Does Family Support, Students’ Future Thoughts and Credit Use Influence their Career Choices? The Case of Students at Vaal University of Technology

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Abstract
It is difficult to ignore the growing influence of families in the everyday lives of young South Africans. The family influence can be on the students’ future thoughts, credit use and career choices among others. Using a data set of 150 students from Wits University and Vaal University, the current study investigates the influence of family support on students’ career choices and the mediating role of credit use and future thoughts in this relationship. The results indicate that family support, future thoughts and credit use all influence student career choices in a positive way. However, only credit use has a significant impact on student career choices – hence indicating that credit availability and use plays a paramount role and influence on student career choices when compared to family support and student future thought. Implications of the research findings and future research directions are suggested in this study.

Keywords: Family support; Future thoughts; Credit use; Career choices; University.

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1.0. Introduction

It is difficult to ignore the growing impact of financial debt in the everyday lives of young South Africans. As the tuition has significantly increased over the few years in South Africa, it has become common for university students to finance their education through loans. This proposal seeks to find out the factors that influence a student to take studying loans and how those loans influence their career choice. Family support, credit use, future thoughts and career choice are the research variables of this study, these variables are of good interest to my research because they enable my research to clearly find the root problem to why students take credits and how the credit influence they career choice. When they are minimum financial support from family this leads.

Credit is a part of most college students' lives. Having access to credit can provide a convenient way to make purchases, a source of transportation, and even a means to attend college. Debt can impact students while they are in college, such as affecting concentration on their studies or having to reduce their course load in order to get a job (or increase work hours). Excessive debt may even lead to a student having to drop out of college (Baum, S. & O'Malley; 2003). According to Summak, 2003, it is important for this reason that the perceptions of young people about the future of their environments, near and far, are determined so that educational programs may be structured accordingly. Career choice although there is limited research on factors influencing students' career choices, Ozdemir and Hacıfazlioğlu (2008) found that parents and environment had a great influence on students' occupational preferences in Turkey. It was also found that students' expectations of universities varied greatly according to their social status and family income.

1.1. Problem Statement

The problem faced by young South African is of financial background when the family support is minimum this will lead many students to think of credit use. The amount of credit they get also affect the careers they eventually choose. A student who aspires to be a medical student and get a lower loan which cannot cover up the fees, this will make the student rethink of the career choice. Tuition fees have become very expensive that it has become nearly impossible for students to pay their own education by working. As a result, many students have graduated with thousands of Rands of debt outstanding. Educational debt is becoming a national issue as the fees for the University are vast increasing in both private and public universities. The researcher has shown that the real earning of parents has failed to keep pace with the increase of educational cost. Studies have shown that students' debt may be the next bubble for South Africa economy, when the bubble burst, the country is going to experience financial crisis and the consequential economic recession (Tourylai, 2012). Millett (2003) states in this article that student debts clearly give evidence of financial debt will hinder recent graduate's ability to pursue their aspirations for graduate educational. The world has set an expression that to have a better life is to be a graduate and that graduates earn more salary than those without. This has made students think of obtaining a degree. Families in developing countries have not been able to save enough money to pay tuition fees. When a student is from a family which the family is not well financed, this makes the student think of credit use (loan) in order to pursue their educational aspiration. The reason behind the research is to see how minimum family support can lead to students taking loans and the loan having an impact on career choice. Many students in South Africa end up going for the careers they don't intend to do, because of prestige, money and status.

Most studies on student career choices have been largely qualitative. More so, these studies have been conducted in developed countries such as Europe and the USA. The current study is unique in that it is one of the few attempts to investigate the antecedents of students’ career choices in South Africa – a research context that is rarely researched on. Moreover, the identification of
family support, credit use and future thoughts as antecedents of student career choices has rarely been investigated in the extant literature.

1.2. Contribution of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to have practical implications practitioners involved in student support and finance. In addition to that, the study will generate new literature which will add to the existing body of knowledge.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current research is to investigate the influence of family support on credit use, future thoughts and career choice.

1.4. Research Objective

The section below will explore the theoretical and empirical research objectives of this study.

1.4.1. Empirical Objectives

Given the purpose of the study, the following empirical objectives were developed.

- To investigate the influence of family support on credit use.
- To investigate the influence of family support on future thoughts.
- To investigate the influence of credit use on career choice.
- To investigate the influence of future thoughts on career choice.

1.5. Research Questions

- To what extent does family support influences student credit use in South Africa?
- To what extent does family support influences student future thoughts in South Africa?
- To what extent does student credit use influence their career choices in South Africa?
- To what extent does student future thoughts influences their career choices in South Africa?

2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Collective Efficacy Theory

Previous environmental behaviour studies have revealed that many people express pro-environmental attitude but that such attitude does not translate into environmentally responsible behaviours (Scott and Willits, 1994, 239-260). One reason that has been offered to this discrepancy between attitudes and behaviour is that although people's self-efficacy beliefs are key to individual actions undertaken to solve individual problems, such beliefs are less relevant for collective actions to solve problems perceived as a collective (e.g. the climate crisis Homburg & Stolberg, 2006: 1-14). The concept of collective efficacy is an essential addition to the study of environmental behaviours because people are social beings and rely upon each other to find solutions to problems relevant to improving their quality of life (Neville, 1986; 477). Neville (1997,477), defined perceived collective efficacy as groups' shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organise and execute the course of action required to produce given levels of attainment. Peoples shared belief in their collective power to produce desired results is crucial to solving collective problems such as climate change. Collective attainments are the products of a social system that involves not only the shared intentions, knowledge, and skills of its members and also the interactive, coordinated and synergetic dynamics of their transactions. Perceived collective efficacy is an emergent group-level property and not simply the sum of the efficacy beliefs of individual members. Group based copying requires people to focus on their collective rather their individual resources (van Zomeren, Postemes, & Spears, 2008; 234-235). The findings of Homburg and Stolberg's study (2006) also
disclose that when an environmental problem is treated as a stressor, collective efficacy, rather than self-efficacy, determines copying attempts and pro-environmental behaviour. This means that people must perceive their value of a collective effort to enhance pro-environmental behaviour and benefit sustainability. Although the theory of collective efficacy provide the useful framework to investigate how people view their ability and the effectiveness of their actions to solve environmental problems, it has been largely overlooked. In this study, collective efficacy theory is found useful because it assumed that family support plays an important role in students’ eventual career choices.

2.2. Family Support

Research dating back to 1990 or before indicate that family support in business and academic career choices is vital (Tropp, 2004; 267). For instance, a study by Tropp (2004:267) explored the role played by family members’ support in facilitating other members’ intentions and aspirations to seek a leadership role in family businesses. The same sentiments were prior to that echoed by Eckrich and Loughead (1996; 369-386), who highlighted and argued that children belonging to owners of family business find it difficult to establish their vocational identity without family support. In other family owned related studies, Sharma (2004;1-35) and Carr and Sequeira (2007; 1090–1098) recognise the potential impact of family business background and the role the family plays in the career choices of family members, and their future entrepreneurial intent. Such findings were later also buttressed by findings from Zellweger, Sieger, & Halter’s (2011; 521–536) who noted in their study that family support and socialisation played a unique role in career choice intentions of students with family business background. Schroder et al. (2011, 205–321) and Schroeder and Schmitt-Rodermund’s (2013; 476–485), found that one's identification with the family beliefs and values and parental job rewards impacted on their children’ career choice intentions.

According to Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008; 1107—1135), social or family support can be understood in terms of interpersonal transactions that involve emotional concern, instrumental aid, information, or appraisal. In this case, the emotional concern is associated with sharing life experiences whereas instrumental aid involves the provision of tangible help and services that directly assist a family member in need. Information refers to the provision of advice, suggestions, and information that a family member can use to address problems, and appraisal is linked to the provision of information that is useful for self-evaluation purposes — constructive feedback, affirmation and social comparison. Echoing the noted roles of family support by Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008), Zellweger, Sieger, & Halter’s (2011) noted that family members successes in career choices and career development were somehow linked to the emotional support and career advice they get from close family members.

2.3. Credit Use

Drawing from the extant literature, it is noted that use of credit cards has received much attention in recent years from members of the financial community and policy makers (Brobeck, 2007; Berkner, 2000; 151). On one hand, financial planners are interested in understanding how money attitudes relate to investment and savings behaviours, while financial counsellors seek to understand more about how and why individuals get themselves into debt. On the other hand, policy makers want to know why consumer credit card debt and personal bankruptcies have been rising so rapidly. There is increasing evidence in the existing literature that credit card debt has contributed to the rise in family financial problems and personal bankruptcies (Hayhoe, 2004; Brobeck, 2007). However, in order for one to understand why credit card use and debt are increasing it is important to understand an individual’s attitudes towards credit, money and debt. In 2002, Xiao, Noring and Anderson (2002; 155-174), studied college students’ attitude towards
credit use. The researchers developed a Likert summated rating scale composed of a series of statements relating to credit cards. Fifteen of the statements related to feelings about credit cards, ten statements dealt with knowledge and twelve statements related to usage of credit cards. The findings from this research indicated that college students had favourable attitudes towards credit. Of those surveyed, 82% of the students had favourable active attitudes and 67% had favourable cognitive attitudes. Related research has been conducted on credit and the level of debt an individual is willing to carry. Tokunaga (2004; 285-316) studied two groups of credit card users and those who had experienced severe financial problems and a control group who had not experienced such problems. This author found that heavy users of credit cards viewed money as a source of power/prestige, experienced more anxiety about financial matters than the control group, and were less concerned about retaining money.

Davies and Lea (2003; 266-279) examined attitudes towards student debt (student loans, bank overdrafts, credit cards and money owed to family and friends) of college students who were in their final year at university in the United Kingdom. Their findings suggest that students with higher incomes tend to have higher debts. According to Berkner (2000), more than half of undergraduate students in the United States borrow to finance their college education and an increasing number of students borrow the maximum available in the government student loan program. However, as more funds are borrowed for student loans (from all sources), the repayment process becomes complex. In fact, it is noted that default rates on all forms of student loans have increased in the past decade in the USA and Europe. This has necessitated the private creditors to assess student default risk based on credit type and offer type-contingent credit terms. It has been observed in the empirical literature that students from high-income families invest more in their college education, but borrow less than those from low-income families. In addition, default rates among rich students are lower than those of poor students. As for credit type, it is noted in the extant literature that college investment is higher for students with good credit compared to those with bad credit.

2.4. Future Thoughts

Interest on studies related to antecedents of future thoughts has been on the increase in the existing body of literature (Hall and Bernsten, 2008; 48-57; Rubin & Berntsen, 2009; 591-614; Eryilmaz, 2011; Rasmussen & Berntsen, 2011; 1842–1846; Finnbogadottir and Berntsen, 2013; 625–640; Rasmussen, Ramsgaard, Berntsen, 2015; 185–205). Some of these studies have examined the relation between the frequency of voluntary or involuntary autobiographical memories and future thoughts among undergraduate and graduate students. Findings from these studies have been mixed and they seem not to be any general consensus among the researchers. However, an interesting finding among these studies was one that found a positive but weak significant relationship between the attitudes of students toward future and the level of their subjective well-being and determined that the students were planning for the future and looking positively upon it, had low anxiety and high subjective well-being levels. In a study carried out by Nebblett and Cortina (2006; 795-811) with American high school students, it was found that the satisfaction and support received from the family had an impact on the students' orientation toward the future and that student who felt satisfied in their family relations looked upon the future with much more hope and positivity. One of the dimensions that lead to subjective well-being is family satisfaction. Eryilmaz (2011) determined in a study with high school students that those with positive expectations for the future also demonstrated high levels of subjective well-being. These results are consistent with the present study. The findings also shed some light on the benefit of evaluating the attitudes toward future of high school students, a nuclear group that will be playing a role in the country's future, together with an assessment of their subjective well-being.

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2.5. Career Choice

It is important to invest effort in making a career decision since one’s career plays a vital role in one’s economic, social and emotional well-being (Blustein, 2006, 2008; 228-240; Fouad & Bynner, 2008; 612-622; Hartung, 2011; 296–305; Rochlen, 2001; 18-23; Uthayakumar, Schimmack, Hartung, & Rogers, 2010; 196–204). However, choosing one's future career path can be a difficult and stressful process, due to the very large number of possibilities that are open to young adults and the many considerations that need to be taken into account (Multon, Heppner, Gysbers, Zook, & Ellis-Kalton, 2001; 324–335; Sauermann, 2005; 273–303). Therefore, it is not surprising that young adults are concerned about their future careers and that many encounter difficulties in making this decision (Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 2012; 510–526; Nurmi, 2000; 1-15).

A number of studies have found that children and young adults cite parents as an important influence on their career choice, for example, Hodkinson and Sparkes (1997). Links have been established between parental and family support and the career choice of the adolescent (Wolfe and Betz, 2004; 363–369), others, for example, Borycki and Samuel (2001; 19-20) have shown the influence of guidance teachers and career advisors as a significant influence on the career choice of school pupils. May et al. (1991; 311–319) suggest that school pupils are not being encouraged to enter other careers such as nursing by their ‘enablers', that is, adults who might potentially influence their career choices. This could be because of the society's negative attitude towards professions such as nursing as a career. The variable of parents' education was identified in the study of May et al. (1991) where the results showed that adults with high school education or less had significantly more positive attitudes towards nursing than those with a bachelor degree or above. From the study, it was assumed that the higher the educational level of the parent the less positive they were towards nursing as a career. Besides, level of education, family income also found to be a crucial factor in children's future career choices. For instance, those who were in the higher economic levels had significantly more negative attitude towards nursing as a career choice than those in the lower economic levels.

Guidance teachers and career advisors were found to have strong influences on the formation of career perceptions and choices among school pupils (Alexander and Fraser, 2001). In the study by Mignor et al. (2002, 86–89) nursing was rated lowest as a profession by school guidance teachers. Williams (2001; 218–220) found that many guidance teachers and career advisors did not value nursing as an intellectual enterprise. Wolfe and Betz, 2004; 363–369, found that guidance teachers and career advisors were often not well informed regarding the opportunities available to today's nurse and also often had a negative image of nursing as a career choice. Further support for this comes from Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 2012; 510–526 who found that career advisors had a negative image of nursing which was prejudiced by media presentation of nursing and it was generally felt by career advisors that nursing was for females with limited academic ability. This is further endorsed by Blasdell and Brewer (2006; 176–178) who reported that guidance teachers and career advisors identified compassion, kindness, obedience, moderate academic capabilities, minimal leadership abilities, and minimal decision-making abilities as characteristics for potential nursing candidates. Interest in public affairs, self confidence, assertiveness, leadership skills, and decision-making skills was considered important for other professions, such as engineering, medicine, education and social work (Pickersgill, 2001; 81-86; Schnautz, 2003; 11; Bolan and Grainger, 2005; 135–138).
3.0. **Conceptual Model and Hypothesis Statement**

The proposed conceptual model consists of one predictor variable which is family support. The mediating variables are credit use and future thoughts while the sole outcome variable in the current study is career choices. The key objective of this study is to explore the extent to which family support affect the students’ credit use, future thoughts and eventually their career choices. Conceptually, the study tests the linkage between the family support and students’ career choices, and as well as the mediating role of future thoughts and credit use in this relationship. An illustration of the conceptual model is provided below in figure 1.

![Conceptual Model](image)

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

3.1. **Hypotheses statement**

Based on the conceptual model in Figure 1 above, the following four hypotheses are proposed:

- **H1**: There is a positive relationship between family support and the student credit use in South Africa
- **H2**: There is a positive relationship between family support and the student future thoughts in South Africa
- **H3**: There is a positive relationship between student credit use and their career choices in South Africa
- **H4**: There is a positive relationship between student future thoughts and their career choices in South Africa

4.0. **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

This section will provide the research design of the current study. In particular, the research design cover – sampling design, instrument design, and data collection technique and data analysis approach. The sampling design will constitute of target population, sampling frame, sample size

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and sampling method. The instrument design will provide the measurement instruments used for each of the research variables, the sources of the instruments used and the Likert scale used. Different methods of collecting data will be provided and finally, the current study data collection technique will be given. Suggestions of the proposed data analysis approach will also be provided.

4.1 Sampling design

Sampling design is a procedure where a portion of the data is gathered from a larger population in order to draw inferences from the sample to the entire group (Teddlie & Yu, 2007:32). Aspects like the target population (i.e. the scope of the study as defined by the geographic location), sampling frame (i.e., all cases from which the sample is selected), sampling method (i.e., making a choice between two main approaches: probability and non-probability methods) and sampling size (i.e., the total number of respondents) are typical elements of a sampling design (Collins, Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 2007:18).

4.2 Target population

According to Bryman and Bell (2014:170) target population is the universe of unit, like people, nations, cities, regions, firms’ etc. from which the sample is to be selected. It is also defined as the collection of elements or objects that possess the information sought by the researcher and about which inferences are to be made (Malhotra, 2010:456). The identification of the study population is necessary for the formulation and running of any trial (Klein & Meyskens, 2001:171). When defining a target population, a researcher should indicate clearly the characteristics of the target population that apply directly to the study. In this study, the target population will be students at tertiary level – in particular, University students. Vaal University of Technology students in Gauteng Province of South Africa formed the unity of study hence the population target for this study.

4.3 Sample frame

The sampling frame is the listing of all units in the population from which the sample will be selected (Negil 2010:155). It is also defined by Negil (2010:155) as a complete list of all the cases in the population from which your sample will be drawn. According to Malhotra (2010:458) sampling frame is a representative of the elements of the target population. In other words, it is a list or other device used to define a researcher's population of interest. Due to the fact that a researcher rarely has direct access to the entire population of interest in social science research, a researcher must rely upon a sampling frame to represent all of the elements of the population of interest. In this study, the sampling frame will be drawn from the Vaal University of Technology registered students.

4.4 Sample size

Sample size refers to the number of elements to be included in the study (Malhotra 2010: 458). The sample size influences the accuracy of estimation but in general, however, a large sample size can help minimise sampling errors and improve generalizability of research findings (Yang et al.2006:604). A good sample has two properties: representativeness and adequacy (Singh 2006:604). Thus, the larger the sample, the surer it can be that the answers truly reflect the opinion of the population. In the current, a sample size of 158 respondents was used.

4.5 Sampling method

A sampling method is a guideline and procedures through which population elements are integrated into the sample (Grafstrom 2010:85). In the current study, convenient sampling
technique was used for easy access to the students. Moreover, the researcher found it also to be the least expensive and least time-consuming of all sampling techniques.

4.6 Instrument design

No study can accomplish its aims without a well-designed questionnaire. In any research study, the theoretical constructs that are measured are the determining factors for the choice of measurement methodology (Fagarasanu & Kumar 2002:355). In this study, four research constructs were used in the conceptual model. The measurement instruments of the research constructs were operationalized in accordance with previous works. Proper modifications will be made in order to fit the current research context and purpose. Six measurement instruments adopted from Ryu, Kabadayi and Chung (2007:685) were used to measure family support, credit use, five measurement instruments adopted from Harrast (2004:350) were used to measure future thoughts while three instruments and four instruments adopted from Guler (2004:254) and Baum and O’Malley (2003:638) were used to measure credit use and career choice, respectively. All scale items will be measured on a 5 point Likert scale which will be anchored by 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree to express the degree of agreement.

5.0. DATA ANALYSIS APPROACH

The current study will use some statistical software such as SPSS and AMOS to analyse the data collected and to test the proposed hypotheses. Below are the demographic results that will be followed by confirmatory factor analysis results and structural modelling results respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Sample demographic characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 33 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 – 39 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 Years &amp; Above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
</tr>
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<td>Matric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that females were the majority of the respondents and constitute 51.1% of the sample. Most of the respondents were aged between 18 - 25 years which constitutes 31.5% of the sample.
The majority of the participants hold a Matric qualification (55.8%) and followed by those who hold an Honours degree (39.5%).

6.0 STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING APPROACH
Data analysis was performed using the structural equation modelling (SEM). Structural equation modelling has become a popular statistical technique to test theory in several fields of knowledge (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black 1998:5; Schumacker & Lomax 2004:12). Qureshi and Kang (2014:3) describe SEM as “a multivariate, statistical technique largely employed for studying relationships between latent variables (or constructs) and observed variables that constitute a model”. Additionally, it is according to Bollen (1989:48), Mitchell (1994:870) Hoyle (1995:1) Malaeb, Summers and Pugesek (2000:93) Reckhow, Arhonditsis, Kenny, Hauser, Tribo, Wu, Elcock, Steinberg, Stow and Mcbrid (2005:2913) and Grace (2006:14) a statistical method with which a researcher can create theoretical concepts and validate proposed causal relationships through two or more structural equations.

6.1 Reliability and Validity tests
Once an appropriate overall fit was established, the following step was to assess reliability and validity, under the guide of previous literature (Byrne 1994:18; Chau & Lai 2003:123; Fornell et al. 1981:39; Gerbing & Anderson 1988:186; Hair et al. 1998:11). As advocated by Chau (1997:324) the squaring of factor loadings was conducted to assess item reliability. Item reliability recognises "the amount of variance in an item due to underlying construct rather than to error" (Chau 1997:324). Discriminant and convergent validity were also examined by using the AVE as suggested by Fornell et al. (1981:39). According to Nusair et al. (2010:316), a low-cross correlation signifies discriminant validity while the strong loading of items on their familiar construct is an indication of convergent validity. Sarstedt et al. (2014:108) describe discriminant validity as the degree to which a construct is empirically different from other constructs in the model, both in terms of how it links with other constructs and in terms of how specifically the items represent only this single construct. Convergent validity alternatively is referred to as the degree to which a construct is represented by its measurement items (Sarstedt et al. 2014:108).

6.2 Summary of Measurement Accuracy Statistics

Table 2: Scale accuracy analysis
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research constructs</th>
<th>Scale item</th>
<th>Cronbach’s test</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Item- total</td>
<td>α value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS</td>
<td>FS1</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.270</td>
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<td>0.913</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FS2</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>1.031</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FS3</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>1.398</td>
<td>0.632</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FS4</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.451</td>
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<td></td>
<td>FS5</td>
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<td>0.956</td>
<td>0.575</td>
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<td></td>
<td>FS6</td>
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<td>1.270</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT</td>
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<td>1.443</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>1.71</td>
<td>1.142</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FT3</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.366</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FT4</td>
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<td>FT5</td>
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<tr>
<td>CU</td>
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<td>CC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CC2</td>
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<td>1.388</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CC3</td>
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<td>CC4</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>1.334</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: FS = Family Support; FT = Future Thoughts; CU = Credit Use; CC = Career. SD = Standard Deviation; CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted

7. Reliability Assessment
7.1 Cronbach’s Alpha test

Proceeding from the discussion of Cronbach’s Alpha in chapter five, literature asserts that a higher level of Cronbach’s coefficient alpha indicates a higher reliability of the measurement scale (Chinomona 2011:108). From the results provided in Table 4.7, the Cronbach’s Alpha value for each research construct ranges from 0.640 to 0.763 and as these are above 0.6 as recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994:43), validity is indicated. Furthermore, the item to total values ranged from 0.500 to 0.665 and were therefore above the cut-off point of 0.5 as advised by Dunn, Seaker and Waller (1994:145). The Cronbach's Alpha results indicated in Table 4.7, therefore, validate the reliability of measures used in the current study.

7.2 Composite Reliability (CR)

The Composite Reliability test was also conducted in order to examine the internal reliability of each research construct, as recommended by Chinomona (2011:108) and Nunnally (1967:81). A Composite Reliability index that is greater than 0.7 signifies sufficient internal consistency of the construct (Nunnally 1967:81). In this regard, the results of Composite Reliability that range from 0.808 to 0.847 in Table 4.7 confirm the existence of internal reliability for all constructs of the study.

Validity Assessment

7.3 Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Factor Loadings

Author: Rudo Cynthia Christine Chinomona
According to Chinomona (2011:109) “The average variance extracted estimate reflects the overall amount of variance in the indicators accounted for by the latent construct”. A good representation of the latent construct by the item is identified when the variance extracted estimate is above 0.5 (Sarstedt et al. 2014:109; Fornell et al. 1981:39; Fraering & Minor 2006:284). In the current study, the results of AVE those range from 0.559 to 0.587 in Table 4.7 hence, authenticating the presence of convergent validity. Furthermore, all the Constructs Factor Loadings in Table 2 are above 0.5. This indicates that all the measurement instruments converged well and explained at least 50% of what they were designed to measure, hence convergent validity.

8. Constructs Correlation Matrix

Table 3 presents the research constructs correlation matrix. As such, all these criteria were adequately met across all the possible pairs of constructs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH CONSTRUCTS</th>
<th>FS</th>
<th>FT</th>
<th>CU</th>
<th>CC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Support (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Thoughts (FT)</td>
<td>0.601</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Use (CU)</td>
<td>0.517</td>
<td>0.552</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Choice (CC)</td>
<td>0.462</td>
<td>0.661</td>
<td>0.633</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: FS = Family Support; FT = Future Thoughts; CU = Credit Use; CC = Career.*

As suggested by Hulland (1999), the researcher checked whether the correlations between the research constructs were less than 0.8. As indicated in Table 3, above all the correlation values are less than the recommended 0.8, hence confirming the existence of discriminant validity.

8.1 Assessing measurement model fit

Following formulae provided by Tenenhaus, Vinzi, Chatelin & Lauro (2005), the global goodness-of-fit (GoF) statistic for the research model was calculated using the equation:

\[
\text{GoF} = \sqrt{\text{AVE} \times R^2}
\]

The calculated global goodness of fit (GoF) is 0.48, which exceeds the threshold of GoF>0.36 suggested by Wetzels, Odekerken-Schröder and Van Oppen (2009). Thus, this study concludes that the research model has a good overall fit.

9. STRUCTURAL MODEL TESTING

As the second procedure in Structural Equation Modelling (Chen et al. 2011:243), structural modelling was conducted. Essentially, the procedure is conducted for the purpose of evaluating causal relationships among latent variables (Nusair et al. 2010:314). This procedure includes “multiple regression analysis and path analysis and models the relationship among latent variables” (Chen et al. 2011:243). Figure 4.1 below is a representation of the path model. Much like the CFA model, the ovals represent the latent variables while the rectangles represent the observed variables. The unidirectional arrow signifies the influence of one variable on another. Structural model. The results of the SmartPLS analysis are shown in Figure 2 and Table 3. Standardised path coefficients are expected to be at least 0.2, and preferably greater than 0.3 (Chin
The reliability of each coefficient is assessed from bootstrapping (300 resamples). Support is provided for all the three hypotheses (H1, H2 and H3). However, H1 ($t=1.006$) and H2 ($t=1.786$) path coefficients were insignificant except H3 ($t=5.067$).

Figure 2: Path Model Results

Note: FS = Family Support; FT = Future Thoughts; CU = Credit Use; CC = Career.

9.1 Hypothesis testing

As the hypothesised measurement and structural model have been assessed and finalised, the next step was to examine causal relationships among latent variables by path analysis (Nusair et al. 2010:316). According to Byrne (2001:18) and Nusair et al. (2010:316), SEM asserts that particular latent variables directly or indirectly influence certain other latent variables with the model, resulting in estimation results that portray how these latent variables are related. For this study, estimation results elicited through hypothesis testing are indicated in Table 4.9. The table indicates the proposed hypotheses, path coefficients, t-statistics and whether a hypothesis is rejected or supported. Literature asserts that $t > 1.96$ are indicators of relationship significance and that higher path coefficients indicate strong relationships among latent variables (Chinomona, Lin, Wang & Cheng 2010:191).

Table 4.9. Hypothesis testing results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed hypothesis relationship</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Path Coefficients</th>
<th>T-Statistics</th>
<th>Rejected/Supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Support (FS)</th>
<th>Career Choice (CC)</th>
<th>H1</th>
<th>0.028</th>
<th>1.006</th>
<th>Supported and insignificant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future Thought (FT)</td>
<td>Career Choice (CC)</td>
<td>H2</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>1.786</td>
<td>Supported and insignificant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Use (CU)</td>
<td>Career Choice (CC)</td>
<td>H3</td>
<td>0.860</td>
<td>5.067</td>
<td>Supported but significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: FS = Family Support; FT = Future Thoughts; CU = Credit Use; CC = Career Choice.

Drawing the results in Table 4.9 above, H1 (t=1.006) and H2 (t=1.786) are supported but are both insignificant since the t statistics are less than 1.96. Finally, H3 (t=5.067) is strong and supported since both the t statistics are above 1.

10. Discussion of the Research Findings

The current study sought to investigate the influence of family support, student credit use, future thoughts on student career choices in South Africa. The three hypotheses developed by the study were examined. Findings regarding each of the hypotheses are discussed below.

10.1 Family Support (FS) and Career Choices (CC)

It was revealed that family support has a negative relationship with student credit use. This was expected since the extent to which families' support the students financially directly impact on how much of the credit the students are likely to require and eventually use. Based on these findings, it can, therefore, be affirmed that to some extent when there is family financial support, the credit needs and use by the students is likely less.

10.2 Future Thought (FT) and Career Choice (CC)

A positive but insignificant relationship between students' future thoughts and their career choices was revealed. Drawing from the results a positive career future thought has positive impact on the students' career choice. The influence is positive but however insignificant. Based on these findings, it can, therefore, be confirmed that there is a weak influence of the future thoughts on career choice.

10.3 Credit Use (CU) and Career Choice (CC)

A positive and significant relationship between students' credit use and their career choices was revealed. Judging from the results a positive credit use has positive impact on the disadvantaged or financial challenged students' career choice. The influence is positive and significant. Based on these findings, it can, therefore, be confirmed that there is a strong influence of the credit use on career choice.

11. Implications of the Study

The findings have produced some inferences for the study. They are discussed below.

11.1 Family Support (FS) and Career Choices (CC)

Findings have revealed that this relationship is significant at p = 0.1. This means that the higher the level of family’s financial support, the lesser the credit the students require to use. This means that if the families want to reduce the students’ credit use, they need to financially support them adequately.

11.2 Future Thought (FT) and Career Choice (CC)
This relationship also appeared to be positive but insignificant. This means that by implication the students’ future thoughts weakly influenced students’ choice of career.

11.3. Credit Use (CU) and Career Choice (CC)

Findings indicate that this relationship is significant at $p = 0.05$. This also means that while student credit use has a positive association with their career choices is relatively stronger and significant. This implies that the students’ career choices are positively influenced by the level of credit availability and use.

12. Conclusion

Tests were conducted in order to address the study’s empirical objectives. Inferences regarding objectives and findings associated with them are discussed below.

The study's first empirical objective was to investigate the influence of family support on credit use. The findings acquired after analysis revealed that family support will have a negative influence on student credit use. Findings also revealed that the relationship between the two variables is significant. Therefore, it is now understood that when compared to the direct effects of family support on future thoughts, it has a negative but significant effect on credit use.

The study’s second empirical objective was to investigate the influence of student future thoughts on their career choices. The findings obtained after analysis revealed that future thoughts will have a positive but weak influence on student career choices. It can, therefore, be concluded that future thoughts have an impotent effect on student career choices.

The study’s third empirical objective was to investigate the influence of students’ credit use on their career choices. The findings obtained after analysis revealed that future thoughts will have a positive and strong influence on student career choices. Thus, it is concluded that student credit use has a potent effect on student career choices.

13. Contributions

This research can contribute to the financial providers, parent and practically to students. The parents can learn that the only way for their students to reduce their credit us is to support them adequately. Financial providers to disadvantaged or financially challenged students also learn that the availability of credit to students positively impact their career choices and therefore they need to support these students. Students also note that their future thoughts influence their future career choices.

14. Overall recommendations

Since the credit use has influence on career choice, recommended that financial advisors should consider investing more in providing finance to career choices on students. Students end up choosing careers that are not their passion because they could not get education loan, some will not be able further their careers because they cannot get enough credit to further their education. From a general perspective, credit use will strongly influence the career choice which in turn will impact on the students' career of choice in South Africa.

15. Limitations and Future Research

Whilst this study will be representative on South Africa's students who are currently registered at a University or College, it is not intended to be generalizable to the country broadly. Somewhat, it provides initial insights into what South African students are facing in deciding on their career.
choice. As in most questionnaire surveys, there is a chance of a social desirability occurring, where respondents may provide answers they think the interviewer wants to hear. An effort will be made to address this by asking similar questions in different ways. Future studies may have to look at the reason why financial advisor do not give students enough loans to go for their career choice. Future studies might also look at other countries if the students are experiencing the same problem.

16. REFERENCES


Author: Rudo Cynthia Christine Chinomona


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APPENDIX: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Variables</th>
<th>Number Instruments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Family Support</strong></th>
<th>FS1</th>
<th>Family background (parents’ educational degree, parents’ occupation type and family annual) affects whether I should apply for educational loan.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FS2</td>
<td>My parents’ educational degree had impact on my career of choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FS3</td>
<td>My family annual income lead me to credit use (loan).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FS4</td>
<td>My tuition is paid by my family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FS5</td>
<td>My family pay my living expenses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FS6</td>
<td>I do not get support from my family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future Thoughts</strong></td>
<td>FT1</td>
<td>The need to pay back my student loan is hampering my ability to further my career of choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FT2</td>
<td>I want to graduate as soon as possible in order to get a job and start making money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FT3</td>
<td>I want to graduate first and worry about student loan afterwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FT4</td>
<td>Graduating is more important than career choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FT5</td>
<td>Diploma/Degree is helpful in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit Use</strong></td>
<td>CU1</td>
<td>My student loan had an impact on my career choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CU2</td>
<td>Application of education loan effected my thoughts to further education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CU3</td>
<td>The type of university affected my decision on applying for educational loan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career Choice</strong></td>
<td>CC1</td>
<td>My student loan played a role in my decision to my career choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CC2</td>
<td>Any degree is better than staying at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CC3</td>
<td>I choose my career because I want to get a good job and pay off student loan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CC4</td>
<td>I chose this career because it has good paying jobs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>