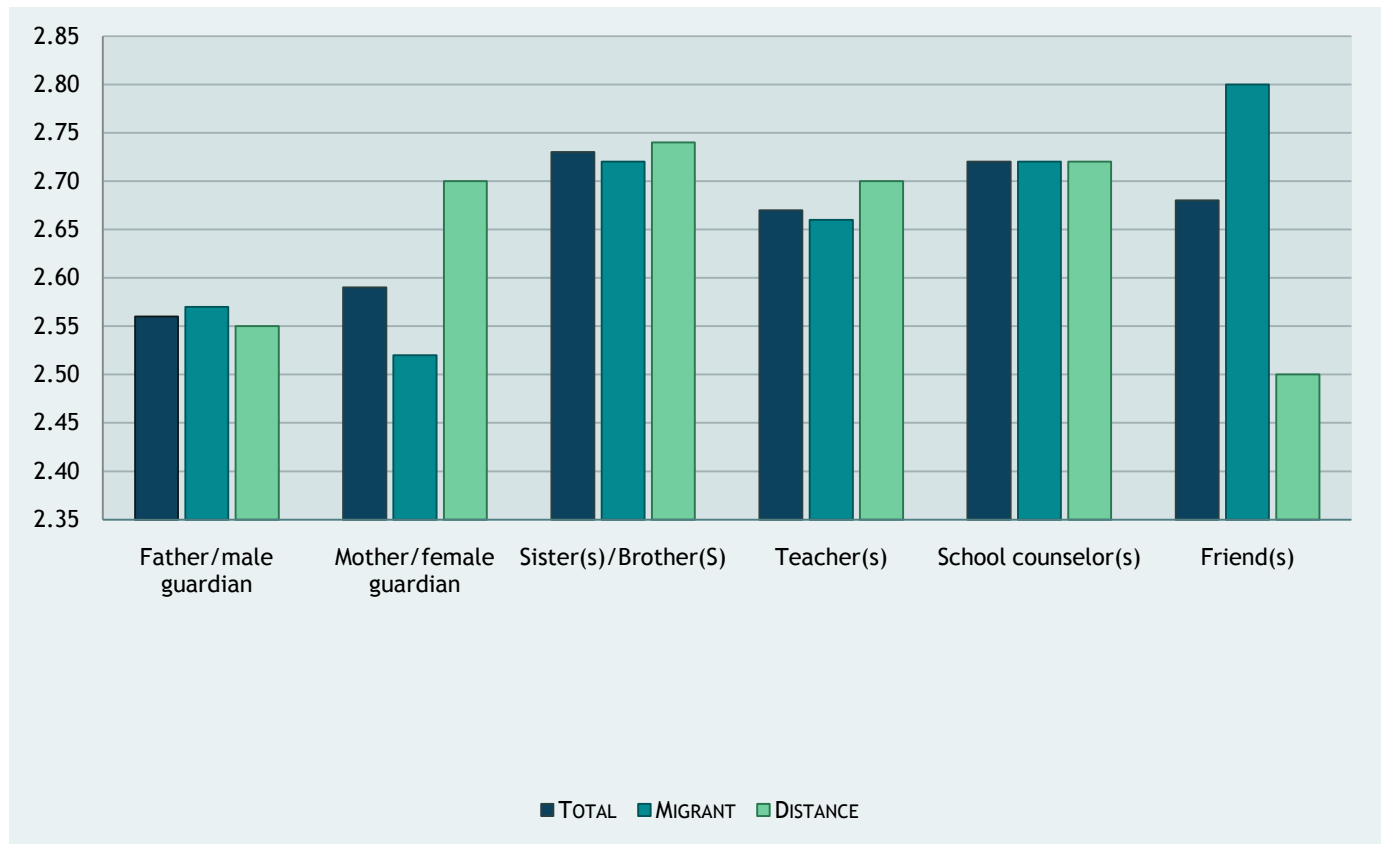


3.4.4 Encouragement to Attend Memorial University

Using a Likert-type scale, students were asked to rate from 1 to 5, with 1 being ‘very much encouraged’ and 5 being ‘very much discouraged’, the extent to which people encouraged or discouraged them to attend Memorial University. They were asked to rate 6 “categories” of people who may have either discouraged or encouraged the students. These were: 1) Father/Male Guardian; 2) Mother/Female Guardian; 3) Sister(s) and/or Brother(s); 4) Teacher(s); 5) School Counselor(s); and 6) Friend(s). The most encouragement appeared to be provided to students, on average, by siblings (2.73),

followed by school counsellors (2.72), and friends (2.68). Students received less encouragement from teachers (2.67), their Father/Male Guardian (2.59), and their Mother/Female Guardian (2.56). However, it would seem that, on the whole, key influencers were relatively neutral, rather than actively encouraging or discouraging students to attend Memorial. There were no statistically significant differences between the responses of migrant and distance students on this item. The complete breakdown of responses for this question is provided in Figure 3.11.

Figure 3.11: Sources of Encouragement to Attend Memorial

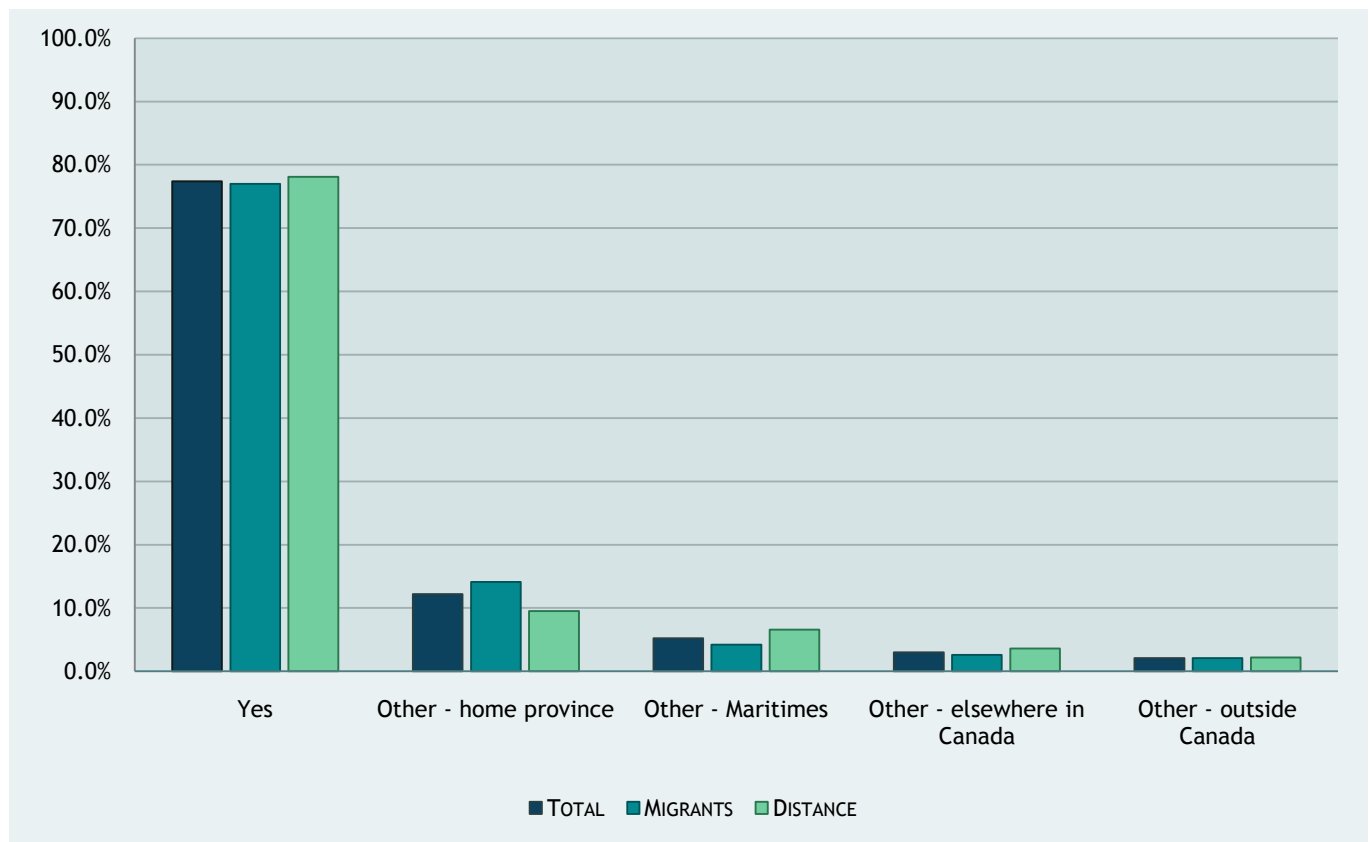


3.4.5 Memorial University: First Choice?

Students were asked to state whether or not Memorial University was their first choice of institution. They were given 5 options to choose from: 1) 'Yes'; 2) 'No, another institution in home province'; 3) 'No, another institution in the Maritimes'; 4) 'No, another institution in Canada'; and 5) 'No, an institution outside Canada'. As Figure 3.12 shows, over three quarters of the students surveyed indicated that Memorial was their first choice of post-secondary institution (254 or 77.4%). The second most commonly

chosen option was 'No, another institution in home province', suggesting that these students had intended to enroll in an institution closer to home. These students represented a small proportion of those surveyed (40 or 12.2%). The third most common choice was 'No, another institution elsewhere in the Maritimes was my first choice' (17 or 5.2%). The overall pattern of responses to this question generally held true for both migrant and distance students.

Figure 3.12: Memorial University as First Choice



3.5 Being at Memorial University

3.5.1 Financial Information: Paying for University

3.5.1.1 Most Important Source of Financing Education

The researchers asked students to indicate the most important source of funding in financing their education. Survey respondents had the following 9 options to choose from: 1) 'Yourself'; 2) 'Spouse or Partner'; 3) 'Parents'; 4) 'Other Family Members'; 5) 'Scholarships, Bursaries and/or Awards'; 6) 'Student Line of Credit/Credit Cards'; 7) 'Government Student Loans', 8)

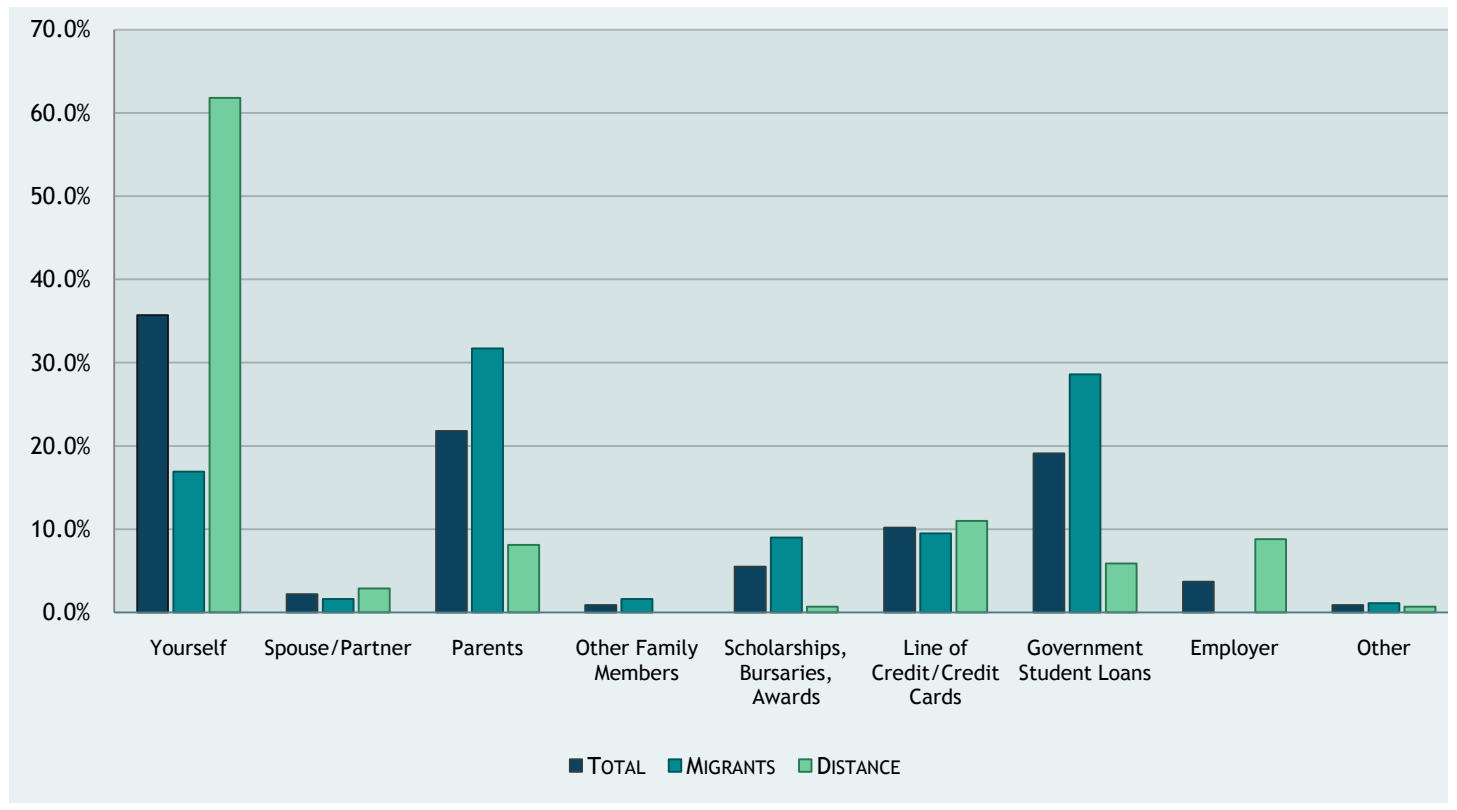
'Employer'; and 9) 'Other'. They were to choose one option only. The most commonly chosen source of funds overall was 'Yourself', with over a third of students indicating that they primarily funded their education themselves (116 or 35.7%). This source was followed by 'Parents' (71 students or 21.8%) and 'Government Student Loans' (62 students

or 19.1%). The complete results are provided in Figure 3.13.

There were substantial differences between sources of funding relied on by migrant and distance students. First of all, ‘Yourself’ was chosen by a much larger proportion of the distance students (61.8%) as compared to migrants (16.9%). In contrast, more migrants relied on their parents (31.7%)

than did distance students (8.1%). ‘Government Student Loans’ were also utilized more by migrants (28.6%) than by distance students (5.9%). In sum, it would appear that distance students were much more reliant on themselves as their primary source of funding, compared to migrant students, who relied much more on parents and borrowing.

Figure 3.13: Most Important Source of Financing for Education

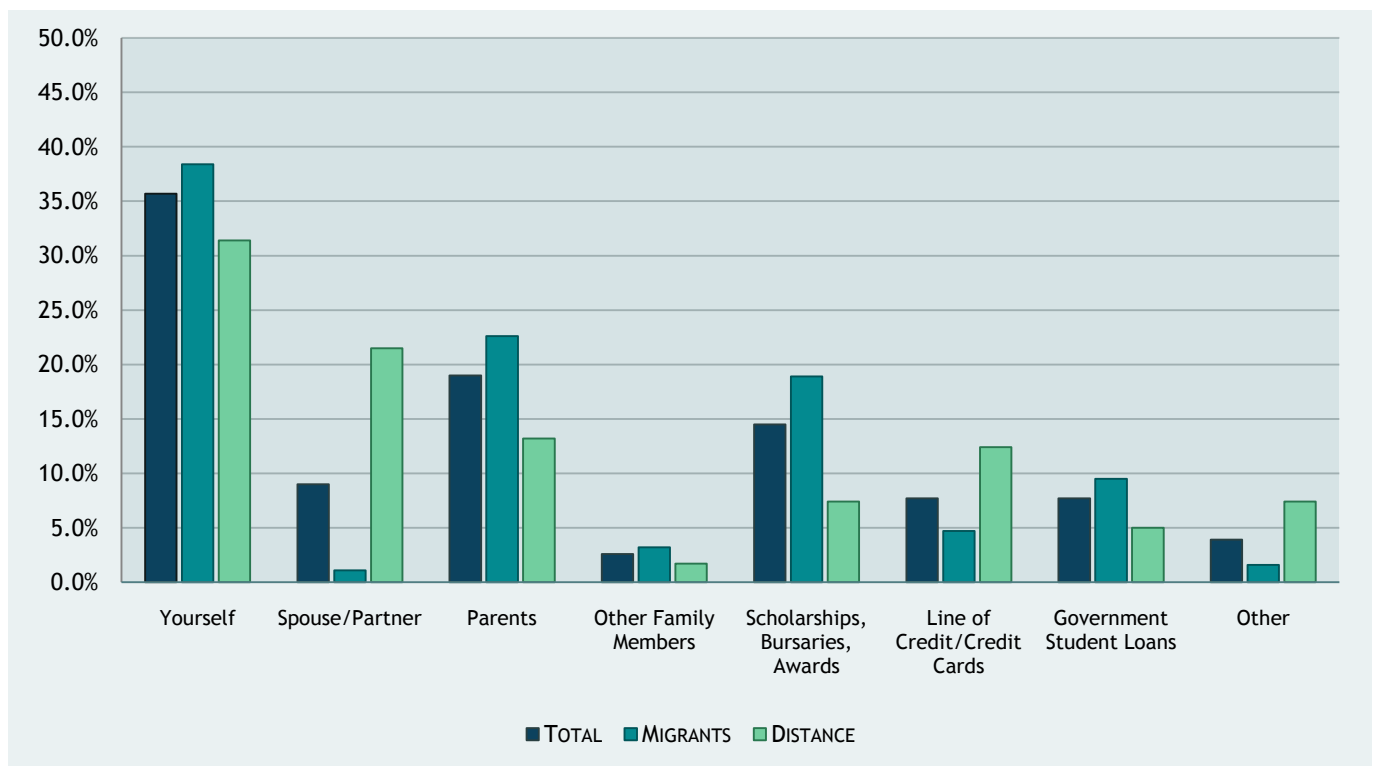


3.5.1.2 The SECOND MOST important funding source

The researchers wanted to know other ways students finance their education; namely, the second most important source of funding. For this purpose, the survey asked students to indicate their second most important source of funding from the same list of options as above. Overall, the largest number of students chose 'Yourself' as their second most important funding source (111 or 35.7%). This was followed by 'Parents' (59 or 19.0%) and 'Scholarships, bursaries and/or awards' (45 or 14.5%). The complete results are provided in Figure 3.14. As before, there were differences between the responses of

migrant and distance students. Firstly, while the most common choice for both migrant and distance students was 'Yourself', this was somewhat more common for migrants (38.4%) than distance students (31.4%). The second most common choice for migrants was 'Parents' (22.6%) compared to 'Spouse or Partner' for distance students (21.5%). 'Parents' was the third most common source selected by distance students (13.2%), and the third most common option for migrants was 'Scholarships, bursaries and/or awards' (18.9%).

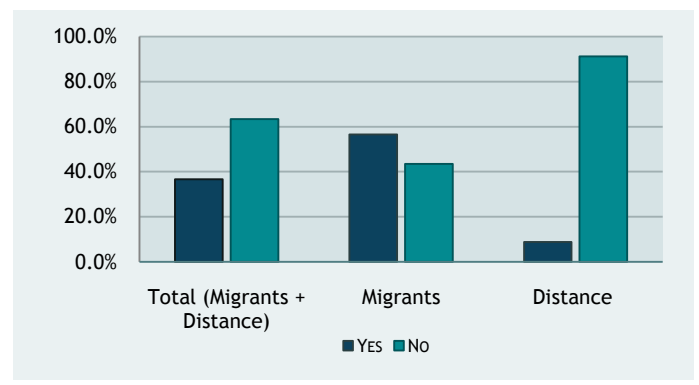
Figure 3.14: Second Most Important Funding Source for Education



3.5.1.3 Financial Award Recipients

The survey asked students to indicate whether or not they were recipients of a scholarship, bursary, or other monetary award at the time of the survey. The survey responses indicated that, overall, most students had not received such funding. The total number of financial award recipients was 119 (36.6%) (see Figure 3.15). However, there was a significant difference between migrant and distance students in terms of financial award holders, $\chi^2 (1, N=325) = 77.830, p=.000$. A majority of the students in the Migrant group (56.6%) had received

Figure 3.15: Current Scholarship Recipients



financial awards compared with a much smaller proportion of students in the Distance group (8.8%).

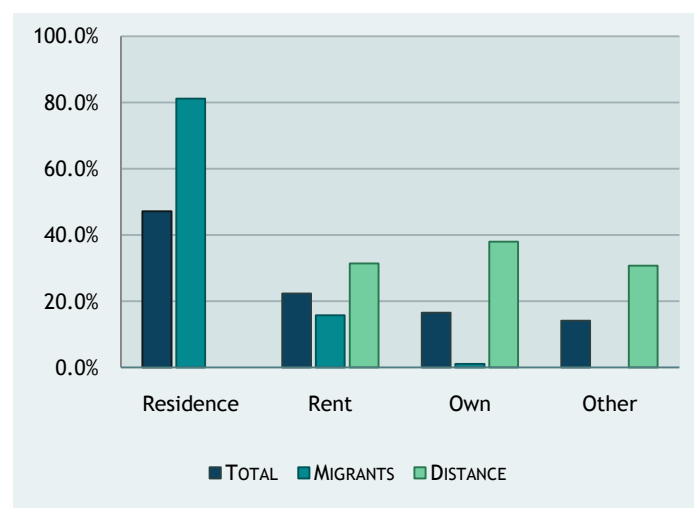
3.5.2 Living Arrangements: Accommodations While Enrolled

3.5.2.1 Current Accommodations

The survey asked students to choose one of the following statements which best described their accommodations at the time of completing the survey: 1) 'University Residence'; 2) 'Accommodations that I Rent'; 3) 'Accommodations that I or My Parents Own'; or 4) 'Other'. As Figure 3.16 shows, just under half of the students chose 'University Residence' (154 or 47.1%). This was followed by 'Accommodations That I Rent' (73 or 22.3%) and 'Accommodations that I or My Parents Own' (54 or 16.5%). There were differences between the responses given

by migrants and the responses given by distance students. Perhaps not surprisingly,

Figure 3.16: Student Accommodations



none of the students in Distance group indicated that they lived in residence. Over 80% of the migrants lived in the university residence while another 15.8% lived in rental

accommodations. In comparison, distance students were more likely to report that they lived in a property that they owned³⁰ (38.0%) or rented (31.4%).

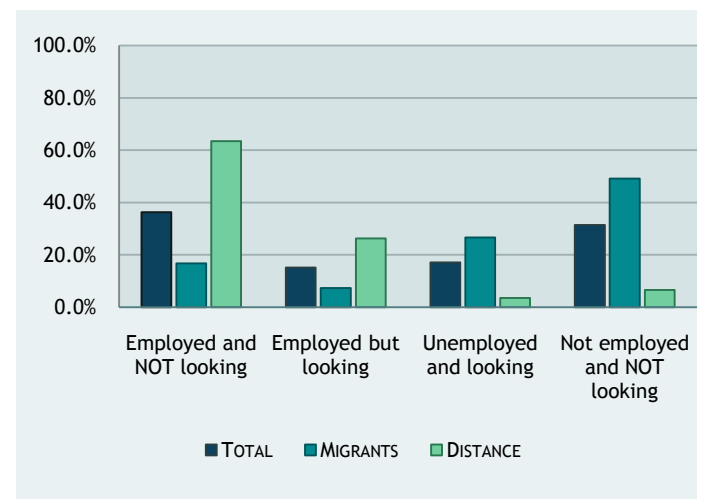
3.5.3 Employment: Working While in University

3.5.3.1 Current Employment Status

Students were asked to choose from the following four options that described their employment status at the time of the survey: 1) 'Employed, and NOT looking for more or different work': 2) 'Employed, but looking for more or different work'; 3) 'Unemployed (i.e., looking for work)', and 4) 'Not employed and NOT looking for work'. The most common option selected by students was the first one, 'Employed, and NOT looking for more or different work'. The total number of students who chose this option was 119 (36.3%), and more distance students (63.5%) than migrants (16.8%) chose this option. Close to a third of students (103 or 31.4%) indicated that they were 'Not employed and NOT looking for work', with more migrants (49.2%) than distance students (6.6%) choosing this option. Similar proportions of students chose 'Unemployed (i.e., looking for work)' (17.1%)

and 'Employed, but looking for more or different work' (15.2%) as their employment status. More than a quarter of the migrant students were represented among the unemployed and a similar proportion of distance students were 'Employed, but looking for more or different work' (see Table 3.17).

Figure 3.17: Student Employment Status



3.5.3.2 Number of Jobs Currently Held

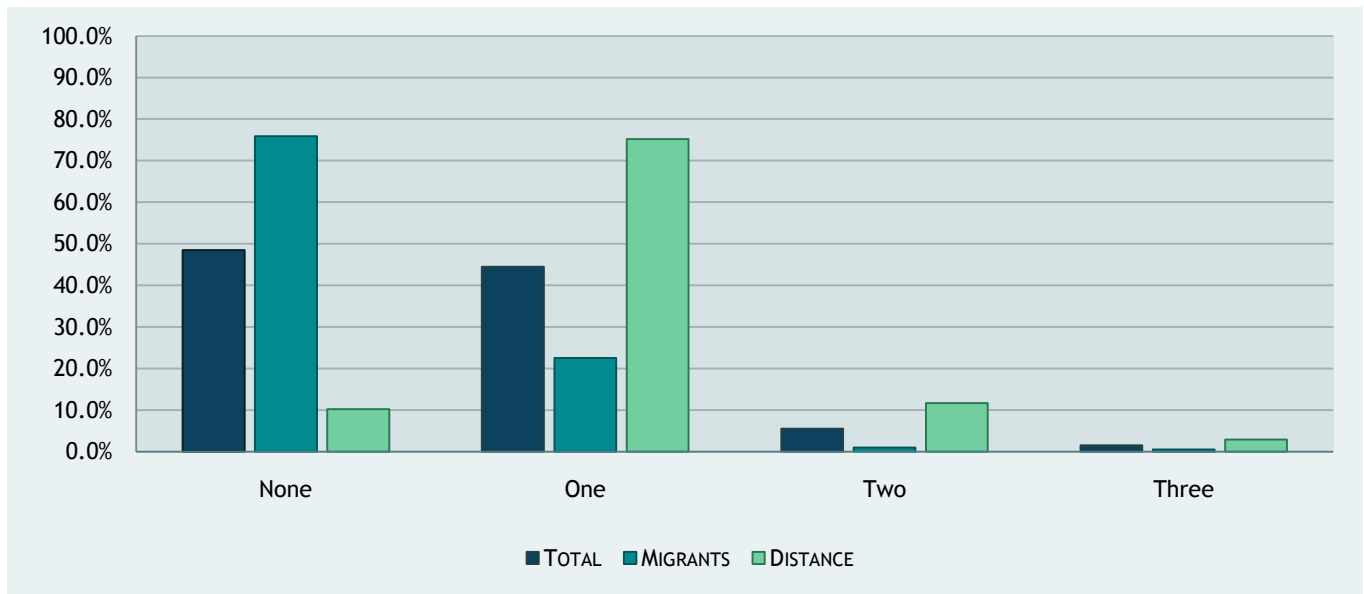
Students were asked to indicate how many jobs they had at the time of taking the

survey. Almost half of the respondents indicated that they held no job (48.5% or 159

students) while 146 students (44.5%) worked at one job at the time of the survey. Relatively fewer respondents indicated that they worked more than one job. Most of the migrants (75.9%) held no job while almost one-quarter

(23.8%) of them worked one job (see Table 3.18). Most of the distance students held one job (102, or 75.2%) and close to 12% of the remaining distance respondents held two jobs.

Figure 3.18: Number of Jobs Held

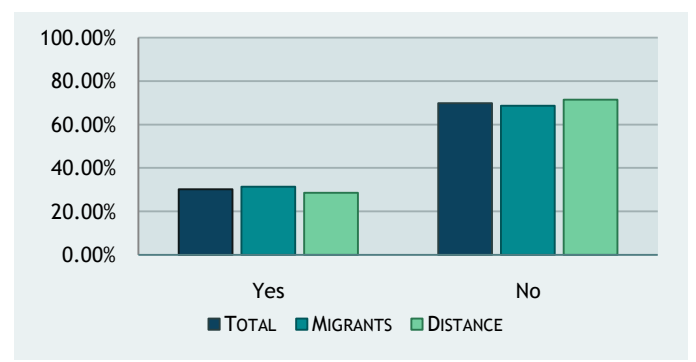


3.6 Family/Friendship Links to Memorial and Newfoundland Labrador

3.6.1 Relatives Residing in Newfoundland and Labrador at the Time of Application

We asked students to indicate whether or not they had relatives residing in Newfoundland and Labrador at the time of their application to Memorial University. Most students said they did not (229 or 69.8%).

Figure 3.19: Relatives Residing in NL at the Time of Application



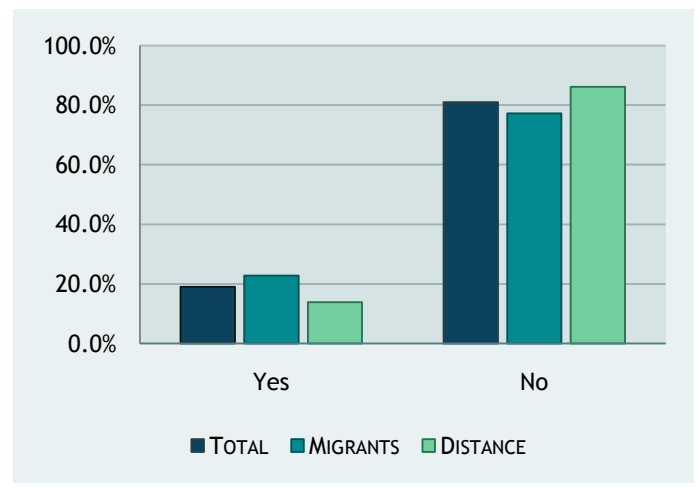
While the difference was not statistically significant, the data show that a slightly larger percentage of migrants (31.4%) than

distance students (28.5%) had relatives in the province (see Figure 3.19).

3.6.2 Relatives Attending Memorial University at the Time of Application

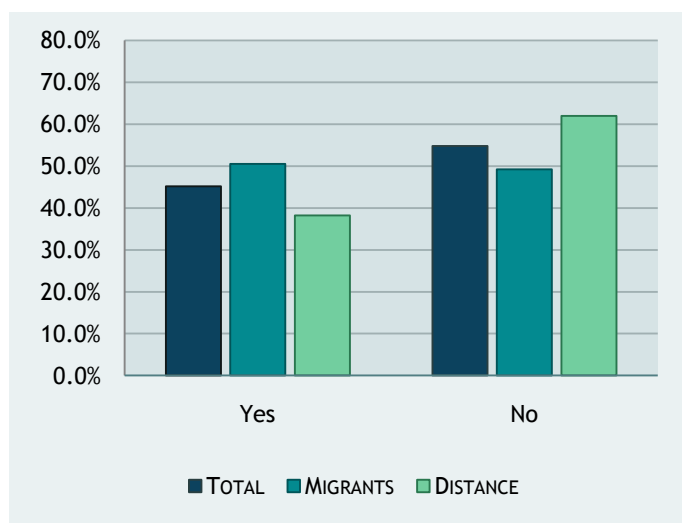
The researchers also wanted to ascertain whether the students surveyed had relatives attending Memorial University at the time of their application. As Figure 3.20 indicates, over three quarters of the students surveyed (264 or 81.0%) indicated they did not have relatives attending the university. A larger proportion of migrants (22.8%) than distance students (13.9%) had relatives at the university. This difference between the two groups was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1, N=326) = 4.069, p=.044$.

Figure 3.20: Relatives Attending Memorial at the Time of Application



3.6.3 Friends Residing in Newfoundland and Labrador at the Time of Application

Figure 3.21: Friends Residing in NL at the Time of Application



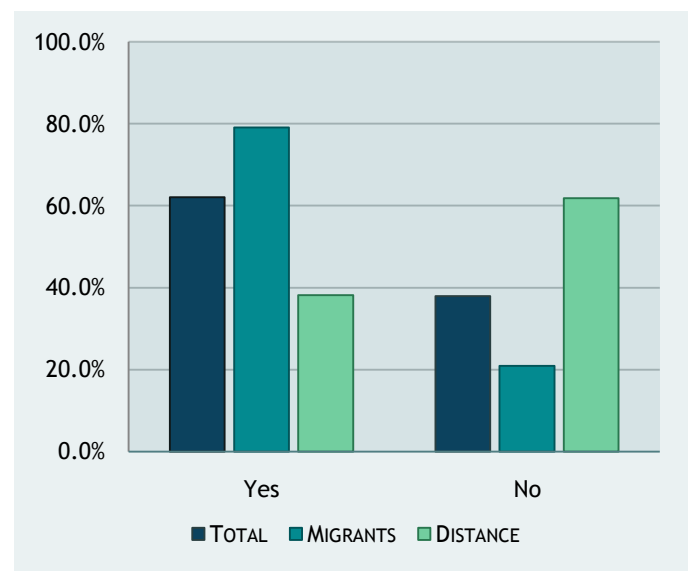
The researchers asked students if they had any friends residing in Newfoundland and Labrador at the time of their application to Memorial University. The data indicated that close to half of the students who completed the survey (147 or 45.2%) had friends living in Newfoundland and Labrador when they applied to the university (see Figure 3.21). Just over half of the migrants (50.5%) had friends in Newfoundland and Labrador compared to 38% of distance students. This

difference between the Migrant and Distance groups was statistically significant, χ^2 (1, N=325) = 5.059, $p = .024$.

3.6.4 Friends Attending/Applying to Memorial University

The researchers also wanted to get a sense of whether survey respondents had friends attending or applying to Memorial University at the time of their own application. Over half of the students surveyed pointed out that they did have friends attending Memorial or applying to Memorial at the time they were applying (203 or 62.1%) (see Figure 3.22). Among the migrant students, 79.1% had friends attending or applying to Memorial. In contrast, 38.2% of distance students had friends attending or applying to Memorial. This difference was statistically significant, χ^2 (1, N=325) = 56.234, $p=.000$.

Figure 3.22: Friends Attending or Applying to Memorial at the Time of Application



3.7 Previous Formal Education

3.7.1 High School Grades

We asked students to report their average grade in high school, using one of the following ranges: 60–65%, 70–75%, 80–85%, or 90%+. Most students (172 or 52.6%) indicated that their high school average was in the 80%–85% range (see Figure 3.23). The second highest percentage of students ranked themselves in the 70%–75% range (77 or

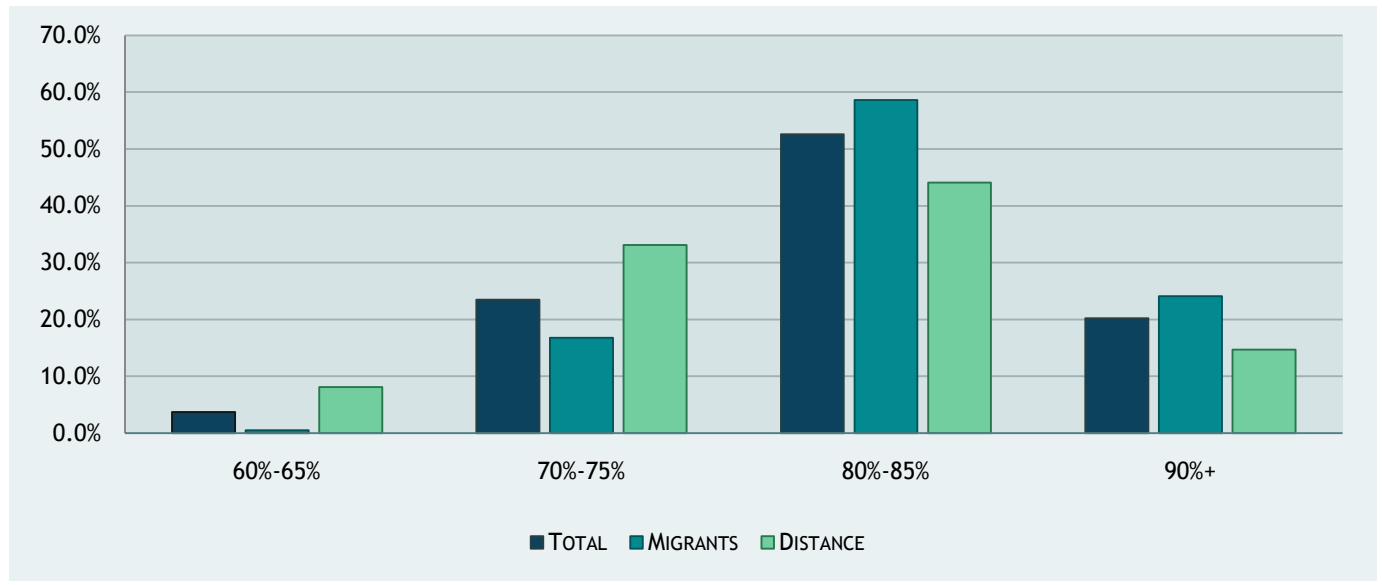
23.5%), followed by students who were in then the 90%+ range (66 or 20.2%).

Differences in the responses of Migrant and Distance groups were statistically significant, χ^2 (3, N=327) = 28.034, $p=.000$. More of the migrants (58.6%) reported that their high school grades were in the 80%–85% range compared to 44.1% of distance

students. Likewise, a greater proportion of migrant students (24.1%) fell into the 90%+ category than distance students (14.7%). More

of the distance students (33.1%) were in the 70%–75% range than were migrants (16.8%).

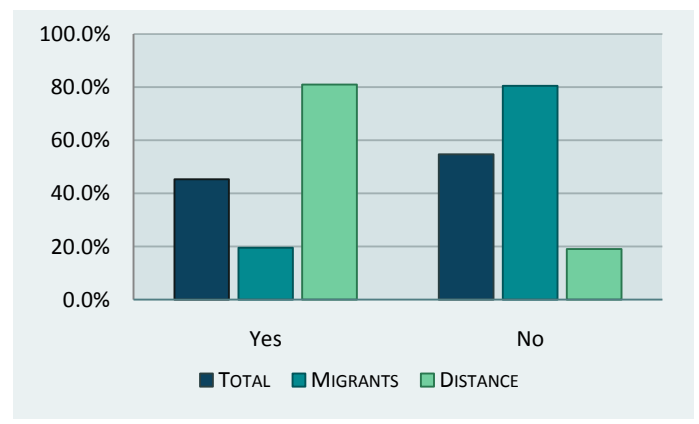
Figure 3.23: Average Grade in High School



3.7.2 Other Post-Secondary Institutions Attended

The researchers asked students if they had attended any other post-secondary institutions besides Memorial University prior to their application and enrollment. Most of the students indicated that they had not attended another institution (179 or 54.7%) (see Figure 3.24). Many more distance students (81.0%) had attended a previous institution compared to migrants (19.5%). These differences were statistically significant $\chi^2(1, N=327) = 121.713, p = .000$.

Figure 3.24: Institutions Attended Other Than Memorial



3.8 Experiences at Memorial University

Students were asked a series of questions about their experiences at Memorial University. Specifically, students were asked whether they felt their tuition fees were reasonable, whether they were satisfied with their experience overall, if they would recommend Memorial University to others, and whether they are satisfied with student services for out-of-province students. Responses to these questions were made on the following 5-point scale: 1)

Strongly Disagree', 2) 'Somewhat Disagree', 3) 'Neither Agree nor Disagree', 4) 'Somewhat Agree', or 5) 'Strongly Agree'. As the data in Table 3.6 show, students tended to agree with each of the four statements. With the exception of the first question on the subject of tuition fee levels, there were no statistically significant differences between the responses of migrant and distance students.

Table 3.6: Experiences at Memorial University

	Migrants	Distance	Total
The tuition fees I pay at Memorial University are reasonable*	4.71	4.47	4.61
Overall, I am satisfied with my experience at Memorial University	4.45	4.36	4.41
I would recommend Memorial University to others	4.67	4.56	4.62
Overall, I am satisfied with the services available to out-of-province students at Memorial University	4.08	4.15	4.11

* $p < .01$

3.9 Post-Graduation Residence Plans

The researchers were interested in where students planned to live following their graduation from Memorial. They were asked if they planned to live in their home community after graduation, if they would consider living in Newfoundland and Labrador following graduation, and if they would be willing to re-locate to Newfoundland and Labrador for a job. As before, students provided their responses on a 5-point scale from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'.

Overall, the responses to the three statements tended toward the neutral position of 'Neither Agree nor Disagree'; however, there were significant differences between the Migrant and Distance groups on all three accounts. Responses of the distance students indicated that they were more in favour of living in their home community following graduation than were migrants. For their part, the migrants were more amenable to living in Newfoundland and Labrador following completion of their program.

Table 3.7: Post-Graduation Residence Plans

	Migrants	Distance	Total
I plan to live in my home community after graduation*	2.95	3.34	3.11
I would consider living in Newfoundland and Labrador following graduation**	3.31	2.50	2.98
I would be willing to re-locate to Newfoundland and Labrador for a job**	3.62	2.98	3.35

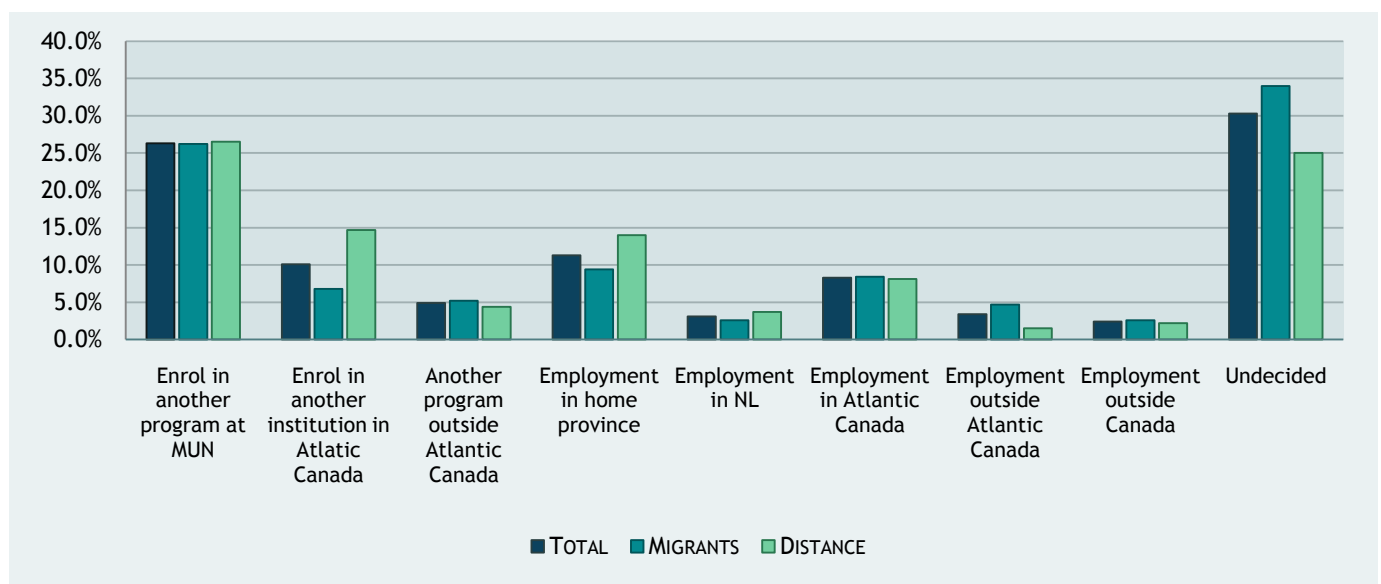
* $p < .01$, ** $p < .001$

3.10 Post-Graduation Plans

The researchers asked students to select which of the following 9 statements best represented their plans for after they complete their current program of study: 1) 'Enroll in another program at Memorial University'; 2) 'Enroll in another program at a different institution in Atlantic Canada; 3) 'Enroll in another program at a different institution in Canada, but outside Atlantic Canada'; 4) 'Find employment in your home province'; 5) Find employment in Newfoundland and Labrador'; 6) 'Find employment in Atlantic Canada'; 7) 'Find employment in Canada, outside of Atlantic Canada'; 8) 'Find employment in another country outside of Canada'; and 9) 'Undecided'.

The selection most commonly made by students was 'Undecided' (99 or 30.3%). The second and third most commonly selected statements were: 'Enroll in another program at Memorial University' (86 students or 26.3%), and 'Find employment in your home province' (37 students or 11.3%). More of the migrants (34.0%) were undecided about their future plans than were distance students (25.0%). Enrollment in another program at Memorial University was most frequently selected by distance students (26.5%). The response was selected by a similar proportion of the migrants (26.2%). See Figure 3.25 for complete results.

Figure 3.25: Plans Following Completion of Program



3.11 Experiences with Housing in the St. John's Area (Migrant Group Only)

Students in the Migrant group were asked a series of questions about their experiences with housing in the St. John's area. They were asked to respond to each of the following five statements with 'Strongly Disagree', 'Somewhat Disagree', 'Neither Agree nor Disagree', 'Somewhat Agree', or 'Strongly Agree': 1) 'Rental Housing in the St. John's area is affordable'; 2) 'There is enough rental housing in the St. John's area'; 3) There is enough on-campus housing available at Memorial University'; 4) I have experienced difficulty in securing on-campus accommodations at Memorial University; and 5) 'I have experienced difficulty in finding a

suitable place to live this semester'. The highest levels of agreement were indicated following three statements: 'There is enough on-campus housing available at Memorial University' (3.49). This was followed by 'Rental housing in the St. John's area is affordable' (3.10), and 'There is enough rental housing in the St. John's area (2.88). There was less agreement with the remaining two statements as follows: 'I have experienced difficulty in securing on-campus accommodations at Memorial University' (2.17), and 'I have experienced difficulty in finding a suitable place to live this semester' (1.98).

3.12 Experiences with Distance Courses (Distance Group Only)

Distance students were asked about their learning experiences in their distance courses. They were to indicate whether they 1) 'Strongly Disagree', 2) 'Somewhat Disagree', 3) 'Neither Agree nor Disagree', 4) 'Somewhat Agree', or 5) 'Strongly Agree' in

response to these statements: 'I believe I can learn the same amount in either distance or on-campus courses', 'I believe I can earn the same grade in distance and on-campus courses', 'I enjoy studying by distance', 'I would prefer distance education for courses I

take in the future’, and ‘Overall, I am satisfied with distance education at Memorial University’. As the data in Table 3.8 show, students tended to agree with each of the statements, suggesting that they regarded their distance course experiences to be more positive than negative.

Table 3.8: Experiences at Memorial University

I believe I can learn the same amount in either distance or on-campus courses	3.78
I believe I can earn the same grade in distance and on-campus courses	3.83
I enjoy studying by distance	4.02
I would prefer distance education for courses I take in the future	3.93
Overall, I am satisfied with distance education at Memorial University	4.34

Section 4:

Interview Results



Following our survey of Maritime students at Memorial University, we conducted a series of interviews with students to provide a richer contextualization of their perspectives on enrolling at Memorial. Sixty-nine students participated in these interviews.

4.1 Selecting a Post-Secondary Education Option

4.1.1 Services/Programs Utilized When Deciding Where to Attend University

Students were asked about the extent to which they utilized institutional resources, such as services or programs, in their decision-making regarding post-secondary education. Most students told us that they had used some kind of program or service to help them in their decision-making. The most common resources utilized by students

were the internet/web media, typically university websites, and other promotional materials, such as pamphlets and advertisements.

A small number of students also mentioned recruiting/information sessions they attended, such as university/career fairs, and many had communicated with

university representatives rather than guidance counsellors. In addition to services or programs they sought out, students often cited word of mouth as a source of information.

Migrant Student Response:

Oh, it was word of mouth and then me researching the programs they have because they do have a lot of, say, med school and pharmacy and nursing, a lot of

the programs that interest me, so I committed a lot of time and research on my own for both schools.

Distance Student Response:

It was actually someone who had already done the program that I know ... we just happened to be chatting about it because I knew that he took my program and he got his [degree], so I guess that's sort of how I found about it in the first place.

4.1.2 Other Post-Secondary Options Considered

Most respondents indicated that they considered other post-secondary options before deciding on Memorial. Institutions in the Maritime provinces were cited most frequently, followed by others in Canada.

Students in the Migrant group most often had considered a university closer to their home while most of the distance students had considered online university programs options in Canada.

4.1.3 Deciding to Study Outside Home Province

Students were asked whether they had first decided to study at a university outside of their home province prior to deciding to enroll at Memorial. Most students indicated that they had not. In some instances, responses demonstrated that institutional location was not a primary consideration.

Migrant Student Response:

I just decided that I wanted to go to MUN, and it didn't really matter where it was.

Migrant students who said that they did decide to study outside of their home province before settling on a specific choice often added that they wanted to 'get away' from home and experience university life on their own.

Migrant Student Response:

I wanted to get away from home for a bit for a change... I just wanted to experience a new place and meet new people.

Migrant Student Response:

Yes, that was the first thing...I wanted the experience...I've never been outside of my own province...I've been to other

countries, but I had never been to other provinces in Canada.

4.2 Factors Influencing Decision to Attend Memorial University

4.2.1 Individuals Who Influenced Decision to Attend Memorial

Most of the students who were interviewed indicated that there was no one individual in particular who influenced their decision to attend Memorial. Many indicated that they took the initiative to explore their own post-secondary education options themselves. Students whose decisions were influenced by others indicated that family, friends, co-workers, and Memorial University alumni played a key role in their decision-making.

Some students knew others who were or had been living in Newfoundland and Labrador, and some indicated that they knew others who were attending or had attended Memorial. Students often made reference to multiple individuals who helped them in their decision-making.

Migrant Student Response:

A lot of my friends were going. My parents enjoyed [attending Memorial] ... my friends' parents enjoyed it, and just... it's

pretty cheap so I just thought... I mean, I just wanted to get away from... move away from home, just try something new.

Distance Student Response:

It was right after high school. I took a semester off, and I was talking to a guy who had gone to MUN, and he really captured my attention with how low the tuition prices were, and then so, anyway, long story short, here I am.

Migrant Student Response:

The people that came to my school and set up a booth, they were very good at – probably better than half the other schools I spoke to – about informing students about what they were getting into at MUN, and I did have a teacher in high school that had a son that went to MUN, and he was probably my favourite teacher, so we talked about it quite a bit, so there were quite a few people.

4.2.2 Academic and Program Considerations

As with the survey results, students who were interviewed frequently mentioned program availability and the reputation of Memorial's academic programs as important considerations in their decision-making. For distance students, the most prominent theme that emerged was the desire to attain educational or career goals. Many indicated they were hoping to finish a program they had started or to upgrade previously completed degrees. Some indicated the added incentive of being able to transfer previously completed course credits. A number of these students also indicated that they considered Memorial for reasons that were directly related to their job.

Distance Student Response:

I work at the community college in Halifax, and job opportunities that are coming up require for me to have my degree, so I looked at my different options for working full time, but still completing my BBA, and the MUN program, the distance program, was, I felt, one of my best options so decided to come back.

Distance Student Response:

Everybody actually talked about how good the online programming was, and that's all I was interested in was the online programs.

4.2.3 Connections to the University and Province

Some of the students pointed out that their personal attachment to Newfoundland had played a role in their decision to consider attending Memorial University. In some cases, these students were either from the province or their parents were. Other students mentioned that they began thinking about attending the university after visiting the campus in St. John's. Familiarity with the Memorial University campus and its programs was also established through alumni and other personal contacts.

Migrant Student Response:

Before this I was going to stay home in Nova Scotia, ...both my parents are [living in] Newfoundland so I hadn't seen them in a long time, right, so I figured kill two birds with one stone.

Distance Student Response:

I'm from Newfoundland originally, and I went to MUN in '97; and when my family moved to Nova Scotia, I transferred out of MUN and came to Halifax and attended

university here. Never did finish the degree though, and now I'm working in education myself.

4.2.4 Most Important Influence on Decision to Attend Memorial

The vast majority of migrant students told interviewers that the cost of attending university was the most important influence on their decision to attend Memorial. The migrant students who did not cite cost as the most important factor noted that program availability was the most important influence on their decision to attend Memorial. A number of students also indicated that they were primarily motivated by a desire to move to St. John's.

Migrant Student Response:

I suppose the cost of the school, really, because that was a big one. I was worried about where I was going to stay; and since it was so cheap, I was able to stay in residence for a good price.

Migrant Student Response:

Probably that they had pharmacy because that's where I wanted to go, and that's what program I wanted to study, so at that point like my parents are [saying] 'Like you can go wherever you want to. Like money isn't going to be issue, so take what you want to do and do that instead of worrying about money'.

For the majority of the distance students interviewed, academic-related factors were the most important influence on their decision-making process. Program and course considerations such as quality, accessibility, and reputation were of primary importance; particularly as these characteristics related to distance education.

Distance Student Response:

Accessibility of courses, that's probably my biggest thing, and seemed to be... a very big promoter within the university was the BBA - general BBA - doing distance, and the flexibility of it, so that was definitely the biggest factor.

Distance Student Response:

Well, it is the quality of the distance education, so where prior where it was cost and all that, now I'm working full time so I have money and all that, so now for me it's the quality and the accessibility and the ease of use of the distance education...

Many of the distance students also cited cost as a consideration in their decision to choose Memorial. In many cases, students mentioned the influence of cost alongside other factors.

Distance Student Response:

Obviously cost is really important...but also so is, you know, taking distance education that's engaging and important, so I can't

say that I'd take something that I hated even if it was cheaper...So I think they're both equally important. You know, they're both factors.

4.2.5 Cost of Tuition Fees at Memorial University

When migrant students were asked if the cost of tuition fees at Memorial was a consideration in their decision to attend the university, almost all indicated that tuition was indeed a positive influence on their decision to come to Memorial. In some instances, migrant students noted that while tuition was indeed a consideration when deciding whether or not to attend the university, it was not the biggest factor affecting their decision.

Migrant Student Response:

I love the program, but if it didn't... if it wasn't as inexpensive as it is, I would've had to wait a long time in order to save up...the price was a huge consideration.

Most distance students also said that tuition fees were a factor in their decision to attend Memorial, indicating in many cases that cost was “definitely” or “absolutely” important. One distance student noted that the cost of tuition was an influence, despite the fact that it would be paid for by their employer. Other distance students reported that cost was a less important consideration for them.

Distance Student Response:

[Tuition was] not at all [important]. My employer was going to pay... as long as I passed the course, my employer would pay for that and any other expenses like books or, you know, that sort of thing.

Students were also asked whether an increase in tuition or other university fees would cause them to reconsider their enrollment at Memorial. Most of the migrant students said they would reconsider attending the university if fees increased, and many said that their reconsideration would depend on the extent of the increase and how the cost compared to other universities closer to home.

Migrant Student Response:

Yeah, I probably would [reconsider]...If it was like on par with other universities, I'd probably have to move back home.

Migrant Student Response:

Well, probably even just over like \$1,500 would...So if it was the same tuition as

other universities, no, definitely not...I wouldn't come back.

While many migrant students indicated that they were initially attracted to the low tuition fee costs at Memorial, some said they had committed to the institution; therefore, they would stay despite an increase.

Migrant Student Response:

No, I'd still stay if it went up... MUN is known to have a really cheap tuition, so if it went up a lot, I guess it wouldn't like be known that well. Like it wouldn't be known as well for that.

Migrant Student Response:

Not now probably. I think I love it here and I'll stay, but maybe, initially, when I didn't know and before I came here it might've...I wouldn't like it. I'd prefer if they stayed lower...

Overall, migrant students were averse to an increase in tuition fees, particularly if those fees rose to become as high as other institutions located nearer to their family home. Some students reported that they it would be difficult for them to manage much of an increase in fees due to already tight budgets.

In contrast, most of the distance students who were interviewed indicated that they would not reconsider their enrollment at the university if tuition fees were to increase. Some of these students pointed out that they were not paying their tuition fees themselves or that they had the funds to support themselves as a result of being employed. A number of students acknowledged that their responses might be different if they were financially responsible for the costs of attending university themselves.

Distance Student Response:

It would probably cause me to re-evaluate compared to other universities, but MUN is... I mean, it's nowhere near the other... you know, other universities are five times the tuition rate; so, I mean, even with the small increase I'm sure it would be fine, so... but it would cause me to re-evaluate, yes.

Distance Student Response:

At this stage in the game, no. I'm halfway through my Bachelor's so... I mean, unless it was a really significant increase of, you know, double...Then I'd definitely reconsider but, no, to this point, no.

4.2.6 Reasons for Selecting Distance Education

Students were asked why they decided to take distance courses rather than face-to-face courses at Memorial University. Most of the distance students told the interviewers that they actually preferred face-to-face classes over distance classes; however, many indicated that they chose distance courses due to limitations associated with their family and career responsibilities. The remarks from this group of distance students speak to the life situations of many of these individuals, especially compared to the migrant group which consists primarily of 'traditional' university students.

Distance Student Response:

Well, the tuition in Halifax is absolutely insane. I've got a large family, six kids, and I work full time, so the flexibility of the distance program really appealed to me.

Distance Student Response:

I guess I would rather be in the classroom, but I very much enjoy the distance also...It's hard to say. There's pros and cons to both, I guess...by being able to do it online I saved a lot of money for accommodations – in that way since I didn't have to leave my home to do this.

Many of the distance students interviewed said that they preferred to enroll

in courses delivered via distance. These students often cited the flexibility, convenience, and ability to work at their own pace without having to attend classes. One student suggested that they preferred distance courses because the online course format is more interactive than large classrooms.

Distance Student Response:

Yeah, the flexibility part of it definitely is an advantage there that I can... it works around my lifestyle – you know, around work, around kids, around other obligations. You can fit it in there, whereas having to run off to a class. Everything has to come to a halt to get to that class so, you know, the distance education has definitely benefits that way.

Distance Student Response:

I... went to MUN, and there's a class, a big auditorium all full of, you know, 150 people, and you're in there and there's an instructor at the front trying to teach you something. I found that useless, but this way it's more interactive. You're right there. The information is in front of you while your classmates are pretty much right there. You can interact with them through the forum...and stuff like that. It's just... it's way better.

4.3 Migrant Student Experiences at Memorial University

4.3.1 Impressions of the University

Overall, students who moved to St. John's and enrolled in full-time studies at Memorial University's main campus had positive impressions of the university. They spoke positively about their experiences with professors, their use of campus services, and their social interactions on campus. One major area of concern raised by students was a perceived lack of parking facilities on campus. A number of students indicated that they were pleased with their university experience thus far, and saw little, if any, need for improvement.

Migrant Student Response:

From what I've had so far, I've had very, very good profs. I've had... like there's tons and tons of help centers here. Like there's writing centers and a help center for almost every course I've been in, so off the top of my head I really can't think of anything that I wouldn't... that MUN doesn't have that I need, really.

Migrant Student Response:

I like how here... kind of like a close connection with MUN. Even though it is a big university, living in res, there's not that

many people who live here... and you feel very connected and a part of the university, and that's really nice, and people here are just really friendly, and I like all my programs and the cost, and overall it's been a great experience so far. It has a lot of good qualities.

Many of the migrant students talked about positive experiences with their classes and professors. A number of students noted how their professors were accessible, approachable, and accommodating to students' schedules and commitments beyond the classroom.

Migrant Student Response:

[It is] easy to get in touch with your professors. [I thought] that ought to be a more difficult because of the class sizes, but they're usually pretty good to get in touch with, and you can make appointments with.

Students who used campus student services had positive impressions of their quality. A number of students noted that the quality of the facilities and services provided by the university was a positive surprise.

Migrant Student Response:

The residence is different than I thought...bigger than I assumed; more rooms than I had assumed there were, and the tunnels were a pleasant surprise. I had no idea about those before coming here. Those were great.

A number of students also mentioned that they were pleasantly surprised by the friendly and socially accommodating atmosphere on-campus at the university.

Migrant Student Response:

...I mean, you feel so at home, and like everybody can just talk about anything. Like the openness of the classroom discussions, that surprised me quite a bit. Like everybody is just so friendly.

Migrant Student Response:

Yeah, just how friendly everyone is around here and how everyone can hold a conversation with everybody because everyone is so open minded and friendly.

4.3.2 Impressions of the City of St. John's

Students were asked about their experiences in moving to the City of St. John's, their initial impressions when they first arrived, and how they felt about their new surroundings. The majority of students expressed positive initial impressions of the city. Many of the respondents commented on the friendliness of the people and the local culture.

Migrant Student Response:

The city is really great and that other people here are fantastic, and the school is awesome and I love the campus, and everything is really convenient.

Migrant Student Response:

It felt really... like, I mean, really just at home, really. St. John's is kind of like a miniature Halifax, so I did enjoy it. It's like a mixture between Halifax and Cape Breton.

4.3.3 Attending University Outside Home Province

Students were asked if they were satisfied with their decision to study outside of their home province and move to St. John's. The majority of students commented that they were happy with their decision. A number of students who said that they had felt homesick initially or since moving away from their home province also noted that they did not regret their choice.

Migrant Student Response:

No, I mean, I'm glad I decided to study outside my own province because, you know, it made me think about a lot of things, right? Gave me, you know, like experience and, you know, it opened up my mind a little bit so, you know, I don't regret it at all.

Migrant Student Response:

I miss home. I do. I miss the familiar things – all my friends are in New Brunswick – but

I don't regret it. I don't think I ever could. I like the difference, and now... in my lifetime I never wanted to travel. Now I would kind of like to see the other provinces because if this is how different this one is from mine, the others must be insanely different, so I don't regret it at all.

Only one of the migrant students who were interviewed indicated that they wished they had stayed in their hometown. This student cited personal finances as a reason for their second thoughts.

Migrant Student Response:

I do wish I'd kind of stayed just because it wouldn't be as expensive. Like for me to travel here, it's almost just as expensive as it is for me to travel to any other school because you have to fly as opposed to driving, right, so that's a little... that kind of made me think that maybe if I wanted to save money for a like the future...

4.4 Distance Student Experiences at Memorial University

Most of the distance students were positive and enthusiastic about their experiences taking distance education courses at Memorial. Most indicated that they

had not experienced any significant difficulties in their courses.

Distance Student Response:

There's a lot of support so, even though it's distance, I'm getting as much support... or, actually, maybe more than if I was going in person, and that's from the instructor but, also, I like how there's definitely interaction among your classmates, which there isn't in every distance program, and I just find it very engaging – like the material, and it's very relevant to what I'm doing.

Distance Student Response:

...the only thing that's surprising to me so far the complete freedom you have. There's very little pressure on the distance education. You have your assignment due dates; and, you know, as long as you've got the whole week to do your

assignment... I guess the complete freedom...

Students held diverse perspectives on the quality of instruction and support services. In some instances, students cited concerns about online course navigation and occasional scheduling and technical problems that limited access and full course participation. A number of students raised concerns about coursework, such as having a higher workload than expected as well as unanticipated course requirements.

Distance Student Response:

I think it takes more time than I thought. Like I thought I might be able to take two courses at a time on top of my full-time job, but there's no way I would ever consider that now.

4.5 Paying for Costs Associated with Attending Memorial

All interview respondents were asked how they intended to pay for their tuition and other costs associated with attending university. Most of the migrant students indicated that they incurred some form of

debt such as student loans, bank loans, or personal lines of credit. Many also had financial assistance from family members, employment income or personal savings, or scholarships.

Migrant Student Response:

Right now I have a personal line of credit, so I work in the summers and I use like half of that money, and that goes to my personal line of credit each year, and my dad and parents help me out, so as soon as I graduate, like I'm hopefully going to have a job, so I'll be using money from my job to pay.

Migrant Student Response:

Well, the first year I had quite a few scholarships and bursaries which helped, and I've always worked, so I pay for a lot of it myself, but next year I'll probably actually get a loan, and the money I make throughout the summer.

Most of the distance students who were interviewed intended to pay for their

tuition and other costs using their personal or employment earnings. Another commonly cited source of funding was employers. Some of the distance students indicated that their employer contributed financially in some way to their education. Only a small number of these students were depending on student loans, lines of credit, and/or other bank loans.

Distance Student Response:

I pay for it myself; and then, actually, where I work there's a fund that every year you can apply to have only tuition reimbursed – so not books or any other costs, so no student fees or anything like that – and it's not a given that you'll get reimbursed, but so I've actually been reimbursed for all my tuition.

Section 5:

Conclusion



This research study was carried out to provide insight into the underlying reasons for student migration from the Maritime provinces to Newfoundland and Labrador. In addition to making a contribution to the broader literature on student aspirations, post-secondary education choice, and inter-provincial student migration in Canada, this research study can assist in the development of strategies for increasing the number of out-of-province students enrolled at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

As the population in Newfoundland and Labrador ages, post-secondary institutions in the province will be challenged to maintain current enrollment levels. One way to maintain and grow enrollment levels

is to attract students from other provinces in Canada. In addition to ensuring enrollment stability, this is an important avenue for attracting workers to the province to meet future labour force requirements.

The numbers of out-of-province students at Memorial University have been on the increase, and this is especially the case with students from the Maritime region. The most important factors attracting students from the neighbouring Maritime provinces to Memorial, as evidenced by the results of our survey and interviews, include overall costs, the low cost of tuition, the university's reputation for high quality programs, and the comprehensive choice of program options offered at Memorial.

There are notable and significant differences which influence the choices of migrant students who relocate to Newfoundland and Labrador for full-time study and distance students who maintain their residence in their home province and study at Memorial using distance education means. Our results reveal a degree of distinctiveness in the choices and lifestyles of students in these Migrant and Distance student groups. In short, they are two very different groups with different expectations and concerns.

For the migrant students, the influence of friends appears to be an important factor in deciding to come to Memorial. These students relied on encouragement from friends and were more likely than distance students to have friends residing in Newfoundland and Labrador and attending/applying to Memorial as well. Most migrant students in the study enrolled in Arts and Science programs in their first-year at Memorial. Most of the distance students, in comparison, entered Arts and Marine Institute programs in their first-year.

In comparison to migrants, distance students were more likely to be of the 'first generation' in their families to attend post-secondary education. Those enrolled in distance education courses also tended to be older and were far more likely to be employed. Unlike migrants, who relied far more on parents and student loans to cover educational costs, distance students were

much more likely to cover their educational costs with their own personal sources of financing or financial support from their employer.

While cost was ranked highly by both migrant students and distance students, program availability was more important than cost for those enrolled in distance studies. The cost of tuition fees was also ranked as highly important by students in both groups, although fees were of a significantly greater concern to migrant students.

Since the late 1990s, the Newfoundland and Labrador government has opted to keep tuition fees frozen. At the same time, it has provided increased annual funding to Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic to offset the institutional pressures that would otherwise have resulted from a low tuition fee policy on its own. As a result, the cost of tuition fees at the university and the provincial college are competitively lower than most other provinces in Canada.

As our study has shown, the perceived cost advantage of attending Memorial University has served to attract students from the neighbouring Maritime provinces. In deciding the future direction of tuition fee levels, policy-makers will need to weigh the benefits of continuing to subsidize low tuition in order to maintain enrollment levels at post-secondary institutions, sustain an educated and competitive workforce, and realize the many economic contributions of the post-secondary education sector.

Memorial has also developed a solid reputation for quality and excellence that students from outside of the province are attracted to. In addition, the comprehensive and diverse nature of the programs offered by Memorial provides an opportunity for the university to distinguish itself from competitor institutions in the Atlantic region and to market itself to a broad base of potential applicants.

Judging from our study results, Memorial's affordability, solid reputation, and comprehensiveness are key elements in attracting students from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. A sustained focus on these attributes may prove fruitful to the future recruitment efforts of the university and the sustainability of Memorial University of Newfoundland over the long-term.

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