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*"Collaboration opens the window
to a world of opportunities."*

Project 2016/20:

The retail industry
in South Africa as
employer of first choice
for young talent

APPLIED RESEARCH
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
SERVICE TO RETAIL COMMUNITY

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The retail industry in South Africa
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"Collaboration opens the window to a world of opportunities"

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

The South African retail market is the biggest retail market in Africa in terms of sales. While the retail market is dominated by four giant players, there are several thousand medium and small firms. Economic uncertainty, moderate economic growth expectations and rising inflation has impaired economic growth throughout all industries in South Africa (http://wrlc.org.za/research-landscape-2/).

The wholesale and retail industry is the fourth largest contributor to South Africa´s Gross Domestic Product while employing approximately 21% of the total workforce (W&RSETA, 2014). Accordingly, the wholesale and retail sector plays an important role in South Africa´s economy. In 2014, the average unemployment rate for all industries was nearly 25% (International Monetary Fund, 2014). Despite the large numbers of 'job seekers', the wholesale and retail industry faces a major challenge of finding and recruiting the "right" workforce in terms of motivation, commitment and education.

This project closely aligns with the research needs in the retail industry of South Africa. According to "Top Ten Researchable Topics' defined by the Wholesale and Retail Leadership Chair, to "Explore Talent Management as an essential tool for attracting, developing and retaining scarce W&R skills, linked with youth development and employability goals" is one of the most important needs in the W&R sector. This project aims to uncover those drivers that influence application intentions for pursuing a retail career and to show ways of improving the industry image and thereby attracting a highly motivated and skilled workforce.

In order to answer the research questions, the project employed a mixed-method approach that combined qualitative and quantitative research instruments. To create a questionnaire that depicts retail specific associations in South Africa, qualitative interviews with potential students and professionals from different industries were conducted. In a subsequent survey, the derived image dimensions were used to assess the overall retail image and application (or study) intentions of the respective target group. The sample encompassed young talents across South Africa who had recently decided to study management. In order to measure the dominant criteria that positively and negatively influence the decision for and against a career in the retail sector, the sample needed to vary with respect to participants´ personal interests and already chosen career steps. Due to the research being focused on study and application **intentions**, the sample was restricted to young talents who have recently completed the decision process for deciding on their career and study path. Thus the sample was first year learners studying management topics, at universities that offer a retail specialisation. Data was collected during the first week of the new academic year so as to access opinions about the decision process, and the retail sector, which have not yet been influenced by university study.

The results of this research project contribute to the development of the South African retail sector in three ways:
* First, the results provide a portrayal of the South African wholesale and retail industry image from the perspective of potential retail students and future employees while offering

empirical evidence with regard to the extent that specific perceptions and associations influence the individual´s decision to choose a career in retailing.

* Second, based on a comparison of retail sector images from other countries, a literature review on industry branding and from our empirical findings, we provide suggestions for image shaping activities that the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA), South African retailers and retail educators can implement in order to attract highly motivated and committed students and potential employees.

* Third, the results also contribute to the international research stream on industry image and its behavioural consequences. Therefore, the findings have also been published in scholarly journals and conference proceedings.

This report is a combination of two journal articles and an expanded conference presentation that were prepared from the research findings. The first article focuses on answering the questions posed by the research objectives, primarily from a descriptive and relatively simple and straight forward approach. It is included as Chapter 2 and is a pre-publication of a paper published as per the following citation:

Heidig W, Dobbelstein T, Mason RB & Jooste W. 2017. First Choice or Fallback Option? The Attractiveness of South Africa's Retail Industry for Gen Y Members. *Problems & Perspectives in Management*, 15(2), 110-123.

The second journal article adopts a more sophisticated approach, using more advanced statistical methods to analyse the collected data and attempting to identify the personality characteristics associated with the retail sector by retail and non-retail students. Associated personality profiles were drawn up. This article is included as Chapter 3 and is also a pre-publication of a paper published as per the following citation:.

Heidig W, Dobbelstein T, Mason RB & Jooste W. 2018. Preference for a Career in Retailing: A Question of Personality. *International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*. 5 June DOI: 10.1080/09593969.2018.1462236

The PowerPoint presentation is included as Chapter 4, providing more detailed numerical and statistical findings, but also summarises the findings into relatively concise statements, which make the findings generally more accessible. The presentation was both to a focus group of industry stakeholders and to the International Conference on Business and Management Dynamics, Cape Town, South Africa, on 7–8 September 2016.

CHAPTER 2 – PAPER 1

First Choice or Fallback Option?

The Attractiveness of South Africa's Retail Industry for Gen Y Members

ABSTRACT

The wholesale and retail industry is the fourth largest contributor to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product. However, it faces the major challenge of attracting highly skilled and motivated workers. Although South African universities launched programs in retail management, attracting young talents to a career in retailing remains a tough challenge. Drawing on previous findings from the field of graduate decision-making and industry image from other countries, this research examines the perceptions and expectations of Gen Y members with regard to their field of study and their prospective career. A nationwide survey with 1363 South African first year students, in their first week at university, shows significant differences between freshmen enrolled in retail business management and those enrolled in other business majors. While retail students, as compared to other participants, tend to hold stronger positive associations with their field of study and a retail career, majoring in retailing appears to be a fallback option. Over all participants, the analysis reveals that the perception of retailing careers primarily exceeds expectations on attributes that are only of minor importance. When it comes to important career attributes like payment, work-life balance and advancement issues, the retail image lags behind that of other industries. Comparing the field of study with the preferred industry, we identify four different segments of students that qualify to be targeted by companies and universities in different ways.

Keyword: industry image, retailing, career, Generation Y, South Africa
JEL Classification: I23; L81; M39; O55

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The wholesale and retail industry worldwide, and in South Africa in particular, faces the major challenge of attracting and retaining highly skilled and motivated workers (Koyana & Mason, 2015). This has led to a shortage of knowledge workers who are considered the major sources of competitive advantage in industries like retailing where its players tend towards standardizing processes and systems (Sutherland, Torricelli, & Karg, 2002; Templer & Cawsey, 1999). This development applies especially to the retail industry in South Africa where 80% of local sales originate from four retailers that dominate the market

(PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2012). The wholesale and retail industry is the fourth largest contributor to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product while employing approximately 21% of the total workforce (W&RSETA, 2014). As South African retailers are currently making efforts to expand their businesses to the rest of Africa (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2012), their operating systems are likely to become lean structures of specialists (Gush, 1996). This development indicates that university students will likely be in high demand for management positions in the future (Oh, Weitz, & Lim, 2016). Surprisingly, however, while some South African universities offer special programs on retail management, attracting young talents to a career in retailing remains a tough challenge.

This problem can be attributed to a number of factors, some of which have gained particular interest in recent studies conducted in the US, UK and Malaysia. Research has found that students and graduates appear to hold negative perceptions towards careers in retailing. In former studies, working in retailing was often associated with store-based activities, requiring low training needs, poor working hours, low compensation, dull and boring work content, and limited advancement (Broadbridge, 2003; Mokhlis, 2014a; Rhoads, Swinyard, Geurts, & Price, 2002; Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard, Langrehr, & Smith, 1991). While some of these associations might stem from retail work experience (Broadbridge, 2003) and poor communication between the industry and its prospective employees (Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden, 2009), it seems that most of them emerge from a stereotypical industry image that is hard to change in the short-run. This "retailing myth" persists stubbornly even in the light of growing graduate recruits and retail course implementation (Broadbridge, 2003). As graduate's intentions to follow a career in any company will be determined by their expectations and attitude towards working in that particular industry (Richardson, 2009), it can be argued that the retailing industry finds it hard to compete with other industries in the often-cited "war for talent" (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001). This circumstance might be reinforced by changes in the Generation Y's (Gen Y) attitude towards work content and career (Mokhlis, 2014a), with graduates being more focused on enjoyable work and a sense of accomplishment, good pay and skill development (Knight, Crutsinger, & Kim, 2006). Since Gen Y university learners build the current and future talent base for retail companies, they represent the starting point for our research in order to investigate their perceptions of a career in retailing in South Africa.

Drawing on previous findings from the field of graduate decision-making and industry image, this research sets out to (1) explore the image newly enrolled students hold of the wholesale and retail industry in South Africa; (2) outline the key factors that are important to South African Gen Y members in choosing their field of study and prospective career; (3) identify student segments that are either more or less likely to strive for a career in retailing. The findings provide a contemporary overview of the attractiveness of retailing careers, thereby filling the literature gap by addressing the South African market. Understanding freshmen's attitudes towards retailing is beneficial for educators to help them prepare the students for retail careers, for each retail company to assess the career opportunities they provide and for the retail industry as a whole in order to communicate effectively to their prospective workforce. In sum, the insights from our study help retailers to strengthen their employer branding efforts, to unfold their potential as employer of first choice und thus to get on the

shortlist of high quality candidates. In what follows, we will first review extant literature on students' career choices, its determinants and consequences. In the subsequent empirical part, we will first highlight the procedure of our two-step methodological approach before moving on to the survey results. The study concludes with implications for the retail industry in South Africa.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In his seminal work on the appeal of retailing to university-trained applicants in the 1980s, Swinyard (1981) portrayed a sobering picture. His study revealed that compared to other marketing disciplines, retailing and sales bring up the rear of the list. Students whose university performance was above average rated a retailing career as significantly less appealing than their fellow students with lower grades did. The same observation held true for more mature students. Students of 23 years and older found retailing to be more unattractive than their younger counterparts. With open-ended questions Swinyard (1981) encouraged the study participants to unveil their most prominent associations with their preferred career and with a career in retailing. Whereas the most preferred career was described in terms of "challenging", "interesting" and "good salary" (in order of importance), retailing was primarily characterized as "dull", "people-oriented" and "poor salary". In a follow-up study ten years later, Swinyard et al. (1991) showed that although retailers had become more sophisticated, retailing was evaluated as even less appealing as compared to the earlier study. However, both surveys also revealed that once students had attended a course on retailing, they had a greater preference for a career in retail management, although the rating also decreased between both studies. While these students were more likely to describe retailing careers as positive, the association with "poor working hours", "poor salary" and "dull" persisted (Broadbridge, 2003; Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard et al., 1991). Swinyard et al. (1991) concluded that the associated characteristics of the job were more decisive for the appeal of retailing than functional aspects of the job itself. The distorted view of the retail industry and its opportunities was termed the "retailing myth" (Swinyard et al., 1991).

Benchmarking these results, Broadbridge (2003) conducted a subsequent study more than another ten years later. Unlike the prior studies, demographic variables and academic ability had no significant influence on the appeal of retailing. Overall, the general assertion of retailing as being perceived as an unattractive career option was strongly supported by the data. Only 2.6% of the undergraduate sample nominated retailing as their first career choice (Broadbridge, 2003). She found that beneath the still existing "retailing myth", many students already had negative work experiences with retail companies that reinforced their poor image with this industry. Consequently, the question arises as to which factors were found to influence the appeal of the retail industry to university students.

Summarizing prior research, three different categories of factors can be identified that determine the appeal of the retail industry and thus the decision to major in retailing. These factors are interrelated with each other and can be shown to either directly or indirectly influence retail career appeal and intentions. The three categories are expected job attributes, generation, and the industry image.

2.2.1 Expected job attributes:

Because different individuals hold different values and needs, job expectations and job choices differ greatly between applicants (Oh et al., 2016). According to the literature stream on person-organization-fit, applicants choose their employer according to the extent that the organizational and personal characteristics such as values and goals match each other (Cable & Judge, 1996). This implies that the individual value system and job expectations greatly influence the attractiveness of a retail career. Research has found that as long as expected job attributes (i.e., preferred job attributes) meet job characteristics, commitment and job satisfaction are high while leaving intentions are low (Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003). With regard to college students, Gush (1996) found that study participants expected good training and structured development, good career prospects, rapid opportunities for advancement, and responsibility in the long-run. While the retail industry in the sample was able to meet these expectations in the short term, the need for achievement and development was hard to meet in the long run as the daily business routine started to dominate over time (Gush, 1996). Against this background, we strive to disclose the attributes of preferred careers that are important to South African university learners.

2.2.2 Generation:

Job expectations do not only differ between individuals, they also depend upon the cohort a person belongs to (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). Research has shown that members of one generation share specific job expectations due to similar experiences (Eisner, 2005). Today's graduates largely belong to Generation Y, a collective term for people born between 1980 and 2003 (also referred to as Millennials or Echo Boomers) (Broadbridge et al., 2009; Hurst & Good, 2009). As compared to other business sectors, retailing has traditionally been a youthful industry where senior positions can be reached at a young age (Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden, 2007). Against this backdrop, understanding the career expectations of Gen Y is crucial in order to form recommendations for the retail industry. Although stereotypic media images still dominate the public impression of this generation, there is a growing body of academic literature providing a more reliable picture of Gen Y characteristics (see e.g., Broadbridge et al., 2007; Martin, 2005; Mokhlis, 2014b). Some of these distinguishing attributes are confidence, self-reliance and passion. In contrast to other generations, Gen Y members hold a distinct desire to achieve work-life balance and fast success in their employment (Broadbridge et al., 2009; Eisner, 2005; Retail Merchandiser, 2003). A study conducted by Broadbridge et al. (2009) showed that some characteristics of retail jobs aligned with these generation specific expectations (e.g., lively and fast paced environment), while others (e.g., few career prospects and poor payment) were quite the opposite, thereby diminishing the perceived attractiveness of retail careers. Because South African society faces high socio-economic inequalities (UNDP, 2015), there is reason to expect that South African Millennials hold expectations that are partly different than those of their American counterparts (Dicey, 2016). An international study conducted by Deloitte (2016) gives a first impression of South African Gen Y's expectations. While, for the majority of countries included in the survey, a good work-life balance was the most important priority when evaluating job opportunities (while excluding salary), the opportunity for career

progression was the strongest driver for the 200 South African participants. Towards this end, an academic study on career specific expectations of Gen Y members in South Africa is missing. Our research intends to provide a first insight into this topic.

2.2.3   *Industry Image:*

In the replication study of Swinyard et al. (1991), the authors found that the appeal of retailing was influenced more by associated characteristics than by functional aspects of the job. These retail-specific associations form the "retail industry image". According to Burmann, Schaefer, and Maloney (2007), an industry image "is a set of associations that is firmly anchored, condensed, and evaluated in the minds of people concerning a group of companies, which, from the point of view of an individual, supplies the same customer groups with the same technologies for the fulfilment of the same customer needs" (p. 159). An industry image is not solely the sum of all corporate images within this industry; it is rather the result of social interactions and beliefs that exist within a certain group of stakeholders (Podnar, 2004). The industry image has an influence on the corporate brand image and reputation (Cable & Graham, 2000) of each company within this industry (Burmann et al., 2007), which in turn affects interest and application intentions (Barber, 1998; Manpower, 2011; Rynes, 1991). As documented in prior research from the US and UK, the retail industry image is largely stereotyped as providing long work-hours, monotonous work, poor payment, limited advancement and being people oriented (Broadbridge, 2003). While some of these aspects are rooted in the previous job experiences of the study participants, others may be attributed to poor or missing communication efforts between the retail industry and the prospective applicants (Broadbridge, 2003; Broadbridge et al., 2009). The current study builds upon these insights and strives to determine the key attributes South African students associate with the South African retail industry.

2.3   METHODOLOGY

To address the proposed research questions, a two-step methodological approach was applied. First, a qualitative pre-study was conducted to provide a more comprehensive picture of South African university learners' study choice behavior and industry intentions. The qualitative study served a major purpose: because prior studies in the field of students' industry intentions primarily concentrated on the British and American markets, existing items and scales needed a check on appropriateness in the South African context. Therefore, we conducted narrative telephone interviews with twelve first year students majoring in retail management and six human resource managers from South African retailers. The student participants were asked to reflect on their decision process in selecting a field of study, the factors that drove their decision and the key associations they hold of the South African retail industry. In order to enrich these insights with third party perceptions, we also interviewed human resource representatives on applicants' motivations and relevant information sources. The results of these interviews were used to adapt the measures in the subsequent survey (where necessary) in order to ensure sound validity.

Second, a quantitative study was conducted. The survey consisted of self-administered paper-and-pencil questionnaires that were sent to the business departments of five participating South African universities, namely Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Durban University of Technology, Tshwane University of Technology, University of Johannesburg and Vaal University of Technology. These universities were chosen as they all offered a three-year course in retail. In each university, newly enrolled management students were accessed during class time in their first week to ensure high participation. In a letter of information and informed consent on the first page of the questionnaire, the students were informed about the purpose of the study, the estimated completion time of 15 minutes, anonymity and voluntariness of participation. This collection method resulted in 1426 returned questionnaires. After eliminating 63 questionnaires due to incomplete or unlikely response pattern (for this procedure also see Mokhlis, 2014a), the final non-probability sample consisted of 1363 usable questionnaires.

In general, the aim of the questionnaire was to gain a better understanding of students' decision for a field of study and its driving factors, as well as to explore the image of the retail industry and the most preferred industry. Because a comparative study from South Africa is missing, we refrained from proposing hypotheses. Instead, the structure of the questionnaire was guided by our research questions.

2.4   RESULTS

2.4.1   Description of the sample:

The last section of the questionnaire was used to obtain demographic information about the participating subjects. As can be seen in Table 2.1, more than half of our participants were female (54.9%). The largest number of participants study at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (39.3%) followed by the Vaal University of Technology (30.6%). The age distribution shows that 99.6% of all participants can be classified as being Gen Y members, while most of them were born in 1997 (28.8%).

Table 2.1: Demographics

Variable	Category	Sample %[a]
Gender	Female	54.9
	Male	45.1
Race	Black	83.8
	White	1.9
	Colored	11.0
	Indian	2.7
	Other	.7
Institution	Cape Peninsula University of Technology	39.3
	Durban University of Technology	13.3
	Tshwane University of Technology	9,8
	University of Johannesburg	7.0
	Vaal University of Technology	30.6

Note: N=1363

[a] Adjusted (valid) percentages excluding missing observations

At the beginning of the questionnaire, we asked the students to indicate their current field of study. The list was limited to management majors only and encompassed 30 options that represent all available business majors in South African universities (plus an "other"-option that could be named). As Table 2.2 shows 26.5% of all respondents are enrolled in retail business management as their major field of study. This overproportioned representation of retail students in the sample is due to the fact that we only included universities in the sample that offered retail management as a business major. This procedure ensured a sample size of retail students (as compared to non-retail students) that was big enough to allow for comparisons to be made.

Table 2.2: Current field of study

Category	Sample %[a]
Retail Business Management	26.5
Marketing and Marketing Management	18.9
Human Resource Management	10.2
Management	9.6
Entrepreneurship	7.1
Logistics Management	6.4
Internal Auditing	5.8
Sports Management	4.4
Business Management	3.3
Tourism Management	2.7
Accountancy	1.9
Other	1.1

Note: N=1363

[a] Adjusted (valid) percentages > 1% excluding missing observations

2.4.2 Consideration set of studies:

In order to understand if the chosen field of study was their top of mind alternative, we asked participants to indicate their level of agreement with the statement "The chosen field of study was my first and preferred choice" anchored with strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5). An independent samples t-test revealed a significant difference between retail and non-retail student (M_{retail} = 2.45 vs. $M_{non-retail}$ = 3.25; t(1260) = -8.180, p < .001). That is, as compared to students from other subjects, retail students were less likely to label their current study as their preferred choice. We assume that similar to the product choice context (see e.g., Nedungadi, 1990), future students form sets of alternative majors to choose between. Therefore, we also asked the respondents to specify all other subjects they also considered relevant before starting their studies using the same list as for the current field of study. On average, the consideration set size encompassed 1.8 different majors. Table 2.3 shows the differences between students currently studying retail management and students enrolled in other majors. While "business management", "logistics management" and "retail business management" form the top consideration set for retail students, non-retail students especially considered "accountancy", "business management" and "human resource management" as attractive fields of studies. For this group of students, only 3.6% of the respondents considered retail business management as a prospective major. These results indicate that retail and non-retail students differ in terms of their consideration set, which might result from differences in the underlying decision process.

Table 2.3: TOP 3 consideration set of majors

Retail Students	% Cases[a]	Non-retail Students	% Cases[a]
Business Management	32.0	Business Management	19.3
Logistics Management	22.3	Accountancy	14.2
Retail Business Management	21.7	Human Resource Management	13.5

Note: N=1363   [a] Multiple responses possible

Accordingly, we also asked the participants to evaluate the extent to which they regard retailing as a field of study as sensible, wise and useful. Again, using an independent samples t-test depicts significant differences between retail and non-retail students. That is, retail students assess the decision in favor of a study in retail management as significantly more sensible (M_{retail} = 3.69 vs. $M_{non-retail}$ = 3.09; t(672) = 6.168, p < .001), wise (M_{retail} = 3.99 vs. $M_{non-retail}$ = 3.28; t(722) = 7.518, p < .001) and useful (M_{retail} = 4.23 vs. $M_{non-retail}$ = 3.50; t(724) = 7.919, p < .001) than students from other business disciplines.

2.4.3 Study decision influencers:

Students were asked about various people and factors that influenced their decision to choose a specific field of study. Participants were prompted to assess the role that each of the eleven given information sources played in their decision process on a five-point Likert scale with one corresponding to "no role" and five corresponding to "critical role". The list of sources was adapted from Mokhlis (2014a) and extended to the South African context. That is, based on the results of the narrative interviews we also included "career guidance of the SETA" and

"company visits to TVET colleges to explain their industry" as possible sources in the list.[1] Table 2.4 shows that company websites play the biggest role in the decision on what to study, followed by career guidance at school and consulting family/friends/acquaintances (e.g., employees from the industry). The finding that company websites, offering information on careers in a specific industry, represent the most important factor in the decision process offers great opportunity for retailers to provide their industry with a positive image through their marketing efforts. As opposed to this, traditional information material provided by companies and career guidance offered by the SETA played the least important role in the decision.

Table 2.4: Role of various information sources for study decision

People/factor	Mean
Websites of companies on career in industry	3.41
Consulting friends, family or acquaintances	3.26
Career guidance at school	3.25
Traditional media (e.g., TV, magazines, radio)	3.14
Social media (e.g., Facebook)	3.11
University open days	3.10
Companies visiting schools / TVET colleges to explain their industry	2.94
Life orientation and Vocational Guidance Counsellor	2.94
Job shadowing (e.g., internship, own work experience)	2.92
Information material of the companies (e.g., brochures)	2.84
Career guidance of the SETA	2.84

Note: The higher the mean, the greater the role, N=1363

In order to examine possible differences between retail and non-retail students, a MANOVA was employed. The analysis revealed a significant difference between both student groups regarding the study decision influences (Wilk's λ = .947, p < .001). Retail students significantly differed from non-retail students in the role family/friends/acquaintances (F = 4.001, p < .05), social media (F = 8.105, p < .01), traditional media (F = 13.826, p < .001), life orientation/Vocational Guidance Counsellor (F = 3.983, p < .05), career guidance at school (F = 15.148, p < .001), companies visiting schools (F = 8.665, p < .01), university open days (F = 23.429, p < .001), and job shadowing (F = 3.943, p < .05), played for their decision. The remaining three sources did not significantly differ between both student groups (ps > .149). The means of the ratings are reported and ranked in Table 2.5 for retail and non-retail respondents. Over and above the observation that retail students reported lower influences across all factors, the table also shows that university open days and companies visiting schools were less important for their decision on what to study than career guidance of the SETA and information material provided by companies.

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[1] The SETAs (Sector Education and Training Authorities) were re-established in South Africa in 2005 to increase sector specific skills and thus to implement the National Skills Development Strategy. They offer various information and training programs for each of the representing 23 sectors in South Africa (www.seta-southafrica.com).

Table 2.5: Retail and non-retail students' ratings of information sources

	Retail Students			Non-retail Students		
	M	**SD**	**Rank**	**M**	**SD**	**Rank**
Websites of companies on career in industry	3.30	1.28	1	3.43	1.19	1
Consulting friends, family or acquaintances	3.10	1.33	2	3.29	1.23	2
Career guidance at school	2.90	1.49	3	3.32	1.39	3
Traditional media (e.g., TV, magazines, radio)	2.85	1.37	5	3.22	1.28	4
Social media (e.g., Facebook)	2.87	1.43	4	3.16	1.31	5
University open days	2.68	1.47	9	3.22	1.44	4
Companies visiting schools/TVET colleges to explain industry	2.66	1.45	10	2.99	1.49	6
Life orientation and Vocational Guidance Counsellor	2.73	1.33	8	2.94	1.33	8
Job shadowing (e.g., internship, own work experience)	2.73	1.49	8	2.96	1.55	7
Information material of the companies (e.g., brochures)	2.75	1.29	7	2.86	1.27	9
Career guidance of the SETA	2.77	1.41	6	2.78	1.45	10

Note: The higher the mean, the greater the role, N=1363

2.4.4 Preferred career area:

We asked participants to indicate the industry/career area they would prefer most to work in upon graduation from a given list of eleven areas especially relevant to business graduates in South Africa. These industries were retrieved from an extensive market analysis and the qualitative interviews. The analysis shows that over all participants, careers in marketing/advertising are most prominent, followed by retailing and government/public services. At first glance, this finding seems encouraging compared to prior research that found retailing careers to be less appealing. Although this result compares favorably with the fifth and seventh position in prior research studies from the UK (Broadbridge, 2003; Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard et al., 1991), splitting the sample into retail and non-retail students provides a more conservative picture. As can be seen in Table 2.6, retailing is the number one industry for only 58.1% of all participating students enrolled in retail management studies. As a general notion, one can assume that occupational choices are strongly associated with college major choice, because the field of study forms a substantial investment in human capital (Wiswall & Zafar, 2015). Against this background, it is surprising that 41.9% of the participating retail students would prefer a career in other areas like marketing or financial services. Moreover, it is even more astonishing that a career in retailing is only appealing for 3.2% of all non-retail students, leaving retailing ranked in the eighth position. Overall, this shows that also in South Africa, the retail industry struggles to be appealing to young university learners.

Table 2.6: Students' preferred industry after graduation

	Overall		Retail Students		Non-retail Students	
	%[a]	Rank	%[a]	Rank	%[a]	Rank
Marketing/advertising agency	24.6	1	7.5	2	29.7	1
Retailing	17.0	2	58.1	1	3.2	8
Government/public services	13.4	3	5.9	4	15.9	2
Financial services/insurance/banking	11.1	4	6.5	3	12.7	3
Taxation/accounting	7.7	5	1.6	9	9.9	4
Consumer goods manufacturing	4.6	6	2.2	7	5.6	5
Tourism/hospitality	3.7	7	2.5	6	4.2	6
Education	3.2	8	4.3	5	2.9	9
Information/communication technology	2.9	9	2.2	7	3.3	7
Automotive	1.8	10	.9	10	2.1	10
Consulting	1.6	11	1.9	8	1.6	11
Other[b]	8.3		6.5		8.9	

Note: N=1363

[a] Adjusted (valid) percentages excluding missing observations

[b] Other preferred industries not mentioned in the list included such as fashion design, personal selling and safety management.

By cross tabulating the current field of study with the preferred industry of the participants, we created a classification of four different student types. These categories can be distinguished according to the reasons that drove the decision towards or against retailing as a field of study. In the questionnaire we asked the students to rate the extent to which different reasons influenced their study decision on a five-point Likert scale. Students received a list of six pre-formulated statements. A one-way ANOVA shows significant differences on three of the reasons that can be taken from Table 2.7. Additionally, the students were also prompted to name other reasons in an open field. We analyzed the content of these answers and clustered them according to their similarity. In what follows, the results of the ANOVA and the content analysis help to characterize the four identified student types.

Table 2.7: Students' reasons for study choice

	Retail Students		Non-retail Students			
	Prefer retail	NOT prefer retail	Prefer retail	NOT prefer retail		
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	F	p
A family member/friend works in this field.	2.21	2.24	2.52	2.26	.327	.806(ns)
I went to a consultant who tested me and told me which area fits best for me.	1.74	1.52	1.96	1.77	1.8145	.143(ns)
I want to open my own business in this field.	4.14	3.51	4.28	2.71	6.424	.000
I got a bursary in this field.	1.92	1.74	2.14	1.66	2.685	.045
I worked in this field before, e.g., as a part-time worker or after school.	1.96	1.95	1.86	1.73	1.924	.124(ns)
This was the only field of study that I could get into.	2.16	3.05	2.08	2.21	10.686	.000

Note: The higher the mean, the stronger the influence, N=1363.   ns = not significant

Figure 2.1: Student-Retail Relationships

	Retail Students	**Non-retail Students**
Prefer retail industry	*Group 1:* "Love Marriage"	*Group 2:* "Love at 2nd sight"
NOT prefer retail industry	*Group 3:* "Arranged Marriage"	*Group 4:* "Not Interested"

As can be seen in Figure 2.1, retail students that prefer to work in the retail industry form the first group. As compared to students who are oriented towards other industries, these students want to open their own business. Thirteen students from this group also expressed personal reasons in the open field. Love and passion towards the retail business were the most frequently mentioned reasons, followed by an inspirational mentor from the retail area. The following statements of two participants exemplify this:

"I always loved the retail industry and would love to become a good retailer in the future."
"...my role model is a retail manager, so that gave me a high influence to go for this field."

Because the decision towards retailing in this student group is based upon long-term commitment and affection towards the retail business, we describe the student-retail relation as a "love marriage".

In the second group, non-retail students would prefer to work in the retail industry. Although this group is quite small (3.2% of all non-retail students) they should be of great interest to universities and the retail business. The analysis shows that similar to group one students, they are also keen to open their own businesses. It seems that a bursary for a subject different from retailing drove their study decision. This would explain why, in this group, only two open answers were given (i.e., "research", "still on waiting list"). It shows that these students find it hard to give reasons for their chosen study. Instead, they see their future in a retail career. Thus, their relationship to retailing is a "love at second sight".

The third group of students is the most critical one not least because 41.9% of all retail students belong to it. They study retail management but strive for a career in another industry. The ANOVA shows that students from this group are significantly more likely than the other groups to state that retailing was the only field of study they could get into (F = 10.868, p < .000). This result is also reflected in the open answers. Eight out of twelve statements expressed that the favorite major was already full and the student was placed in retailing. Because these students show low levels of affective attachment to retailing and hold preferences for other industries, we call their relationship to retailing an "arranged marriage".

Finally, the fourth group comprises non-retail students with no preference for a retail career. The given reasons for the chosen field of study were manifold. Most often, the students cited their love for a specific major and the perceived fit to their personality. This group of students is of minor interest to the retail business. They are simply "not interested" in a relationship with the retail business.

2.4.5   *Important career factors and the retail industry image:*

To address the first two research objectives, study participants were asked to rate the importance of various career factors in choosing an industry. Therefore, we integrated the functional industry image scale introduced by Burmann et al. (2007) and expanded the list by attributes taken from Richardson (2009), Broadbridge (2003) and the qualitative interviews. In total, each participating student provided importance ratings on twenty-six attributes ranging from not important at all (1) to very important (5). The same list was used to ask the participants to what extent these attributes applied to the retail industry. Again, a five-point Likert scale was employed (not true at all (1) – very true (5)). Table 8 shows the mean importance ratings as well as the mean image ratings participants hold of retail careers. The first noticeable fact is that for six attributes ("working with different types of people", "challenging task", "close contact with customers", "many international companies", "quick transfer of responsibility", and "possibility to work in family owned-business") the perception of a career in retailing met (i.e., non-significant difference) or exceeded (i.e., positive difference) the importance ratings. However, five of them belong to the lower part of the importance list. That is, in the student's perception, retailing primarily exceeds their

expectations on attributes that are of minor importance. The opposite holds true for the remaining career attributes. For the most important career attributes like "good career opportunities", "good prospects in the job market", "good opportunities for further training", "opens opportunities to work in other industries", "chances for personal growth", and "good work-life balance" students were significantly more likely to rate their importance more highly than they would rate a career in retailing. As can be seen in Table 2.8, this also applies to the remaining attributes from the list. With regard to an importance-perception gap, four attributes can be identified that show mean differences of .60 and more. These are "good career opportunities", "good work-life balance", "high starting salary", and "high wage increases". That is, in the perception of the students, careers in the South African retail industry lag behind their ascribed importance when it comes to payment, work-life balance and advancement issues.

Table 2.8: Importance ratings and image of retail career

Attributes	Average importance rating[a]	Average rating of retail career	Mean difference	t-value	p
Good career opportunities	4.74	4.03	-0.71	17.310	.000
Good prospects in job market	4.55	4.00	-0.55	12.965	.000
Good opportunities for further training	4.52	4.12	-0.40	9.547	.000
Opens opportunities to work in other industries	4.46	3.92	-0.54	11.132	.000
Chances for personal growth	4.46	4.03	-0.43	8.766	.000
Good work-life balance	4.41	3.72	-0.69	13.859	.000
Rapid growth and guaranteed future	4.40	3.88	-0.52	11.417	.000
Working with different types of people	4.40	4.35	-0.05	1.104	.270 (ns)
Possibility to improve service in the industry	4.36	4.08	-0.28	6.652	.000
Good cooperation with colleagues and superiors	4.32	4.02	-0.30	6.986	.000
Diversity of job content	4.17	3.79	-0.38	8.134	.000
Many big companies	4.16	4.06	-0.10	2.185	.029
High degree of job security	4.14	3.64	-0.50	11.117	.000
Social responsibility	4.14	3.83	-0.31	6.159	.000
Many innovative companies	4.12	3.79	-0.33	7.110	.000
Challenging task	4.01	3.99	-0.02	.225	.822 (ns)
Close contact with customers	3.99	4.13	+0.14	-3.786	.000
Attractive working hours	3.97	3.46	-0.51	9.445	.000
Dynamic industry	3.95	3.80	-0.15	3.899	.000
High wage increases	3.92	3.31	-0.61	10.685	.000
Work that is fun	3.87	3.59	-0.28	4.812	.000
Many international companies	3.85	3.89	+0.04	.086	.932 (ns)
High starting salary	3.80	3.17	-0.63	11.407	.000
Chances to go overseas	3.76	3.42	-0.34	5.548	.000
Quick transfer of responsibility	3.62	3.69	+0.07	-1.220	.223 (n.s.)
Possibility to work for family-owned business	3.00	3.25	+0.25	-4.077	.000

N=1363;   ns = not significant

[a] Attributes are arranged in ascending order with regard to their importance ratings, with higher mean values indicating higher importance.

The attributes associated with a career in the retail industry were tested to see if there were any significant differences between retail and non-retail students. A MANOVA revealed significant differences between these two groups of respondents (Wilk's λ = .897, p < .001). Over all attributes, retail students held more positive associations than non-retail students. Table 2.9 illustrates that seventeen out of twenty-six attributes showed significant differences. For example, retail students were more likely to agree that the retail industry provides chances for personal growth, good career opportunities, the opportunity to work in another industry and high degrees of job security. This finding extends results from prior research that showed students with prior retail course attendance to hold more positive associations than their non-retail trained counterparts do (Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard et al., 1991). Because our sample only included first week students, prior retail courses do not provide an explanation for this difference. Instead, one might expect that heightened retail involvement in the study decision process might account for this observation. However, both student groups doubt that retailing offers high starting salaries, high wage increases and attractive working hours, as indicated by low evaluations and insignificant differences.

Table 2.9: Retail and non-retail students' ratings of retail career image

	Retail Students			Non-retail Students				
	M	SD	Rank	M	SD	Rank	F	p
Working with different types of people	4.53	.88	1	4.30	1.06	1	6.605	.010
Good opportunities for further training	4.36	.946	2	3.97	1.16	6	16.619	.000
Chances for personal growth	4.36	.87	3	3.85	1.27	11	25.943	.000
Good career opportunities	4.32	1.01	4	3.92	1.24	8	15.442	.000
Many big companies	4.31	.99	5	4.04	1.21	3	7.038	.008
Possibility to improve service in the industry	4.28	.95	6	4.01	1.17	4	7.826	.005
Challenging task	4.25	.99	7	3.95	1.20	7	8.709	.003
Opens opportunities to work in other industries	4.24	1.02	8	3.80	1.33	14	16.512	.000
Close contact with customers	4.19	1.12	9	4.12	1.20	2	.412	.521 (ns)
Good prospects in job market	4.18	.98	10	3.90	1.19	9	8.137	.004
Rapid growth and guaranteed future	4.11	1.06	11	3.85	1.26	12	6.328	.012
Many international companies	4.10	1.08	12	3.90	1.26	10	3.562	.060 (ns)
Good cooperation with colleagues / superiors	4.08	.994	13	4.01	1.14	5	.578	.447 (ns)
Social responsibility	4.06	1.10	14	3.76	1.30	15	8.043	.005
Dynamic industry	4.06	.97	15	3.82	1.23	13	5.744	.017
Many innovative companies	4.05	1.01	16	3.75	1.27	17	7.944	.005
Good work-life balance	3.97	1.15	17	3.65	1.38	19	8.278	.004
Diversity of job content	3.96	1.08	18	3.75	1.33	18	3.884	.049
High degree of job security	3.91	1.12	19	3.54	1.37	21	10.659	.001
Work that is fun	3.77	1.26	20	3.55	1.37	20	3.642	.057 (ns)
Quick transfer of responsibility	3.75	1.13	21	3.76	1.26	16	.010	.921 (ns)
Chances to go overseas	3.71	1.28	22	3.37	1.51	23	7.210	.007
Attractive working hours	3.62	1.31	23	3.46	1.46	22	1.769	.184 (ns)
High wage increases	3.42	1.32	24	3.29	1.46	24	1.179	.278 (ns)
Possibility to work for family-owned business	3.28	1.46	25	3.28	1.59	25	.000	.988 (ns)
High starting salary	3.25	1.38	26	3.23	1.46	26	.041	.841 (ns)

Note: The higher the mean, the more participants believe to find the attribute in the retail industry, N=1363, ns = not significant

Another MANOVA to explore gender differences in retail specific associations showed no significant difference between men and women (Wilk's λ = .962, p = .719).

To test if the often cited "retailing myth" also exists in South Africa, we included three statements in the questionnaire that represent common biases and associations, which participants occasionally expressed in the narrative interviews. To unveil if these prejudices are common amongst respondents, we asked participants to express their level of agreement. The five-point Likert scale was anchored with strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5). Over all participants, the mean values for these items range between 2.52 and 2.83. An independent samples t-test revealed (marginal) significant differences between retail and non-retail students for all three statements "The retail sector is less important than the commodity and industrial sector" (M_{retail} = 2.29 vs. $M_{non-retail}$ = 2.66; t(783) = -4.014, p < .001); "Most people think: If you can't make it anywhere else, you work in retailing" (M_{retail} = 2.69 vs. $M_{non-retail}$ = 2.91; t(793) = -1.839, p = .066); and "Retailing means working in a shop" (M_{retail} = 2.61 vs. $M_{non-retail}$ = 2.94; t(785) = -2.943, p < .01). Accordingly, retail students were less likely to fall prey to the "retailing myth" as compared to students from other disciplines.

2.5   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The current study investigated first year university learners' attitudes, in their first week at university, towards retailing as a field of study and as a prospective career option. The study among 1363 South African study beginners shows that a career in retailing is only appealing to a few Gen Y members. They believe a career in retailing does not offer them those attributes they consider important. It shows that for twenty out of twenty-six attributes retailing significantly lags behind important expectations of an industry. Although our investigation shows that current retail students hold more beneficial associations of a career in their chosen field of study, the often-cited "retailing myth" also exists in South Africa. That is, retailing is often associated with unattractive working hours, low wage increases and low starting salaries. As a consequence, a career in retailing ranks eighth among the given list of industries for non-retail students. Most surprisingly, only 58.1% of all participating retail students specified retailing as their preferred career choice. This highlights the need for the industry, all retail companies and educators to implement strategies that attract and inform highly motivated university students prior to and during their studies. For each of the four identified student groups, different implications will be addressed.

2.5.1   Implications for the "love marriage" group:

Students from this group hold a passionate relationship with their field of study and look forward to working in the retail industry. All communication efforts should focus on this emotionally charged commitment towards a career in retailing. That is, communication strategies should combine information on functional attributes with storytelling and experience-based recruitment. In order to retain their commitment, universities and employers should be keen to address these students' expectations when it comes to the most important career attributes like advancement opportunities, further training and future prospects.

Underpinning the integration of these factors, the selection process for retail students should also focus on applicants' personal commitment to the industry.

2.5.2   Implications for the "love at second sight" group:

Although this group of students in our study was numerically small, they are of great importance for the retail industry. These students strive for a retail career although they are currently enrolled in other majors. Remarkably, these students could not give any reasons for their study decision. One might argue that their current field of study is rather a fallback option than a first choice. These students might have missed the entry requirements of a retail management program or they were faced with capacity restrictions. Accordingly, universities should review their selection process with regard to the selection criteria and capacity restraints.

2.5.3   Implications for the "arranged love" group:

Because of its size and contradictory behavior, this group of students is most critical for the retail industries' future recruitment success. Although these students are enrolled in retail management, they prefer a different industry for their future careers. The major reason for this disjunction can be seen in the fact that retail management was the only field of study the students could get in to. Although this might cause misallocations of resources (which calls for changes in the selection process), it also offers the possibility to universities and the industry to prove that the retailing myth is incorrect. Universities should encourage students to take advantage of internships, right from the beginning of their studies. Moreover, retail companies should offer classroom presentations, case-study sessions and mentoring programs to accompany retail students through their studies. As the major source of information, the career websites should connect to the experience realm of prospective students to encourage them right from the early decision stages.

2.5.4   Implications for the "not interested" group:

As with any field of study, there are also students who are not interested in studying retailing or working in this industry. They hold a "love marriage" with other majors. Although they are not the target audience for future recruitment activities, they are important as customers and advice givers to their peer group. Because the industry image strongly influences the corporate image of each retailer within the retail industry, all market players should entrust a retail association with image building actions. Other countries, for example Germany, have already launched joint communication campaigns in order to counter the "retailing myth" (Hebben, 2011).

As with other studies, we acknowledge some limitations relative to our data collection. Although our sample comprised business students from five South African universities, generalizability of the results is limited. Considering that South Africa has twenty-six public universities, many private universities and colleges, and more than one million students in higher education with a myriad of majors (BusinessTech, 2015), our results are only

applicable to those students majoring in business. For future studies it would be interesting also to include non-business students in the sample – the retail sector also holds potential for students studying disciplines such as law, engineering, food science, fashion design, etc. Such inclusions might result in even sharper differences between groups of students (Mokhlis, 2014a). Moreover, our study only assessed retail specific opinions from first year students within their first week of studies. Future research should follow up on these results or employ longitudinal research designs in order to show how the retail image evolves over time, and to assess efficiency of image-building actions.

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CHAPTER 3 – PAPER 2

Preference for a Career in Retailing: A Question of Personality

ABSTRACT

Drawing on previous findings from the field of brand personality research and employer branding this research aims to explore the symbolic attributes of the retail industry image in South Africa and to identify those personality traits that distinguish preferred industries from the retail industry. Therefore, a quantitative survey study with 1426 participants from South African universities was conducted. The main results suggest that retail and non-retail students hold different personality perceptions of the retail industry and that retailing performs significantly worse on those personality attributes that are of major importance for future job seekers. Moreover, we identified those attributes that exert a strong effect on students' preferences for the retail industry.

Keywords: brand personality; industry image; retail industry; South Africa

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3.1. INTRODUCTION

For decades, the core topic of branding literature was marketing activities targeting at customers and consumers of products and services. In recent years, however, the branding perspective has shifted also towards other groups of stakeholders such as shareholders, suppliers and, of particular note, employers (Rampl and Kenning, 2014). In increasingly competitive labor markets where the often cited "war for talent" is present, attracting and retaining skilled employees is the focal interest of corporate branding activities (Michaels et al., 2001) such as employer branding (Lievens, 2007) and internal branding (e.g. Vallaster, 2004).

Against this background, scholars have begun to investigate whether branding concepts and strategies for acquiring and retaining customers might be applicable to the labor domain. In this vein, research on employer branding addressed different antecedents and outcomes of a favorable employer image (for a comprehensive review see Lievens and Slaughter, 2016). It shows that organizational actions, recruiters and non-organizational information determine the mental representations of an employer as held by individual constituents (Lievens and Slaughter, 2016). Over and above these factors that originate from the organization and individual itself, several studies draw on the considerable influence of external factors such as the type of industry in which the company operates (Blinda, 2003; Burmann et al., 2007; Cable and Graham, 2000; Dowling, 2004; Erz et al., 2008). More precisely, research shows that the industry image significantly determines the overall corporate image and the associated image attributes alike (Burmann et al., 2007) which in turn affects interest and

application intentions (Barber, 1998; Rynes, 1991). In this regard, an industry image is defined as "a set of associations that is firmly anchored, condensed, and evaluated in the minds of people concerning a group of companies, which, from the point of view of an individual, supplies the same customer groups with the same technologies for the fulfillment of the same customer needs" (Burmann et al., 2007, p. 159).

Moreover, there is also evidence that industries with low image profiles (i.e., those with unknown, unclear and unattractive value propositions) find it hard to attract a skilled and motivated workforce (Wallace et al., 2012) and to even motivate university students to strive for a career in the respective industry (Oh et al., 2016). In addition to other industries (such as rail and hospitality) this observation especially holds true for the retail industry (Rhoads et al., 2002; Wallace et al., 2012). Research on the appeal of the retailing industry predominantly focused on the functional attributes of the industry image such as working hours, development opportunities or salary (e.g., Broadbridge, 2003). Thus, it only captured a small fraction of the overall image stakeholders, especially university students, establish about an industry. Symbolic attributes of an industry, i.e. the more abstract and intangible associations not related to the actual product or service (Zentes et al., 2008), have so far been of minor interest in retail literature. These symbolic attributes are also referred to as personality trait inferences or brand personality (Lievens and Slaughter, 2016). In their 2004 article in the *Journal of Retailing* Ailawadi and Keller (2004) addressed the symbolic meaning individuals attribute to brands as one priority in future retail research. While some researchers addressed this call while applying the brand personality construct to retail brands (i.e., retailers as brands) there is no study that investigates the brand personality of retailing as an industry. This manuscript fills this void with a study conducted with first week university students in South Africa.

Drawing on previous findings from the field of brand personality research and employer branding we aim to explore the symbolic attributes of the retail industry image in South Africa and to identify those personality traits that distinguish preferred industries from the retail industry.

The findings provide a contemporary overview of the current image of the retail industry in South Africa from the perspective of young university students. The insights from our study allow retailers to strengthen their joint communication efforts with regard to the most favorable personality characteristics. Therefore, the remainder of the paper is as follows: First, the use of the personality metaphor for brands and industries is discussed, followed by an overview of empirical studies on brand personality in general and in retailing in particular. Next, we present the results of an empirical study which analyzed symbolic characteristics of the South African retail industry and compared the results to the profiles of the industries most wanted by university students. Finally, we conclude with implications for the retail industry in South Africa.

3.2. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.2.1 Image of the retail industry

Prior research from the field of marketing conceptualized the image of a brand as a composition of functional and symbolic attributes (Padgett and Allen, 1997). Moreover, some researchers added the experiential meaning of a brand as a third dimension to the concept (Keller, 1993; Park et al., 1986). In their seminal work, Lievens and Highhouse (2003) adapted this so called instrumental-symbolic framework to the field of employer images. According to their framework, a job seeker´s attraction to an organization builds upon instrumental and symbolic associations (Lievens, 2007). While functional attributes describe an organization in terms of its objective and concrete characteristics such as job security, pay and advancement, symbolic attributes encompass subjective and intangible associations (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003; Van Hoye et al., 2013). These symbolic associations can be best described as traits that job seekers associate with organizations (Slaughter et al., 2004). Both, instrumental and symbolic image dimensions have been found to influence job seekers´ attraction to a company as an employer (Lievens, 2007) as well as identification and recommendation intentions (Lievens et al., 2007; Van Hoye, 2008). Additionally, a study conducted by Burmann et al. (2007) revealed that instrumental and symbolic industry inferences determine corporate images held by potential employees.

In recent years, there is growing interest in the symbolic meaning consumers and job seekers ascribe to brands and organizations (Das, 2014). This might be due to the finding that, in terms of relative importance, symbolic attributes contribute most to organizational attraction (Lievens et al., 2005). Moreover, companies find it easier to differentiate from their competitors on the basis of symbolic image dimensions rather than instrumental attributes (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003). In light of these findings, it seems surprising that until now, studies on job seekers´ attraction to the retail industry concentrated on functional attributes of the retail industry image without incorporating the symbolic dimension in their studies (Broadbridge, 2003; Broadbridge et al., 2007, 2009; Mokhlis, 2014b; Oh et al., 2016; Swinyard, 1981; Swinyard et al., 1991).

In sum, each of these studies portrayed a sobering picture of the appeal of retailing careers based on data from the UK, the US, and Malaysia. More precisely, in one of the first studies in this field, Swinyard (1981) found that study participants hold mainly unfavorable functional associations with a career in retailing. Whereas the most preferred career was described in terms of "challenging", "interesting" and "good salary" (in order of importance), retailing was primarily characterized as "dull", "people-oriented" and "poor salary". In a follow-up study ten years later, Swinyard et al. (1991) showed that although retailers had become more sophisticated, retailing was evaluated as even less appealing as compared to the earlier study. The distorted view of the retail industry and its opportunities was termed the "retailing myth" (Swinyard et al., 1991). Benchmarking these results, Broadbridge (2003) conducted a subsequent study more than another ten years later. Only 2.6% of the undergraduate sample nominated retailing as their first career choice due to similar associations (Broadbridge, 2003). Although the industry image can be decomposed into

functional and symbolic attributes, these studies omitted a measure of personality traits of the industry in their studies. Against this background, we strive to explore the symbolic associations that future job seekers hold of the retail industry in the South African context.

3.2.2 The personality of an industry

Symbolic attributes of organizations are also known as organization personality perceptions (Slaughter and Greguras, 2009). This concept draws on Aaker´s (1991) work on brand personality that is defined as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (p. 347). While customers and prospective employees might associate different personalities with a company, research shows that these traits can be best described in terms of five higher-order factors, namely sincerity, innovativeness, competence, prestige and ruggedness (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003). Because humans possess a general tendency to anthropomorphize objects and brands (Zentes et al., 2008), researchers applied the metaphor of a brand holding personality traits to products and product groups (Aaker, 1997), countries and places (Demirbag Kaplan et al., 2010), organizations (Van Hoye et al., 2013) and industries (Burmann et al., 2007). Brand personality traits are metaphorical in nature (Zentes et al., 2008). That is, as compared to human traits, organizations do not possess objective personalities but rather traits that individuals, external to the organization, ascribe to them (Slaughter and Greguras, 2009; Zentes et al., 2008).

Trait perceptions stem from multiple sources, such as media coverage, advertisements and information from friends and family, and first and foremost, the people associated with the company (Slaughter and Greguras, 2009). According to the latter, the behavior and thus the personality of the employees working for an organization as well as their clients are important drivers of organizational personality impressions (Wenzel, 2009). In general, personality impressions inherit a signal effect, i.e. job seekers are attracted to those symbolic company traits that "enable them to maintain their self-identity, to enhance their self-image, or to express themselves" (Van Hoye et al., 2013, p. 544).

The current study is grounded in the perspective of a single product or company and focusses on the industry as the object of investigation. Thereby, our study emphasizes that industries, seen as groups of companies, can also be characterized by personality traits that stakeholders associate with them. Borrowing from Aaker´s (1997) definition of brand personality, we define *industry personality* as the set of human personality characteristics perceived to be associated with an industry.

3.2.3 Applying the personality metaphor to the retail industry

Compared to the attention researchers have paid towards the concept of product brand personality, studies that examine personality traits of retailing remain scarce. In a call for a stronger application of personality research on the area of retailing (Ailawadi and Keller, 2004), some authors addressed questions beginning with the retail brand (Hyman et al., 2010) through to retailers as a brand (Burt and Davies, 2010). A study conducted by Möller and Herm (2013) investigated the role customer experience played in forming perceptions of retail

brand personalities. The authors found that bodily experiences of hardness and temperature during shopping transfer their metaphoric meaning to retail brand personality perceptions (Möller and Herm, 2013, study 2). Moreover, Das (2014) empirically tested the assumption that retail brand personality impacts store loyalty. Employing a store personality scale developed for the Indian market, the results revealed that retail brand personality positively influenced store loyalty while gender moderated the relationship. In a subsequent study, the author showed that retail brand personalities varied from department stores to specialty clothing stores (Das, 2015). The author also demonstrated that male study participants hold different personality associations than females. In a more recent study conducted by Zentes et al. (2008) the authors applied the personality construct to retail brands in Germany. The authors provided empirical evidence that different personality traits exert different effects on loyalty. While perceived competence regressed high on attitudinal loyalty, ruggedness seems to influence loyalty negatively. They concluded that retail brand personality "plays an important role in store patronage and loyalty behavior" (p. 180). These studies primarily examined the personality traits from the perspective of retailers as brands. To date, however, there is no study that investigates personality perceptions of retailing as an industry. Only Burmann et al. (2007) empirically examined personality perceptions of industries, but without focusing on the retail industry in particular. The results of their research outline that industry images (symbolic and functional attributes) determine corporate images and that this relationship is moderated by involvement and knowledge of potential employees. In their conceptual article Erz et al. (2008) drew upon these results and argued that negative industry images represent stereotypes that affect job seekers' perceived attractiveness of an industry and its companies. Again, empirical results for the retail industry are missing.

This gap motivates us to explore the following research questions:

RQ 1: Which personality traits do young university students associate with the retail industry, and is there any difference between retail and non-retail students?

RQ 2: What does the personality profile of a preferred industry look like?

RQ 3: How does the personality profile of the retail industry relate to the personality profile of the most preferred industry?

RQ 4: Does the perceived retail industry personality influence university students´ preference for a career in retailing?

3.3. METHODOLOGY

3.3.1 Sample and data collection

A quantitative study, employing self-administered paper-and-pencil questionnaires, was done. Having received ethics clearance from Cape Peninsula University of Technology, (Clearance certificate No. 2015FBREC309), the questionnaires were sent to the business departments of five participating South African universities, namely Cape Peninsula University of

Technology, Durban University of Technology, Tshwane University of Technology, University of Johannesburg and Vaal University of Technology. These universities were chosen as they all offered a three-year course in retail. In each university, newly enrolled management students were accessed during class time in their first week on campus to ensure high participation. A letter of information and informed consent informed the respondents about the purpose of the study, the estimated completion time of 15 minutes, anonymity and voluntariness of participation. This collection method resulted in 1426 returned questionnaires. After eliminating 63 questionnaires due to incomplete or unlikely response patterns (for this procedure also see Mokhlis, 2014a), the final non-probability sample consisted of 1363 usable questionnaires.

3.3.2 Measures

In order to measure the *industry personality* we adapted the scale Burmann et al. (2007) proposed in their seminal paper on industry image, that builds upon Aaker´s (2007) 42 item brand personality measure. We relied on the shorter version consisting of 15 different personality traits that has proven applicable in the industry setting (Burmann et al., 2007). Respondents rated how descriptive the given personality traits were of the retail industry and their most preferred industry, using a five-point scale (1 – not at all true, 5 – very true). For brand and organizational personality scales scholars generally accept a five dimensional structure while eliminating and re-allocating some indicators to other factors (Zentes et al., 2008). However, an explorative factor analysis could not replicate this structure from our data. Instead, the shortened and adapted scale for industry personality proved to be unidimensional with a Chronbach´s Alpha of .84 (see Table 3.1 for correlations). In line with Burmann et al. (2007) we refrained from calculating a composite score for the personality scale. Instead, we used each item to measure the respective personality trait. Thus, we are able to give concrete recommendations with regard to every facet of industry personality.

To gain information on participants' *preferred industry*, we asked them to specify the industry they would prefer to work in after finishing their studies from a given list of eleven industries relevant to business graduates in South Africa. These industries were retrieved from an extensive market analysis.

Finally, we also included *descriptive measures* of gender, age and the current field of study in the questionnaire. Gender and age did not show any significant differences on personality perceptions and were therefore excluded from the subsequent analysis.

Table 3.1: Correlation matrix for industry personality traits

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
(1) Charming	1.00														
(2) Cheerful	.537**	1.00													
(3) Well-mannered	.367**	.477**	1.00												
(4) Reliable	.323**	.417**	.673**	1.00											
(5) Authentic	.365**	.378**	.540**	.628**	1.00										
(6) Distinguished	.278**	.276**	.378**	.414**	.526**	1.00									
(7) Intelligent	.281**	.329**	.463**	.488**	.455**	.455**	1.00								
(8) Robust	.287**	.320**	.313**	.328**	.407**	.495**	.378**	1.00							
(9) Spirited	.340**	.409**	.417**	.367**	.382**	.342**	.479**	.481**	1.00						
(10) Honest	.264**	.316**	.535**	.558**	.462**	.354**	.440**	.311**	.434**	1.00					
(11) Freedom-loving	.313**	.345**	.423**	.445**	.447**	.351**	.357**	.359**	.424**	.524**	1.00				
(12) Enterprising	.237**	.340**	.393**	.437**	.457**	.318**	.466**	.297**	.374**	.399**	.480**	1.00			
(13) Passionate	.345**	.391**	.495**	.525**	.489**	.376**	.538**	.322**	.438**	.511**	.502**	.629**	1.00		
(14) Imaginative	.299**	.346**	.387**	.456**	.518**	.348**	.451**	.277**	.400**	.419**	.494**	.567**	.618**	1.00	
(15) Solid	.255**	.348**	.460**	.532**	.442**	.342**	.454**	.325**	.358**	.450**	.427**	.475**	.543**	.508**	1.00

Significance level: ** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

N = 866

3.4. RESULTS

3.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The sample profile of this study was as follows. Female – 54.9 percent, with 97 percent born between 1990 and 1999. About 26.5% of all respondents were enrolled in retail business management as their major field of study. This large representation of retail students in the sample is due to the fact that we only included universities in the sample that offered retail management as a business major. This procedure ensured a sample size of retail students (as compared to non-retail students) that was big enough to allow comparisons to be made. As can be seen in Table 3.2, "marketing/advertising agencies" represents the most preferred industry for later careers.

Table 3.2: Demographics

Variable	Category	Sample %[a]
Gender	Female	54.9
	Male	45.1
Subject	Retailing student	26.5
	Non-retail student	73.5
Preferred	Marketing/advertising agency	24.6
Industry	Retailing	17.0
	Government/public services	13.4
	Financial services/insurance/banking	11.1
	Taxation/accounting	7.7
	Consumer goods manufacturing	4.6
	Tourism/hospitality	3.7
	Education	3.2
	Information/communication technology	2.9
	Automotive	1.8
	Consulting	1.6
	Other[b]	8.3

Note: N=1363
[a] Adjusted (valid) percentages excluding missing observations
[b] Other preferred industries not mentioned in the list included such as fashion design, personal selling and safety management.

3.4.2 Results for research question 1

To address the first research question, study participants were asked to assess the personality traits they associate with the retail industry on a five-point Likert scale ranging from not at all true (1) to very true (5). To examine possible differences between retail and non-retail students,

we conducted a MANOVA. The analysis revealed significant differences between both groups of respondents (Wilk's λ = .942, p < .001). Retail students significantly differed from non-retail students in their perception of the retail industry personality as being cheerful, well-mannered, reliable, intelligent, honest, enterprising, passionate, imaginative and solid. While perceptions of charming, authentic, distinguished and freedom loving were only marginally significant, no significant differences emerged for robust and spirited. Table 3.3 shows that retail students hold more favorable personality associations of the retail industry for all prompted traits than non-retail students.

Table 3.3: Retail and non-retail students' personality perceptions of retailing

Personality Perceptions	Retail students		Non-retail students		Mean difference	F-value	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
Charming	3.42	1.34	3.22	1.49	0.20	2.942	<.10
Cheerful	3.90	1.14	3.59	1.42	0.31	8.339	<.05
Well-mannered	4.30	1.01	3.92	1.29	0.38	14.947	<.001
Reliable	4.32	.97	3.90	1.28	0.42	18.429	<.001
Authentic	3.93	1.02	3.75	1.29	0.18	3.255	<.10
Distinguished	3.83	1.11	3.66	1.32	0.17	2.890	<.10
Intelligent	4.30	.91	3.96	1.24	0.34	13.576	<.001
Robust	*3.44*	*1.14*	*3.47*	*1.36*	*-0.03*	*.068*	*.79 (n.s.)*
Spirited	*3.75*	*1.18*	*3.73*	*1.32*	*0.02*	*.044*	*.83 (n.s.)*
Honest	4.11	1.14	3.88	1.29	0.23	5.085	<.05
Freedom-loving	3.98	1.14	3.80	1.35	0.18	2.823	<.10
Enterprising	4.38	.83	4.12	1.14	0.26	9.481	<.01
Passionate	4.42	.83	4.04	1.23	0.38	18.041	<.001
Imaginative	4.25	.99	4.02	1.23	0.23	5.706	<.05
Solid	4.13	1.07	3.86	1.30	0.27	7.009	<.01

Note: The higher the mean, the more participants find the trait to be applicable in the retail industry, N=700

The students' perception especially differs when they were asked to describe the retail industry personality as being reliable, passionate, well-mannered and intelligent. Because our sample included only first week students, prior retail course attendance does not explain these differences. Instead, however, we expect that heightened retail involvement in the study decision phase might account for this observation. In the questionnaire, we asked participants to indicate their willingness to choose retailing as their field of study before they actually started university, using a five-point scale (1 - not at all willing / 5 – very willing). We used this item as a measure for retail involvement and ran four bivariate regression analyses. That is, we regressed those

personality traits that showed the largest differences in participants' perception on retail involvement. For each of the four dependent variables the coefficient was found substantive, positive and significant (see Table 3.4). Variance explained (R^2) in each regression equation was between 5.2% and 7.5%. These findings show that students who can be characterized by a higher retail involvement (prior to their studies) evaluated the personality traits of the retail industry more positively in terms of reliable, passionate, well-mannered and intelligent. That is, we can conclude that prior retail involvement accounts for, at least, some variance in the observed difference between retail and non-retail students.

Table 3.4: Results of regression analyses

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients (β)		
	b	SE	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	3.345 (b_0)	0.094		35.769	
Retail Involvement	0.224 (b_1)	0.032	0.274	7.043	.000

Notes: Dependent variable: Reliable: $R^2 = 0.075$

(Constant)	3.560 (b_0)	0.089		40.101	
Retail Involvement	0.179 (b_1)	0.030	0.232	5.956	.000

Notes: Dependent variable: Passionate: $R^2 = 0.054$

(Constant)	3.366 (b_0)	0.096		35.001	
Retail Involvement	0.203 (b_1)	0.033	0.242	6.190	.000

Notes: Dependent variable: Well-mannered: $R^2 = 0.059$

(Constant)	3.438 (b_0)	0.091		37.764	
Retail Involvement	0.180 (b_1)	0.031	0.229	5.837	.000

Notes: Dependent variable: Intelligent: $R^2 = 0.052$

3.4.3 Results for research question 2

We also asked participants to indicate the personality characteristics of their most preferred industry, again using the same personality scale as in research question 1. According to the specified preferred industry, all respondents were classified as either "yes – prefers to work in retail" or "no – does NOT prefer to work in retail". A MANOVA revealed a significant difference between those participants preferring a retail career compared to those striving for a career in one of the remaining industries (Wilk's λ = .972, $p < .05$). However, the subsequent univariate tests for each of the preferred personality characteristics show different results. Except for the industry personality trait of being "enterprising" (F = 12.782, $p < .001$) no significant difference was obtained for both groups of respondents ($ps > .193$). That is, the personality traits that university students expect from their future industry are (nearly) the same over all industries. Because the multivariate test contradicts the univariate results (which might be due to correlations between the dependent variables), we followed up with a discriminant analysis (Field, 2012). A discriminant analysis was conducted to examine if personality evaluations of the industry (independent variables) predict whether retailing is the preferred industry or not (grouping variable). The analysis revealed one discriminant function explaining 100% of the variance, canonical R^2 = .02, that significantly differentiated between participants preferring a career in retailing and those striving for another industry (Wilk's λ = .972, $p < .05$). Similar to the results of the univariate analysis, only the personality trait of being "enterprising" correlated high on the discriminant function with a factor loading of r = .674. All remaining personality traits fall under the cut of value of r = .30 and are therefore not associated with the grouping variable. Accordingly, retailing as the preferred industry acts as a grouping variable only for the industry personality trait of being enterprising. To sum up, when asked to indicate the personality traits of their preferred industry, first week university students cherish similar attributes (except for enterprising) independent from the kind of industry. Therefore, we calculated mean scores for all personality traits of a preferred industry over all study participants. Figure 3.1 illustrates the personality profile based on these mean values.

Figure 3.1: Personality traits of preferred industries
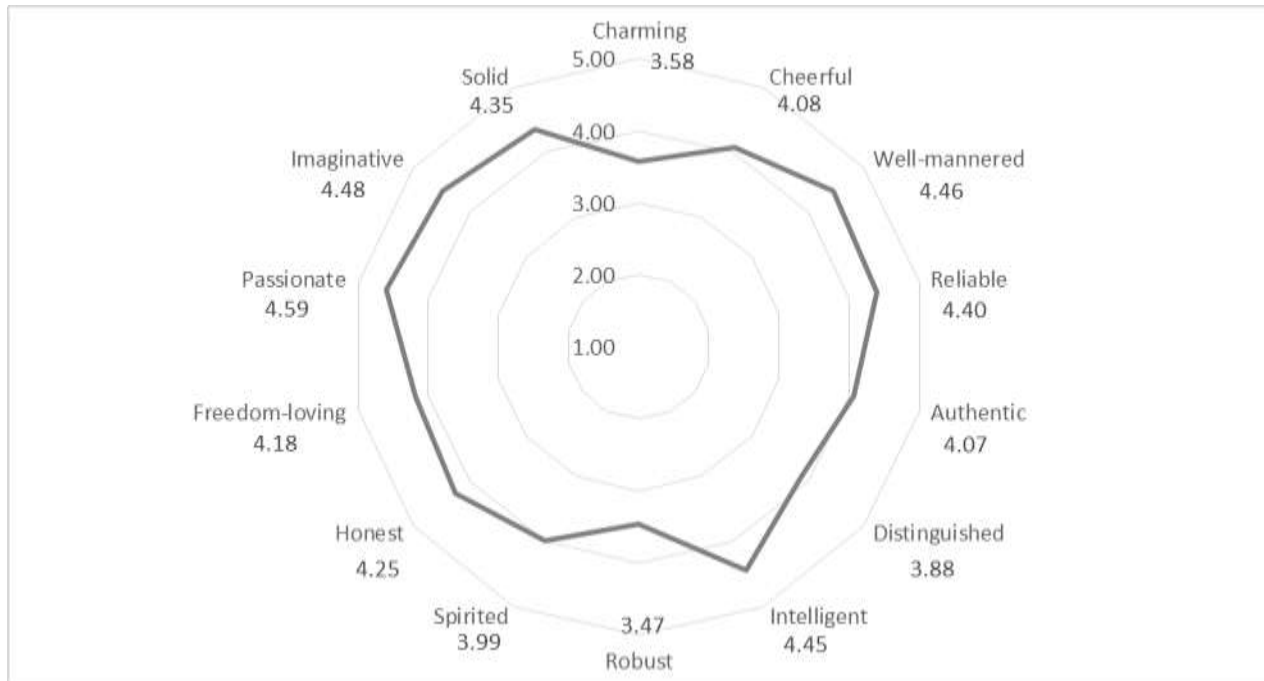
Note: The higher the mean, the more participants find the trait to be applicable in the preferred industry, N=977

It shows that the preferred industries of university students in South Africa can be best described in terms of being passionate, imaginative and well-mannered (top three attributes) and less in terms of being robust, charming and spirited.

3.4.4 Results for research question 3

In order to compare the personality profile of the retail industry with the profile of the most preferred industry, namely marketing, we performed paired sample t-tests. We only included participants in our analysis who chose "marketing/advertising agency" as the industry of choice for their future career. The main question is, what does the marketing industry signal to young university learners that retailing does not? Table 3.5 answers this question. The results reveal that, except for three personality attributes, retailing is significantly inferior to marketing on all remaining personality traits.

Table 3.5: Personality perceptions of marketing vs. retailing

Personality Perceptions	Marketing Industry		Retail Industry		Mean difference	t-value	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
Charming	**3.60**	1.482	**3.27**	1.486	- 0.33	2.703	< .01
Cheerful	**4.20**	1.020	**3.77**	1.360	- 0.43	3.774	< .001
Well-mannered	**4.42**	.934	**3.84**	1.350	- 0.58	5.774	< .001
Reliable	**4.33**	.936	**3.83**	1.322	- 0.50	5.027	< .001
Authentic	**3.90**	1.097	**3.63**	1.279	- 0.27	2.555	< .05
Distinguished	**3.78**	1.215	**3.55**	1.339	- 0.23	2.061	< .05
Intelligent	**4.44**	.878	**3.92**	1.241	- 0.52	5.137	< .001
Robust	*3.32*	*1.214*	*3.39*	*1.371*	*0.07*	*- .646*	*.52 (n.s.)*
Spirited	*3.86*	*1.290*	*3.67*	*1.297*	*- 0.19*	*1.484*	*.14 (n.s.)*
Honest	**3.98**	1.249	**3.69**	1.353	- 0.29	2.651	< .01
Freedom-loving	**4.10**	1.166	**3.84**	1.283	- 0.26	2.231	< .05
Enterprising	*4.29*	*.982*	*4.18*	*1.070*	*- 0.11*	*1.104*	*.27 (n-s-)*
Passionate	**4.61**	.783	**4.03**	1.183	- 0.58	5.998	< .001
Imaginative	**4.62**	.744	**4.07**	1.138	- 0.55	6.180	< .001
Solid	**4.24**	1.028	**3.97**	1.206	- 0.27	2.845	< .01

Note: The higher the mean, the more participants find the trait to be applicable in the industry, N=180

Analyzing the differences between the personality perceptions of marketing and retailing it shows that the marketing industry is especially superior when it comes to signaling a well-mannered, passionate and imaginative personality. This result extends the finding of the analysis under 4.3.

That is, the participating students described their most preferred industry as being passionate, imaginative and well-mannered. However, in reality it is exactly these personality traits where the retail industry trails furthest behind the most preferred industry. The retail industry only meets preferred industry characteristics on two personality traits that the analysis identified as being less descriptive, namely being robust and spirited. Figure 3.2 illustrates this finding.

Figure 3.2: Personality profiles of marketing industry vs. retail industry

Note: The higher the mean, the more participants find the trait to be applicable in the retail industry, N=180 (participants with "marketing & advertising industry" as their preferred industry only)

3.4.5 Results for research question 4

In the previous section we investigated if the personality characteristics of the most preferred industry vary from those of the retail industry. In light of these results, it might be interesting to push the envelope further and analyze if participants´ perceptions of retail personality influence preferences for their future career industry. Accordingly, we asked participants to evaluate the personality characteristics of the retail industry and analyzed the impact on the dichotomous dependent variable (industry preference: retail (0) vs. other industry (1)) using logistic regression.[2] The model chi square indicates that including the predictors (personality perceptions of retail industry) in the model improved overall fit as the -2 log likelihood from the baseline model significantly decreased by a -2LL value of $\chi^2 = 87,281$, $p < .001$).

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[2] We checked for multicollinearity, since all personality traits were included in the logistic regression model. Checking the collinearity statistics of the corresponding linear regression, SPSS shows that no personality trait holds a perfect linear relationship with another predictor (VIFs between 1.496 and 2.528; Tolerance all above .395; all correlation coefficients below .63). Accordingly, we expect the results of the logistic regression to be virtually unbiased.

The Cox & Snell R-square and Nagelkerte R-square are both above 0.11, indicating that the variables in the model account for at least 11% of the variation in industry preference. The classification score shows that 76.4 percent of all cases are correctly classified. In total, the model´s overall fit seems acceptable.

Therefore the statistical significance of each independent variable was estimated and displayed in Table 3.6. The results show that five out of the fifteen investigated personality traits exert a significant influence on industry preference. These are namely, well-mannered (Wald χ^2 = 7.734, p < .01), intelligent (Wald χ^2 = 8.206, p < .01), robust (Wald χ^2 = 6.983, p < .01), spirited (Wald χ^2 = 4.748, p < .05) and passionate (Wald χ^2 = 4.262, p < .05). Furthermore, the results provide insights into the direction of the influence. The personality traits robust and spirited show Exp(B) values above 1. This means, that as retail personality perceptions of being "robust" and "spirited" increase, people tend to prefer industries other than retailing. The opposite holds true for "well-mannered", "intelligent" and "passionate" since these traits show Exp(B) values below 1.

Study participants are more likely to prefer the retail industry for their future career when personality perceptions of retailing as being well-mannered, intelligent and passionate increase. The corresponding odds ratio shows that a one-unit change in the well-mannered-perception would increase participant´s probability of striving for a retail career by 31.1 percent[3]. Likewise, being positioned as robust in the minds of the students would increase participant's probability of striving for a career outside of retailing by 27 percent. This means that, strengthening personality perceptions of being well-mannered, intelligent and passionate helps to attract university students to a career in retailing   .

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[3] Odds ratios have been calculated as Exp(1)-1.

Table 3.6: Logistic regression results

Dependent variable: Industry preference (Retail = 0 / Other industry = 1)						
Independent variables	**Beta**	**Error**	**Wald**	**Sig.**	**Exp. (B)**	**Interpretation**
Charming	0.106	0.077	1.894	0.169	1.112	*n.s.*
Cheerful	-0.161	0.097	2.750	0.097	0.851	*n.s.*
Well-mannered	-0.373	0.134	7.734	0.05	0.689	Increase in one unit, would increase *retail* industry preference by 31.1 percent
Reliable	-0.023	0.137	0.027	0.870	0.978	*n.s.*
Authentic	0.094	0.114	0.688	0.407	1.099	*n.s.*
Distinguished	0.018	0.094	0.036	0.849	1.018	*n.s.*
Intelligent	-0.368	0.128	8.206	0.004	0.692	Increase in one unit, would increase *retail* industry preference by 30.8 percent
Robust	0.239	0.090	6.983	0.008	1.270	Increase in one unit, would increase *other* industry preference by 27 percent
Spirited	0.212	0.098	4.748	0.029	1.237	Increase in one unit, would increase *other* industry preference by 23.7 percent
Honest	-0.036	0.108	0.114	0.736	0.964	*n.s.*
Freedom-loving	-0.064	0.102	0.396	0.529	0.938	*n.s.*
Enterprising	-0.181	0.157	1.337	0.248	0.834	*n.s.*
Passionate	-0.335	0.162	4,262	0.039	0.715	Increase in one unit, would increase *retail* industry preference by 28.5% percent
Imaginative	-0.115	0.128	0.812	0.367	0.891	*n.s.*
Solid	0.081	0.108	0.565	0.452	1.085	*n.s.*

Model statistics:
-2 log likelihood :665.28
Cox & Snell R^2:0.117
Nagelkerte R^2: 0.178
Hosmer and Lemeshow test: χ^2(df) = 15.51 (8), p = .05

3.5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Brand personality perception is a concept that promises value when systematically assessed by companies. Considerable research interest has been devoted to developing scales to assess brand personalities of products and companies and to determine possible influences of the personality perceptions that customers and job seekers hold. The current study focusses on the industry instead of a single product or company. Thereby, our study emphasizes that industries, seen as groups of companies, can also be characterized by personality traits that stakeholders associate with them.

Prior research pointed out that industry images (including personality perceptions) influence corporate images (Burmann et al., 2007). We merge this insight with the notion that the retail industry finds it especially hard to attract qualified and motivated job seekers, and examined whether unfavorable personality perceptions might account for this dilemma.

The findings of our study can be summarized as follows:

First, we find that retail and non-retail students hold different personality perceptions of the retail industry. Since all study participants can be classified as freshmen, prior retail course attendance is cancelled out as an explanation for these differences. Instead, we find that retail involvement, measured as participant's prior consideration of retailing as a possible field of study, accounts for the main perceptual differences.

Second, we examined the personality traits of the most preferred industries as held by students. We find that what makes an industry a preferred industry is universal. That is, students who prefer a career in retailing and those who strive for other industries share the same personality perceptions of their favorite industry. It shows that the preferred industries of university students in South Africa can be best described in terms of being passionate, imaginative and well-mannered, and less in terms of being robust, charming and spirited.

Third, we contrasted the personality profile of the marketing industry as the most preferred industry against the retail industry. Students who strive for a career in marketing find that retailing is inferior when it comes to signaling a well-mannered, passionate and imaginative industry personality. Put differently, retailing performs significantly worse on those personality attributes that are of major importance for future job seekers.

Finally, we examined if retail personality perceptions influence industry preference. Moreover, we identified those attributes that exert a strong effect on students' preferences for the retail industry. A logistic regression revealed that improvements on "well-mannered", "intelligent" and "passionate" positively influenced preferences towards this industry. In contrast, an increase on the "robust" and "spirited" dimension decreased retail preferences.

In light of these results, it is important that retail managers and educators realize the impact of the symbolic image of their industry. To change retail perceptions towards favorable personality traits, three levels of responsibility can be distinguished in retail practice:

On the first level, *educational institutions*, like the sample universities, should adapt their study programs' communication efforts as per our results. That is, campaigns should combine industry information that signal retailing as well-mannered, intelligent and passionate.

On the second level, we encourage each *retail company* in South Africa to provide their retail brand with a clear brand personality. Following Aaker (1997) the main question arises "How does a brand go about developing one [brand personality]?" (p.354). With regard to retailing, researchers argued that store specific attributes like store atmosphere, service level or price perception (Brengman and Willems, 2009; Darden and Babin, 1994) as well as employee behavior (Wenzel, 2009) shape personality perceptions. In cases where those personality perceptions are dissociated from the overall industry image of retailing, subtyping is likely to occur (Kunda and Oleson, 1995). That is, customers and job seekers view the respective store as an exception from the retail industry (Erz et al., 2008). This might result in a changed personality perception of the single retail store but not of the industry as a whole. However, in cases where customers and job seekers generalize those individual store perceptions, a changed industry image is likely to arise. This process can be explained through stereotyping (Crawford et al., 2002). We argue that this process can be fostered when retailers work together in shaping personality impressions.

On the third level, *industry associations* should conceptualize communication campaigns that clearly convey a favorable brand personality of the retail industry. Other countries like Germany have launched campaigns to change job seekers' image of the retail industry. Under the headline "Retailing – Everything for Life" [Der Handel – Alles fürs Leben] the campaign focusses on different functional and symbolic attributes that characterize the retail industry (Hebben, 2011).

3.6. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

As with other studies, we acknowledge some limitations relative to data collection. First of all, our results are only limited to South Africa. Although our sample comprised business students from five South African universities, generalizability of the results is limited. Considering that South Africa has 26 public universities, many private universities and colleges, and more than one million students in higher education with a myriad of majors (BusinessTech, 2015), our results are only applicable to those students majoring in business. For future studies it would be interesting also to include non-business students in the sample – the retail sector also holds potential for students studying disciplines such as law, engineering, food science, fashion design, etc. Such inclusions might result in even sharper differences between groups of students (Mokhlis, 2014a). Moreover, our study only assessed retail specific perceptions from first year students within their first week of studies. Future research should follow up on these results or employ longitudinal research designs in order to show how the retail image evolves over time, and to assess efficiency of image-building actions.

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Table of Content

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🍄 Characteristics of the retail industry

🍄 Potential for improvement in the retail sector

🍄 Summary & Conclusions

Initial situation and research questions

Initial situation

🍄 The wholesale and retail industry is the fourth largest contributor to South Africa´s gross domestic product and employs approximately 22% of the total workforce.

🍄 Although the average unemployment rate over all industries is around 25%, the wholesale and retail industry faces the major challenge of finding and recruiting the "right" workforce in terms of motivation, commitment and education.

Research questions

🍄 What is the current industry image of the wholesale and retail sector in South Africa among university learners?

🍄 What could existing do to make retail the career of choice?

🍄 Which factors drive the image of the wholesale and retail sector in South Africa?

🍄 Does the industry image influence application and study intentions of the relevant target group of potential employees?

Research design and empirical base

- Target group are "young talents" in South Africa, who have decided to study in the field of business / management.

- All eight universities that offer retail management programs in South Africa were invited to participate.

- Retail and non-retail 1st year students were asked to complete hardcopy questionnaires or online questionnaires during the first term at their universities between 15 February and 04 April 2016 (times differed because of student protests).

- Overall 1 363 students participated from 5 universities.

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Research design and *empirical base – universities*

At which university do you study?

- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- Durban University of Technology
- Tshwane University of Technology
- University of Johannesburg
- Vaal University of Technology

N= 1363

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Research design and _empirical base - current field of study_

What is your current field of study?

Field of study	%
Retail Business Management	26.5%
Marketing and Marketing Management	18.9%
Human Resource Management	10.2%
Management	9.6%
Entrepreneurship	7.1%
Logistics Management	6.4%
Internal Auditing	5.8%
Sport Management	4.4%
Business Management	3.3%
Tourism Management	2.7%
Accountancy	1.9%
Other	1.1%
Business Administration	0.4%
Economics	0.3%
Financial Information Systems	0.2%
Administration Management	0.2%

N= 1319
Only results ≥ 0,2% are shown

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6

Decision process – interest and effort

In the following, we would like to understand the process behind your study decision. How much do you agree with the following statements on your decision process on which subject to study?

Non-Retailing Students   Retailing Students

To me, it was very important to choose the right field of study.
4,64 / 4,51 — No Sig.

For my future, it is very important what and where to study
4,48 / 4,43 — No Sig.

To me, it was very important to choose the right university.
4,29 / 4,24 — No Sig.

In selecting from the many fields of study, it took a great deal of care as to which one I chose.
4,17 / 3,90 — Sig. (-0,415; -0,006)

I put a lot of time and effort into finding the right field of study.
3,89 / 3,94 — No Sig.

Strongly disagree   Strongly agree

N (Retailing Students) = 315 – 327
N (Non-Retailing Students) = 908 - 944

The involvement of the NON-retailing students in finding the right field of study is higher than that of the retailing students. Generally the effort is behind the importance.

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Decision process – information sources influencing study decision

Please think about your decision process when deciding what to study. Which role did each of the following information sources play in your decision?

N= 319 - 1090
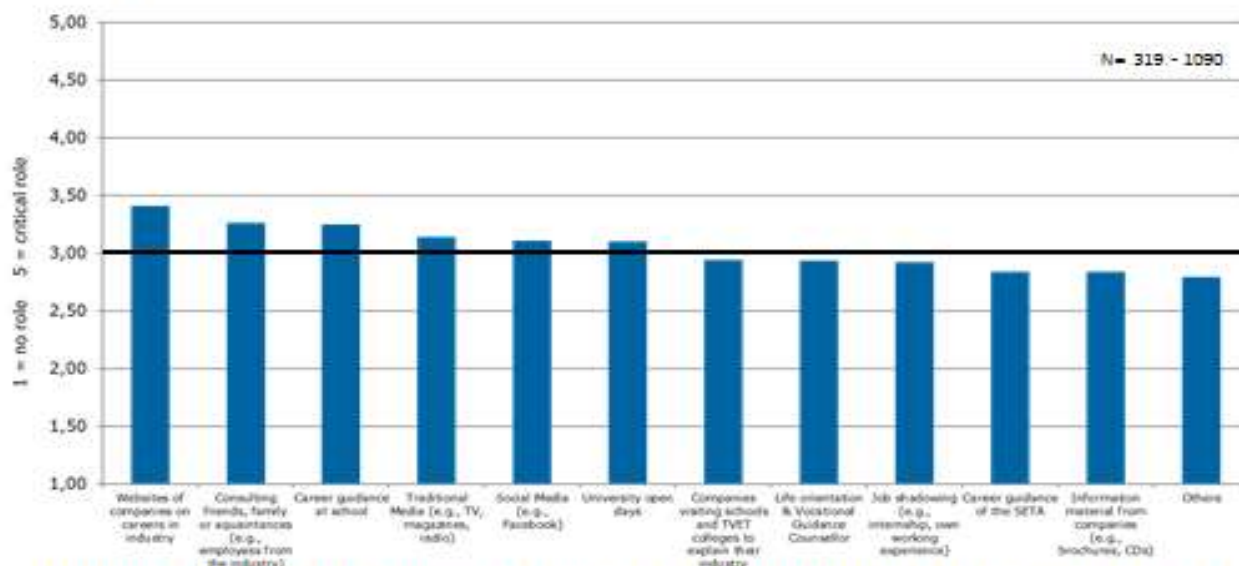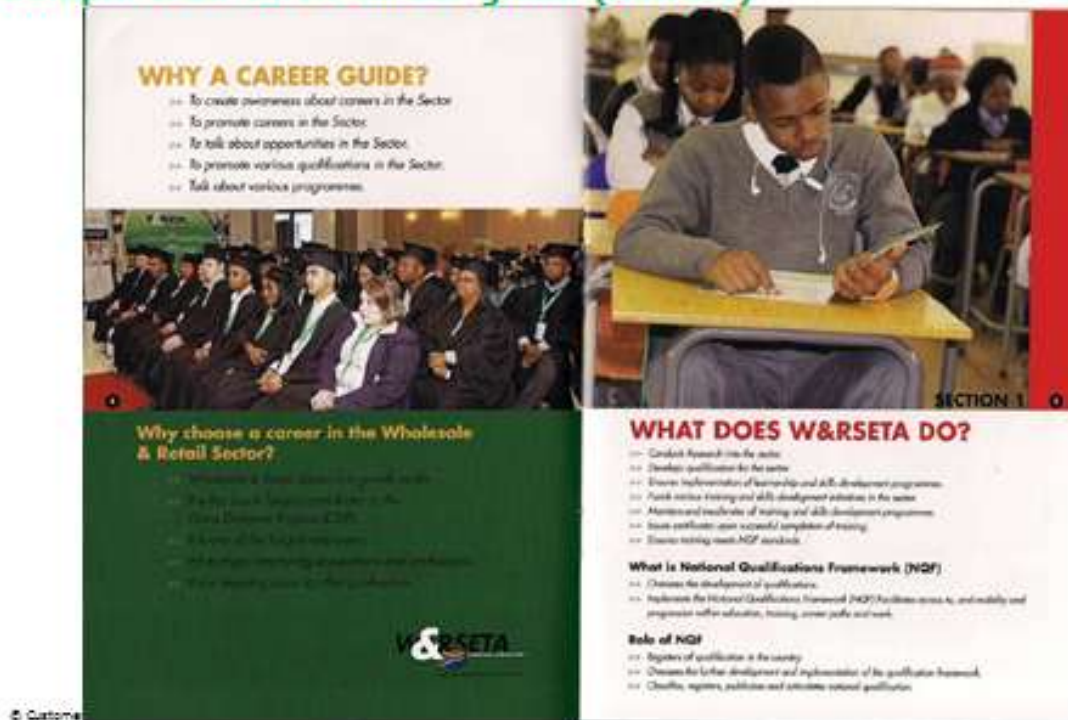
On a medium level company websites, family and friends and career guidance at school have got the highest influence on the decision what to study.

SETA's and retailer's information sources – example W&R SETA career guide (extract)

SETA's and retailer's information sources –
example W&R SETA career guide (extract)

WHY A CAREER GUIDE?
- To create awareness about careers in the Sector
- To promote careers in the Sector
- To talk about opportunities in the Sector
- To promote various qualifications in the Sector
- Talk about various programmes

Why choose a career in the Wholesale & Retail Sector?

WHAT DOES W&RSETA DO?

What is National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Role of NQF

© Custome

SETA's and retailer's information sources –
example Woolworths advertising for young talents (film)

BRANDON COOKE
NATIONAL TRUNKING OPERATIONAL SPECIALIST
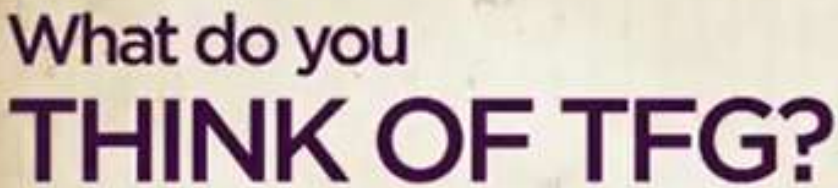
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zhIzYJelU4

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Wholesale&Retail
LEADERSHIP CHAIR
SETA's and retailer's information sources –
example TFG advertising for young talents (film)

What do you
THINK OF TFG?

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Bursary Application Form

Diploma or Degree

Applicant's Names:

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Wholesale&Retail
LEADERSHIP CHAIR
SETA's and retailer's information sources –
example university information

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Study decision process - reasons influencing study decision

Please rate to which extent the following reasons influenced your study decision.

N= 465 - 1291

Bar chart x-axis labels:
- I want to open my own business in this field.
- Other reasons
- This was the only field of study that I could get into.
- A family member / friend works in this field.
- I worked in this field before, e.g. as a part-time worker or after school.
- I went to a consultant who tested me and told me which area fits best for me.
- I got a bursary to study in this field.

y-axis: 5 = high influence ... 1 = no influence
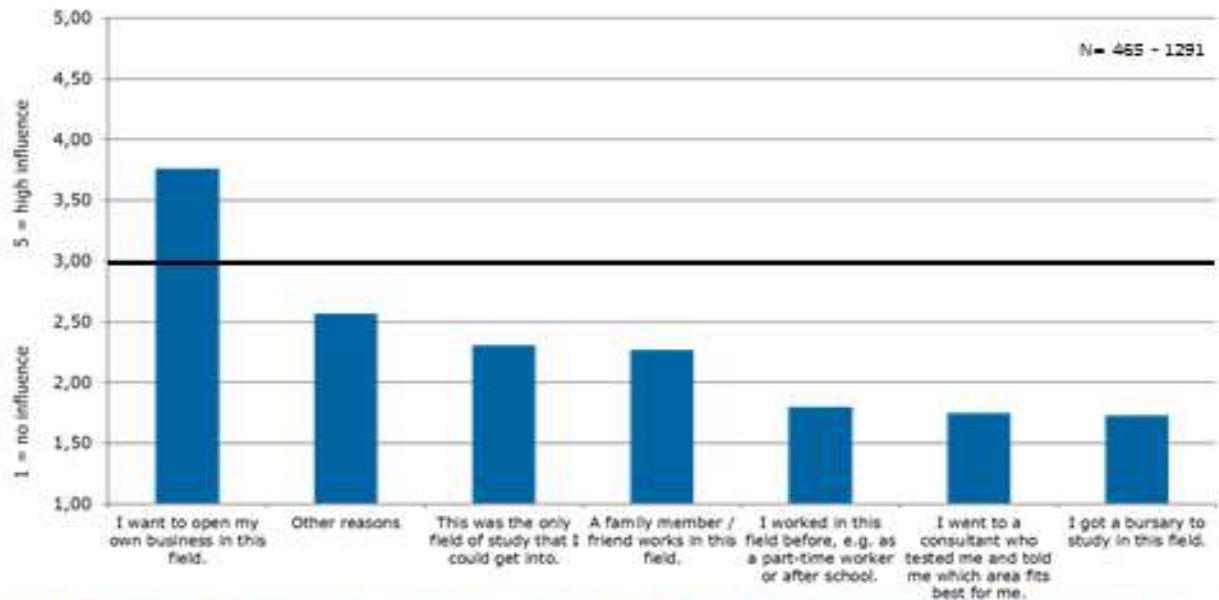
Study decision process is exceptionally influenced by entrepreneurial desires.

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Study decision process - willingness to study retailing
difference between retailing and non-retailing students

Before starting studying, how willing were you to choose retailing as your field of study?

Legend: Non-Retailing Student ■ Retailing Student

Values:
- not at all willing (1): 46.1%, 36.4%
- not willing (2): 8.8%, 10.9%
- neither / nor (3): 16.7%, 17.8%
- willing (4): 11.2%, 22.5%
- very willing (5): 17.2%, 12.4%

28.4%*

N (Retailing Students) = 129
N (Non-Retailing Students) = 551

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.475a	4	0.006
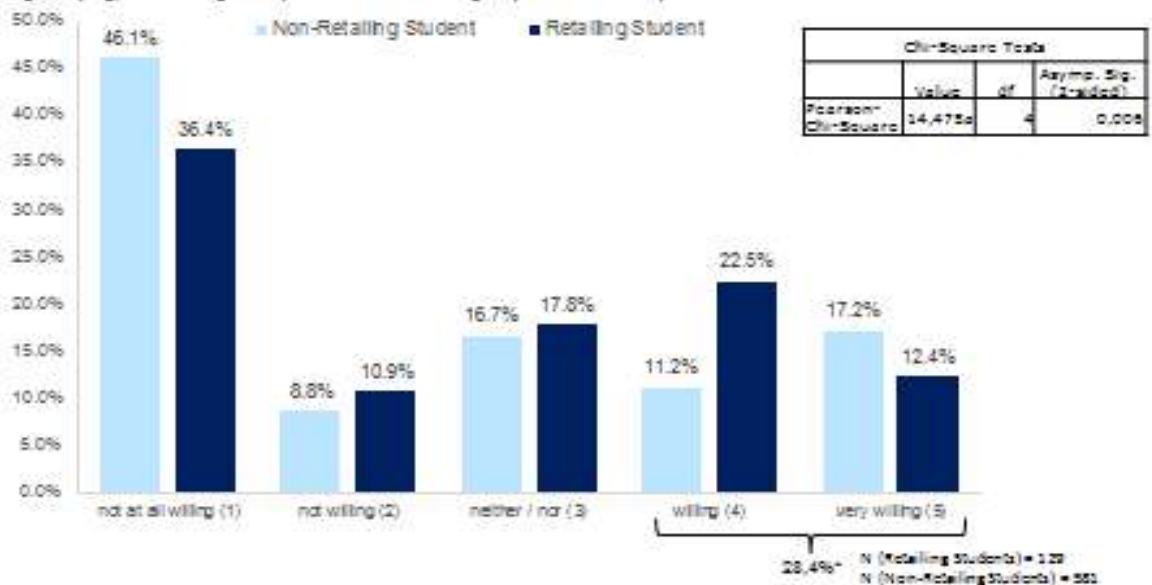
Around 47% of the retailing students were not willing to study retailing before starting studying.

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* Figure only includes Non-Retailing Students

Study decision process - reasons influencing study decision
difference between retailing and non-retailing students

In the following, we would like to understand the process behind your study decision. How much do you agree with the following statements on your decision process on which subject to study?

Non-Retailing Students   Retailing Students

Statement	Non-Retailing	Retailing	Significance
The many universities in South Africa are very different to each other	3,67	3,65	No Sig.
The many fields of study available are very different to each other	3,52	3,51	No Sig.
The chosen field of study was my first and preferred choice	2,26	1,45	High Sig. (-1,042; -0,593)
When I selected the field of study, I had very little information about the industry.	2,69	3,27	High Sig. (0,311; 0,721)
My Mom/Dad/other family members mainly made the decision for me.	1,51	1,57	No Sig.

Strongly disagree   Strongly agree

N (Retailing Students) = 315 – 327
N (Non-Retailing Students) = 908 - 944

Retailing Students claim to have had less information about the industry before they began to study than other students. They also say that their field of study was not their first choice.
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Study / industry decision process - important factors

Please rate how important each of the following factors were when taking your decision about which field or industry to study.

N= 1236 - 1307
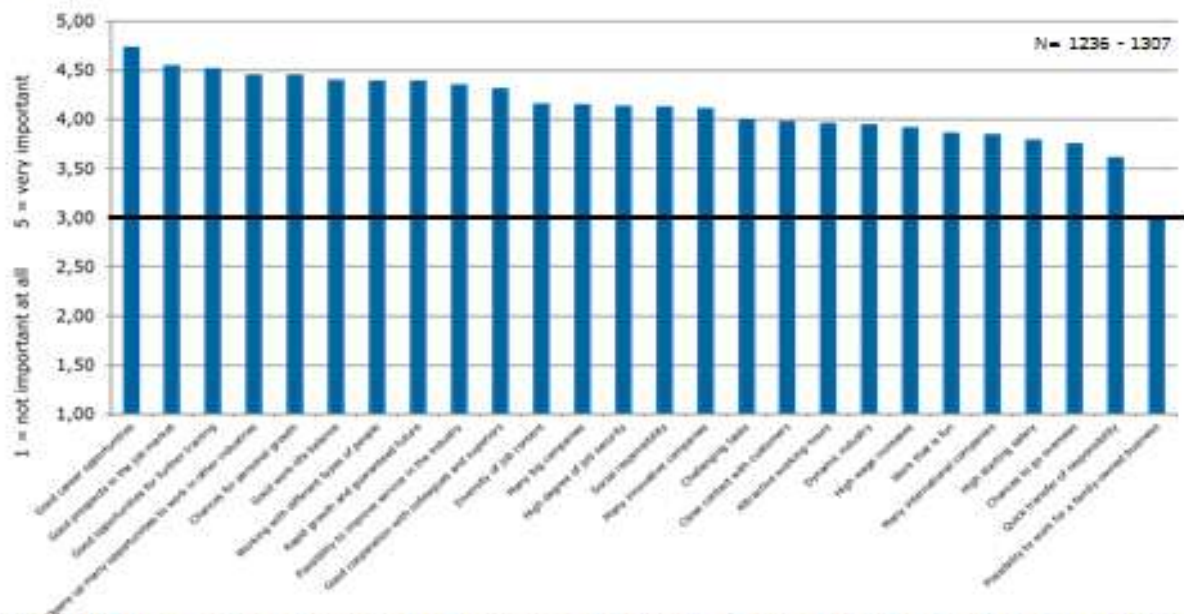
Criteria focusing an career and personal growth have got the highest importance
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General characteristics of the most preferred industry

In my most preferred industry, I believe I will find...

Only results with a difference of ≥0,15 between Retailing and Non-Retailing Students are shown. (Top 9 of the results with the biggest differences as the results are very similar)

Legend: Non-Retailing Students / Retailing Students

Good career opportunities	4,42
Good prospects in the job market	4,42 / 4,24
Rapid growth and guaranteed future	4,34 / 4,19
Good cooperation with colleagues and superiors	4,3 / 4,15
Many innovative companies	4,11 / 2,92
Work that is fun	4,03 / 3,79
Chances to go overseas	2,95 / 3,57
High wage increases	2,75 / 2,45
High starting salary	2,59 / 2,36

High Sig. (-0,275; -0,062)
High Sig. (-0,275; -0,062)
Sig. (-0,282; -0,017)
Sig. (-0,281; -0,036)
Sig. (-0,319; -0,037)
High Sig. (-0,432; -0,108)
Not Sig.
High Sig. (-0,474; -0,136)
High Sig. (-0,397; -0,054)

Not at all true — Very true

N (Retailing Students) = 296-517
N (Non-Retailing Students) = 595-957

Students who do not study retail attach a higher value to the salary than retailing students (differences of up to 0,3 in the mean of ,,high wage increases'' and ,,high starting salary''). In general both groups believe to find good career opportunities and a guaranteed future in their preferred industry.

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Importance of characteristics and rating of the retail industry

Attributes	Average importance rating*	Average rating of retail career	Mean difference	t-value	P
Good career opportunities	4.74	4.03	-0.71	17.310	.000
Good prospects in job market	4.55	4.00	-0.55	12.965	.000
Good opportunities for further training	4.52	4.12	-0.40	9.547	.000
Opens opportunities to work in other industries	4.46	3.92	-0.54	11.132	.000
Chances for personal growth	4.46	4.03	-0.43	8.766	.000
Good work-life balance	4.41	3.72	-0.69	13.859	.000
Rapid growth and guaranteed future	4.40	3.88	-0.52	11.417	.000
Working with different types of people	4.40	4.35	-0.05	1.104	.270 (n.s.)
Possibility to improve service in the industry	4.36	4.08	-0.28	6.652	.000
Good cooperation with colleagues and superiors	4.32	4.02	-0.30	6.986	.000
Diversity of job content	4.17	3.79	-0.38	8.134	.000
Many big companies	4.16	4.06	-0.10	2.185	.029
High degree of job security	4.14	3.64	-0.50	11.117	.000
Social responsibility	4.14	3.83	-0.31	6.159	.000
Many innovative companies	4.12	3.79	-0.33	7.110	.000
Challenging task	4.01	3.99	-0.02	.225	.822 (n.s.)
Close contact with customers	3.99	4.13	+0.14	-3.786	.000
Attractive working hours	3.97	3.46	-0.51	9.445	.000
Dynamic industry	3.95	3.80	-0.15	3.899	.000
High wage increases	3.92	3.31	-0.61	10.685	.000
Work that is fun	3.87	3.59	-0.28	4.812	.000
Many international companies	3.85	3.89	+0.04	.086	.932 (n.s.)
High starting salary	3.80	3.17	-0.63	11.407	.000
Chances to go overseas	3.76	3.42	-0.34	5.548	.000
Quick transfer of responsibility	3.62	3.69	+0.07	-1.220	.223 (n.s.)
Possibility to work for family-owned business	3.00	3.25	+0.25	-4.077	.000

Especially for some very important characteristics the retail industry is rated bad.
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Characteristics of the retail industry – preferred industry to work in

Which of the following industries would you prefer to work in after finishing your studies? *(choose only one)*

Non-Retailing Students ■ Retailing Students

Marketing/Advertising — 7,3% / 29,7%
Government/ Public Services — 5,9% / 15,9%
Financial Services, insurance and Banking — 6,5% / 13,7%
Taxation and accounting — 1,6% / 9,9%
Other — 6,5% / 8,9%
Consumer goods manufacturing — 2,2% / 5,6%
Tourism and hospitality (e.g., hotel, restaurant) — 2,9% / 4,2%
Information and communication technology — 1,9% / 3,6%
Retailing — 2,2% / 58,1%
Education — 4,2% / 4,9%
Automotive — ,9% / 2,1%
Consulting — 1,9% / 1,6%

	Chi-Square Tests		
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	535,175	11	,000

The additional industries listed under ,,others" are not shown as they were mentioned by < 1 % of the participants.

N (Retailing Students) = 522
N (Non-Retailing Students) = 950

Only 58 % of the retailing students want to work in the retailing industry after finishing their studies. The missing 42 % prefer to work in the Marketing, Financial or Government industry.

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Characteristics of the retail industry – top 5 chosen retailers

If you have to apply for a career at a South African retailer, which retailer would you choose and why?

Non-Retailing Students ■ Retailing Students

Woolworths — 18,9% / 18,2%
Shoprite — 14,0% / 16,3%
Checkers — 5,5% / 1,9%
Edcon — 1,9% / 1,9%
Edgars — 1,3% / 4,1%
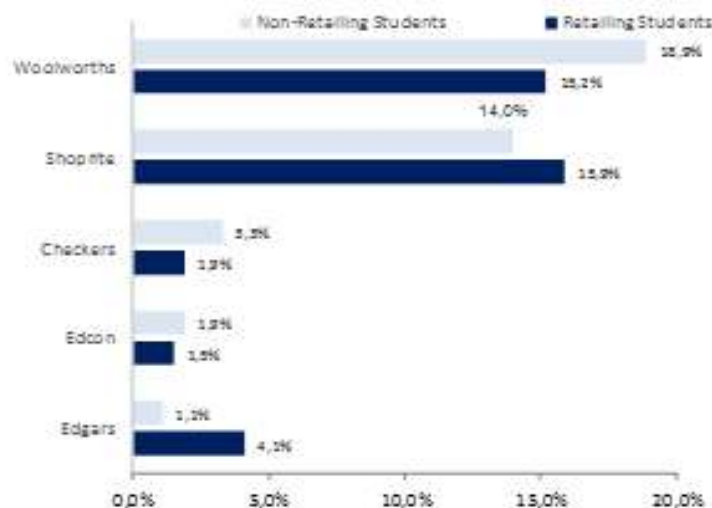
	Chi-Square Tests		
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	201,459	195	,323

N (Retailing Students) = 270
N (Non-Retailing Students) = 565

Woolworths and Shoprite are the most chosen retailers for a career, with clear differences between retailing and non- retail students.

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Evaluation of the retail industry by students who prefer and students who NOT prefer to work in retailing

Student prefers to work in retailing after studying		Good career opportunities	Good prospects in the job market	Good cooperation with colleagues and superiors	Good opportunities for further training	Rapid growth and guaranteed future	Many big companies	Many international companies	Quick transfer of responsibility	Challenging goals
yes – prefers to work in retailing	Mean	4,60	4,42	4,30	4,28	4,06	4,31	4,11	3,71	4,09
	N	212	211	212	214	210	210	208	210	209
	Std. Deviation	,703	,820	1,001	,791	1,004	1,036	1,126	1,232	1,100
no, does NOT prefer to work in retailing	Mean	3,66	3,67	3,97	3,97	3,75	3,97	3,62	3,66	3,61
	N	711	699	703	697	682	691	699	673	682
	Std. Deviation	1,059	1,197	1,192	1,130	1,094	1,204	1,207	1,232	1,209

Student prefers to work in retailing after studying		Work that is fun	High degree of job security	Social responsibility	High starting salary	High wage increases	Many innovative companies	Good work-life balance	Attractive working hours	Diversity of job content
yes – prefers to work in retailing	Mean	3,98	4,04	4,03	3,43	3,35	4,13	4,14	3,72	4,11
	N	208	210	207	208	204	204	203	208	204
	Std. Deviation	1,082	1,089	1,009	1,282	1,344	1,004	1,092	1,291	1,021
no, does NOT prefer to work in retailing	Mean	3,24	3,32	3,71	3,06	3,24	3,66	3,39	3,57	3,70
	N	691	693	699	690	670	679	694	673	666
	Std. Deviation	1,367	1,332	1,202	1,464	1,409	1,342	1,336	1,449	1,297

Student prefers to work in retailing after studying		Opens up many opportunities to work in other industries	Chances for personal growth	Working with different types of people	Possibility to improve service in the industry	Dynamic industry	Chances to go overseas	Possibility to work for a family-owned business	Close contact with customers
yes – prefers to work in retailing	Mean	4,60	4,36	4,60	4,20	4,10	3,70	3,16	4,22
	N	207	208	207	207	206	203	203	206
	Std. Deviation	,922	,724	,808	,901	1,004	1,222	1,226	1,121
no, does NOT prefer to work in retailing	Mean	3,76	3,67	4,26	3,88	3,71	3,31	3,26	4,09
	N	673	679	671	671	669	669	678	682
	Std. Deviation	1,309	1,239	1,073	1,116	1,249	1,492	1,327	1,219

Students who prefer to work in retailing evaluate the retail industry much better than those who do not → strong indicator that the image influences the choice of the industry.

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Potential for improvement of the retail sector

	Retail Students	NON Retail Students
Work in Retail Industry	• "Love marriage" What is their profile? What are their interests, perceptions and reasons to study retailing and work in the retailing industry? What can we learn from them?	3) "Love at 2nd sight" What are the reasons for them not to study retail although they want to work in retail? What perception do they have about the industry? What are their reasons for them to work in retail?
NOT work in Retail Industry	2) "Forced marriage" Why did they study retailing if they don't want to work in retailing? To which industry did the retailing industry lose its market share? What do other industries have to offer that the retailing industry doesn't? Which incentives would make them stay in the retailing sector?	4) not interested Control group

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Ranking of top 5 beliefs –
In my most preferred industry, I believe I will find...

Ranking for all groups
1. Working with different types of people
2. Good career opportunities
3. Good opportunities for further training
4. Chances for personal growth
5. Opens up many opportunities to work in other industries

1) Love marriage	3) Love at 2nd sight
1. Working with different types of people	1. Good career opportunities
2. Good career opportunities	2. Opens up many opportunities to work in other industries
3. Good opportunities for further training	3. Chances for personal growth
4. Chances for personal growth	4. Rapid growth and guaranteed future
5. Opens up many opportunities to work in other industries	5. Good opportunities for further training
2) Forced marriage	**4) not interested**
1. Working with different types of people	1. Good career opportunities
2. Chances for personal growth	2. Working with different types of people
3. Good opportunities for further training	3. Good opportunities for further training
4. Opens up many opportunities to work in other industries	4. Chances for personal growth
5. Possibility to improve service in the industry	5. Good prospects in the job market

1) and 3) correspond with the attributes believed for the retail industry.
→ likely the reason why they decided to study retail.
2) and 4) young talents miss some of these attributes in the retail industry
→ likely the reason why they decided _not_ to study retail

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Potential for improvement of the retail sector –
analysis of the "love at 2nd sight" group

How many non-retail students couldn't get into the field retail but want to work in retail?

Relation : students who study in retailing yes / no – students who want to work retailing yes / no

187
135
29
921

- retail students want to work in retail "love marriage"
- retail students DONT want to work in retail "forced marriage"
- NON retail students want to work in retail "love at 2nd sight"
- NON retail students want NOT to work in retail
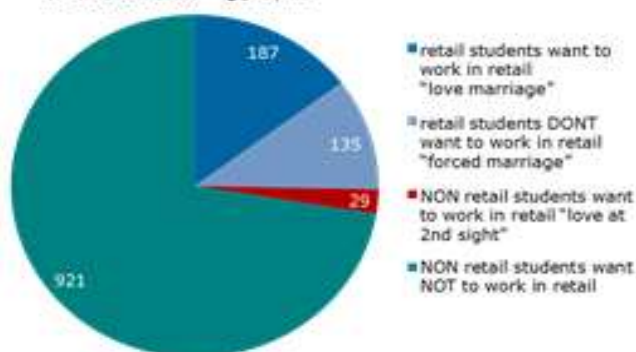
N= 1272

Reasons why "love at 2nd sight" students don't study retail

6
23

- Students who wanted to study retail but couldn't get into the field retail
- Students who didn't want to study retail and students who didn't study retail for other reasons, not mentioned
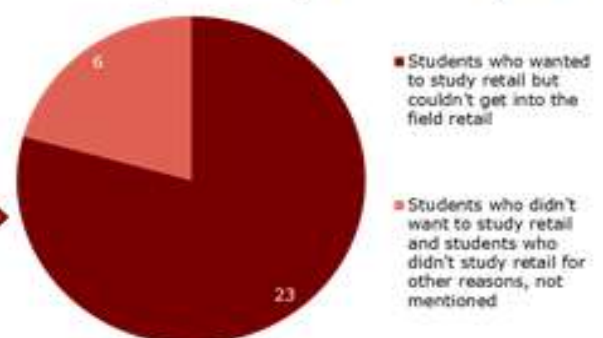
N= 29

29 students are NON retail students who want to work in retail → "love at 2nd sight"

23 out of the 29 "love at 2nd sight" students had no other opportunity than studying in another field than retail
→ They possibly wanted to study retail, but didn't get into the programme
→ Reasons could be high entry requirements or lack of available places → better selection process
* Find all listed reasons in enclosure
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- Young talents state that it is important for them to choose the right field of study but compared to the importance they put much less effort in finding the right field.

- More than 50% of the retail students stated that they had very little information about the industry.

- 40% use the career guidance at school and evaluate it as good.

- Obviously no institution is successful in awaken the young talents interest - there are no really important information sources – company websites, family and friends and career guidance at school are the TOP 3, but only on a medium level. Career guidance by the SETA and brochures from companies have the lowest importance.

- The reason for the low importance - may not be receiving it or receive it, but choose not to use it for what ever reason – is not known, that can be the topic of further research.

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- All institution like companies, universities, schools need to do more to transfer the students' interest in finding the right field of study into active research about the opportunities.

- Before starting studying around 47% of the retail students were not willing to study retailing, 33% study retailing because this was the only field of study they could get into and for only 27% it was their preferred choice.

- There are very strong indicators that the image of an industry influences the choice – students who want to work in retail have a much better image of the industry than those who do not.

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- Good career opportunities, good prospects in the job market, opportunities for further training and to work in other industries, chances for personal growth and work-life balance are the most important criteria to select which filed or industry to study – they have a high image on the overall image of any industry.

- Especially for these image-driving characteristics the retail industry is evaluated very bad. Over all young talents these criteria needs massive improvement to make the retail industry more attractive.

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- Only 58 % of the retailing students want to work in the retailing industry after finishing their studies. The missing 42 % prefer to work in the marketing, financial or government industry.

- Perhaps the image of the retail industry changes after 3 years of study, because students learned more (positive) about the industry – further research is recommended.

- For retail students who do not want to work in the retail industry the following criteria show the *biggest gaps* between retailing and their preferred industry:
    - Good opportunities for further training
    - High starting salary
    - Attractive working-hours

Therefore to motivate more retail students to work in the retail industry one possibility is to improve these criteria.

- 3% of all non-retail students want to work in retail. 80% of these are not studying retail because they could not get into the course. *Consequences to think about:*

- If 33% of all retail students study retailing because it was the only field they could get into and if 2,5% of all non-retail students want to study retailing but could not get in the selection process might be improved.

- Retail students are less demanding as far as their job is concerned and put less effort in finding the right subject to study. It is recommended that selection processes be improved – possibly accepting less but more motivated students who are thus more willing to work in retailing.

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It is all about personality:

- Do study and career choices vary between students holding different personality traits (e.g., interpersonal dependency)?

- If the retail industry was a person, how would it be characterized by young talents?

  How do first-choice industries and the retail industry differ in terms of their ascribed personality traits and what does that mean for future industry campaigns?

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Wholesale&Retail
LEADERSHIP CHAIR

Thank you very much!

Questions?

Contact for further inquiries
Prof. Dr. Thomas Dobbelstein
Dobbelstein@cr42.de

Cape
Peninsula
University
of Technology

"Collaboration opens the window to a world of opportunities."

W&RSETA

CHAPTER 5 – SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study showed that the "retailing myth" also exists in South Africa. That is, retail is viewed in terms of unattractive working hours, low wage increases and low starting salaries. As a consequence, the sector finds it especially hard to attract qualified and motivated job seekers – for example, a career in retailing ranked eighth among a list of industries for non-retail students and only 58.1% of all participating retail students specified retailing as their preferred career choice. Current retail students did, however, hold more beneficial associations of a career in their chosen field of study. Thus Objective 1 of the study was satisfied (*What is the current industry image of the wholesale and retail sector in South Africa among university learners?*).

The study then went on to examine if the sector's unfavourable 'personality' might account for this dilemma
.
First, retail and non-retail students held different personality perceptions of the retail industry. Retail involvement, measured as participant's prior consideration of retailing as a possible field of study, accounts for the main perceptual differences.

Second, the factors that make an industry a preferred industry are universal - students who prefer a retail career and those who prefer other industries share the same personality perceptions of their favourite industry. The preferred industries can be described as being passionate, imaginative and well-mannered, and less as robust, charming and spirited.

Third, in contrasting the personality profile of marketing (the most preferred industry) against retailing, we found that students who prefer a marketing career felt that retailing is inferior in terms of a well-mannered, passionate and imaginative personality. Thus, retailing performs worse on those personality attributes that are of major importance for future job seekers.

Finally, we found that "well-mannered", "intelligent" and "passionate" personality factors positively influenced preferences towards the retail industry. In contrast, an increase on the "robust" and "spirited" dimension decreased retail industry preferences.

This analysis of 'industry personality' shows the factors that influence the retail sector image, also showing that the image does influence potential employees' study intentions. Thus, Objective 2 (*Which factors drive the image of the wholesale and retail sector in South Africa?*) and Objective 3 *(Does the industry image influence application and study intentions of the relevant target group of potential employees?)* have been achieved.

Considerable marketing, advertising and public relations activities are being conducted by the W&RSETA and the bigger retailers, as shown in Chapter 4. However, our findings show the need for the sector, all retail companies and educators to adopt further strategies to attract and inform highly motivated university students prior to and during their studies. Chapters 2 and 3 specify some of the actions that need to be taken, including building and promoting a brand personality for the sector, based on the preferred "well-mannered", "intelligent" and "passionate" factors. Furthermore, retailers should include these factors in their own brand building activities. These recommendations show that Objective 4 has been satisfied (*What are existing role-players doing and could be doing to make retail the career of choice*).

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Ethics approval

Appendix B – Letter of Informed Consent

Appendix C – Application for gatekeepers' permission

Appendix D – Draft questionnaire

Appendix E – Project specification

Appendix A – Ethics approval

Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

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Symphony Road Bellville 7535
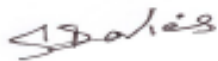
Office of the Chairperson Research Ethics Committee	Faculty: **BUSINESS**

At a meeting of the Research Ethics Committee on 03 December 2015, Ethics Approval

was granted to PROF THOMAS DOBBELSTEIN research activities Related to the:

WRLC (Wholesale & Retail Leadership Chair) within the RETAIL BUSINESS

MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT, Business Faculty at the Cape Peninsula

University of Technology

Title of Project:	Analysis and recommendations for improvement of the retail industry image in order to make retail a career of first choice for potential management talent in South Africa Supervisor: Prof R Mason

Comments:

Decision: APPROVED

	03 December 2015
Signed: Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee	**Date**

Signed: Chairperson: Faculty Research Committee	**Date**

Clearance Certificate No | 2015FBREC309

Appendix B – Letter of Informed Consent

Wholesale&Retail
LEADERSHIP CHAIR

30 November 2015

LETTER OF INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT

The retail industry in South Africa as employer of first choice for young talent

I am currently undertaking a research project on behalf of the Wholesale & Retail Leadership Chair at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The study aims to identify what should be done to make retail in South Africa a career of first choice for young talent, namely learners entering university for the first time

Would you agree to complete a short questionnaire for the study? The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes. Participation is voluntary and you are free to refuse to participate at any time without giving reasons, and without prejudice or any adverse consequences. The information you give will only be used for research purposes and will be aggregated with other responses and only the overall or average information will be used. Your identity and individual answers will be kept totally confidential. If any quotations are used, these will remain anonymous.

Should you wish to discuss this further please feel free to contact me on the number below, or the W&R Leadership Chair, Professor Roger Mason, on masonr@cput.ac.za or 031 460 3040.

By completing the questionnaire, you are confirming that the study has been adequately explained to you, that you understand that you may withdraw from it at any time without giving reasons, and that you are taking part voluntarily.

Your assistance will be much appreciated,

Yours faithfully,

Professor Thomas Dobbelstein
Phone: +49 (0)7554 / 98 7 98 42
mail: dobbelstein@customer-research.de

Cape Peninsula University of Technology   "Collaboration opens the window to a world of opportunities"   W&RSETA

Retail Business Management Department | Business Faculty | Cape Town Campus
Room 2.2 | Commerce Building | Tel 021 464 7260 | Fax 086 680 9632 | Email info@wrlc.org.za | www.wrlc.org.za

Appendix C – Application for gatekeepers' permission

Wholesale&Retail
LEADERSHIP CHAIR

30 November 2015

Letter of permission

Dear Sir/Madam

I am currently undertaking a research project on behalf of the W&R Retail Leadership Chair at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The study aims to identify what should be done to make retail in South Africa a career of first choice for young talent, namely learners entering university for the first time.

As a result, I would like to get questionnaires completed by a sample of new first year students registering to study Retail Business Management and other business qualifications. These respondents will be asked to participate voluntarily and all responses will be totally confidential. They will be free to refuse to participate, or withdraw from participating, at any time, and will not be pressured in any way.

I would like to carry out this research in your Business or Management faculty, and hereby request permission for such data collection.

For more information, please contact me, or the W&R Leadership Chair, Professor Roger Mason, on masonr@cput.ac.za or 031 460 3040.

Regards

Professor Thomas Dobbelstein
Phone: +49 (0)7554 / 98 7 98 42
mail: dobbelstein@customer-research.de

:

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University of Technology   "Collaboration opens the window to a world of opportunities."   W&RSETA

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Appendix D – Questionnaire

1. **What is your current field of study?**
   (choose only one)

   ○ Accountancy

   ○ Administration Management

   ○ Business Administration

   ○ Business Management

   ○ Cost and Management Accounting

   ○ Credit Management

   ○ Economics

   ○ Entrepreneurship

   ○ Financial Information Systems

   ○ Financial Management

   ○ Hospitality Management

   ○ Human Resource Management

   ○ Industrial Psychology and People Management

   ○ Information and Knowledge Management

   ○ Internal Auditing

   ○ Logistics Management

   ○ Management

   ○ Office Management and Technology

   ○ Operations Management

   ○ Printing Management

   ○ Project Management

   ○ Public Management

   ○ Public Relations Management

   ○ Purchasing / Buying

   ○ Real Estate

   ○ Retail Business Management

   ○ Sport Management

   ○ Taxation

   ○ Tourism Management

   ○ Transport and Supply Chain Management

   ○ Other

   If other, please name

   [   ]

2. Which other subjects did you take into consideration when you selected your field of study? *(multiple answers possible)*

☐ Accountancy

☐ Administration Management

☐ Business Administration

☐ Business Management

☐ Cost and Management Accounting

☐ Credit Management

☐ Economics

☐ Entrepreneurship

☐ Financial Information Systems

☐ Financial Management

☐ Hospitality Management

☐ Human Resource Management

☐ Industrial Psychology and People Management

☐ Information and Knowledge Management

☐ Internal Auditing

☐ Logistics Management

☐ Management

☐ Office Management and Technology

☐ Operations Management

☐ Printing Management

☐ Project Management

☐ Public Management

☐ Public Relations Management

☐ Purchasing / Buying

☐ Real Estate

☐ Retail Business Management

☐ Sport Management

☐ Taxation

☐ Tourism Management

☐ Transport and Supply Chain Management

☐ None

☐ Other

If other, please name

3. In the following, we would like to understand the process behind your study decision. How much do you agree with the following statements on your decision process on which subject to study?

	strongly disagree				strongly agree
In selecting from the many fields of study, I took a great deal of care as to which one I chose.	○	○	○	○	○
The many fields of study available are very different to each other.	○	○	○	○	○
The many universities in South Africa are very different to each other.	○	○	○	○	○
To me, it was very important to choose the right field of study.	○	○	○	○	○
To me, it was very important to choose the right university.	○	○	○	○	○
When choosing the field of study, I was very concerned about the quality of education.	○	○	○	○	○
For my future, it is very important what and where to study.	○	○	○	○	○
My Mom/Dad/other family members mainly made the decision for me.	○	○	○	○	○
The chosen field of study was my first and preferred choice.	○	○	○	○	○
I put a lot of time and effort into finding the right field of study.	○	○	○	○	○
When I selected the field of study, I had very little information about the industry.	○	○	○	○	○

4. Please rate how important each of the following factors were when taking your decision about which field or industry to study.

	not important at all				very important
Good career opportunities	○	○	○	○	○
Good prospects in the job market	○	○	○	○	○
Good cooperation with colleagues and superiors	○	○	○	○	○
Good opportunities for further training	○	○	○	○	○
Rapid growth and guaranteed future	○	○	○	○	○
Many big companies	○	○	○	○	○
Many international companies	○	○	○	○	○
Quick transfer of responsibility	○	○	○	○	○
Challenging tasks	○	○	○	○	○
Work that is fun	○	○	○	○	○
High degree of job security	○	○	○	○	○
Social responsibility	○	○	○	○	○
High starting salary	○	○	○	○	○
High wage increases	○	○	○	○	○
Many innovative companies	○	○	○	○	○
Good work-life balance	○	○	○	○	○
Attractive working-hours	○	○	○	○	○
Diversity of job content	○	○	○	○	○
Opens up many opportunities to work in other industries	○	○	○	○	○
Chances for personal growth	○	○	○	○	○
Working with different types of people	○	○	○	○	○
Possibility to improve service in the industry	○	○	○	○	○
Dynamic industry	○	○	○	○	○
Chances to go overseas	○	○	○	○	○
Possibility to work for a family-owned business	○	○	○	○	○
Close contact with customers	○	○	○	○	○

5. Please rate to which extent the following reasons influenced your study decision.

	no influence				high influence
A family member / friend works in this field.	○	○	○	○	○
I went to a consultant who tested me and told me which area fits best for me.	○	○	○	○	○
I want to open my own business in this field.	○	○	○	○	○
I got a bursary to study in this field.	○	○	○	○	○
I worked in this field before, e.g. as a part-time worker or after school.	○	○	○	○	○
This was the only field of study that I could get into.	○	○	○	○	○
Other reasons	○	○	○	○	○

If other reasons, please name

[   ]

6. In order to better understand the way you make decisions, indicate how much each of these statements describe, or characterise, you.

	not characteristic of me				very characteristic of me
I do my best work when I know it will be appriciated.	○	○	○	○	○
As a child, pleasing my parents was very important for me.	○	○	○	○	○
Disapproval by someone I care about is very painful to me.	○	○	○	○	○
I get upset when someone discovers a mistake I have made.	○	○	○	○	○
When I have a decision to make, I always ask for advice.	○	○	○	○	○
I am quick to agree with the opinions expressed by others.	○	○	○	○	○
I am very confident about my own judgements.	○	○	○	○	○
I do not really care in which industry I will work, other things like career advancement and payment are more important.	○	○	○	○	○
Loving my job is more important than earning a lot of money.	○	○	○	○	○
I always care about the opinion that my family / friends have about my decision to study the subject I have chosen.	○	○	○	○	○

7. **Which of the following industries would you prefer to work in after finishing your studies?**
(choose only one)

○ Automotive

○ Tourism and hospitality (e.g., hotel, restaurant)

○ Information and communication technology, computers, electronics

○ Financial services, insurance and banking

○ Taxation and accounting

○ Consulting

○ Marketing / advertising agency

○ Consumer goods manufacturing

○ Government / public services

○ Education

○ Retailing

○ Other

If other, please name

[   ]

Please answer the following question with regard to your most preferred industry:

8. In my most preferred industry, I believe I will find...

	not at all true				very true
Good career opportunities	○	○	○	○	○
Good prospects in the job market	○	○	○	○	○
Good cooperation with colleagues and superiors	○	○	○	○	○
Good opportunities for further training	○	○	○	○	○
Rapid growth and guaranteed future	○	○	○	○	○
Many big companies	○	○	○	○	○
Many international companies	○	○	○	○	○
Quick transfer of responsibility	○	○	○	○	○
Challenging tasks	○	○	○	○	○
Work that is fun	○	○	○	○	○
High degree of job security	○	○	○	○	○
Social responsibility	○	○	○	○	○
High starting salary	○	○	○	○	○
High wage increases	○	○	○	○	○
Many innovative companies	○	○	○	○	○
Good work-life balance	○	○	○	○	○
Attractive working-hours	○	○	○	○	○
Diversity of job content	○	○	○	○	○
Opens up many opportunities to work in other industries	○	○	○	○	○
Chances for personal growth	○	○	○	○	○
Working with different types of people	○	○	○	○	○
Possibility to improve service in the industry	○	○	○	○	○
Dynamic industry	○	○	○	○	○
Chances to go overseas	○	○	○	○	○
Possibility to work for a family-owned business	○	○	○	○	○
Close contact with customers	○	○	○	○	○

9. If my most preferred industry were a person, I would describe this person as...

	not at all true				very true
Charming	○	○	○	○	○
Cheerful	○	○	○	○	○
Well-mannered	○	○	○	○	○
Reliable	○	○	○	○	○
Authentic	○	○	○	○	○
Distinguished	○	○	○	○	○
Intelligent	○	○	○	○	○
Robust	○	○	○	○	○
Spirited	○	○	○	○	○
Honest	○	○	○	○	○
Freedom-loving	○	○	○	○	○
Enterprising	○	○	○	○	○
Passionate	○	○	○	○	○
Imaginative	○	○	○	○	○
Solid	○	○	○	○	○

We would like to compare different industries with each other and would like to focus on "Retailing". Please think about the retail industry only and indicate how true the following statements are of the retail industry.

10. In the retail industry, I believe I will find...

	not at all true				very true
Good career opportunities	○	○	○	○	○
Good prospects in the job market	○	○	○	○	○
Good cooperation with colleagues and superiors	○	○	○	○	○
Good opportunities for further training	○	○	○	○	○
Rapid growth and guaranteed future	○	○	○	○	○
Many big companies	○	○	○	○	○
Many international companies	○	○	○	○	○
Quick transfer of responsibility	○	○	○	○	○
Challenging tasks	○	○	○	○	○
Work that is fun	○	○	○	○	○
High degree of job security	○	○	○	○	○
Social responsibility	○	○	○	○	○
High starting salary	○	○	○	○	○
High wage increases	○	○	○	○	○
Many innovative companies	○	○	○	○	○
Good work-life balance	○	○	○	○	○
Attractive working-hours	○	○	○	○	○
Diversity of job content	○	○	○	○	○
Opens up many opportunities to work in other industries	○	○	○	○	○
Chances for personal growth	○	○	○	○	○
Working with different types of people	○	○	○	○	○
Possibility to improve service in the industry	○	○	○	○	○
Dynamic industry	○	○	○	○	○
Chances to go overseas	○	○	○	○	○
Possibility to work for a family-owned business	○	○	○	○	○
Close contact with customers	○	○	○	○	○

11. If the retail industry were a person, I would describe this person as...

	not at all true				very true
Charming	○	○	○	○	○
Cheerful	○	○	○	○	○
Well-mannered	○	○	○	○	○
Reliable	○	○	○	○	○
Authentic	○	○	○	○	○
Distinguished	○	○	○	○	○
Intelligent	○	○	○	○	○
Robust	○	○	○	○	○
Spirited	○	○	○	○	○
Honest	○	○	○	○	○
Freedom-loving	○	○	○	○	○
Enterprising	○	○	○	○	○
Passionate	○	○	○	○	○
Imaginative	○	○	○	○	○
Solid	○	○	○	○	○

Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

12. **Before starting studying, how willing were you to choose retailing as your field of study?**

not at all willing ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ very willing

13. **Please indicate the extent to which you would regard choosing retailing as your field of study as...**

	not at all				completely
sensible	○	○	○	○	○
wise	○	○	○	○	○
useful	○	○	○	○	○

14. **If you have to apply for a career at a South African retailer, which retailer would you choose and why?**

Retailer (Name): _____

Reason(s):_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

15. **When thinking of retailing, which associations do you have?**

	strongly disagree				strongly agree
Retailing is one of the most important industries in South Africa.	○	○	○	○	○
The retail sector is less important than the commodity and industrial sector.	○	○	○	○	○
Most people think: If you can`t make it anywhere else, you work in retailing.	○	○	○	○	○
Retailing means working in a shop.	○	○	○	○	○

16. Please think about your decision process when deciding what to study. Which role did each of the following information sources play in your decision?

	No role	Slight role	Middling role	Big role	Critical role
Information material from companies (e.g., brochures, CDs)	○	○	○	○	○
Websites of companies on careers in industry	○	○	○	○	○
Consulting friends, family or aquaintances (e.g., employees from the industry)	○	○	○	○	○
Social Media (e.g., Facebook)	○	○	○	○	○
Traditional Media (e.g., TV, magazines, radio)	○	○	○	○	○
Life orientation & Vocational Guidance Counsellor	○	○	○	○	○
Career guidance of the SETA	○	○	○	○	○
Career guidance at school	○	○	○	○	○
Companies visiting schools and TVET colleges to explain their industry	○	○	○	○	○
University open days	○	○	○	○	○
Job shadowing (e.g., internship, own working experience)	○	○	○	○	○
Others	○	○	○	○	○

If others, please specify

[   ]

17. Did you use career guidance at your school to help in your decision making? (choose only one)

○ No, because it was not offered at my school.

○ No, because I got my information elsewhere.

○ Yes.

18. If yes, how do you rate career guidance offered at your school regarding the following aspects?

	very poor				very high
Availability	○	○	○	○	○
Fit to your needs	○	○	○	○	○
Knowledge about career topics	○	○	○	○	○

19. What is your year of birth?

Year:_____.

20. You are:

○ Female

○ Male

21. You are:

○ Black

○ White

○ Coloured

○ Indian

○ Other

22. At which university do you study?

○ Cape Peninsula University of Technology

○ Durban University of Technology

○ Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

○ Sol Plaatjie University

○ Tshwane University of Technology

○ University of Johannesburg

○ University of South Africa

○ Vaal University of Technology

○ Other

If other, please name:

[   ]

**You have successfully finished the survey.
Thank you very much for your participation!**

Appendix E – Project specification

Project Research Specification

Project Number: 2016/20

Research Title:

The retail industry in South Africa as employer of first choice for young talent

Research Objectives:

The main purpose of the study is to

Give recommendations as to what should be done to make retail in South Africa a career of first choice for young talents.

These recommendations, as the main objective, are based on obtaining answers to the following questions, which are sub-objectives:

1. What is the current industry image of the wholesale and retail sector in South Africa among university learners? (Assessing the Status Quo of the industry image within the respected target group of young talents)

2. Which factors drive the image of the wholesale and retail sector in South Africa? (Unveiling the different sources and reasons that build the industry image within the respected target group of potential employees)

3. Does the industry image influence application and study intentions of the relevant target group of potential employees?

4. What are existing role-players (e.g. universities, retail businesses, WRSETA) doing and could be doing to make retail the career of choice.

Research Outcomes:

1. The research methodology will include:
   - A literature review covering relevant international and South African literature,
   - A sample, representative of the target population, namely talented new university learners who have chosen business as a career, operationalized as first year university learners studying business qualifications at SA universities that offer retail programmes.
   - Exploratory interviews with a sample, representative of the retailers, relevant officials and/or sector associations, including W&RSETA, academics at SA universities offering retail programmes, and other stakeholders
   - Questionnaire survey of the representative sample of the target populations

2. The research report will
   - Provide a literature review on the most successful retail image and branding activities internationally to make retail a career of choice.
   - Identify the South African retail industry's image from the perspective of talented new university learners who have recently chosen business as a career, namely the target population.
   - Identify, from the literature review and the empirical research, what specific factors influence the individual's decision to choose a career in retailing.
   - Analyze the actions initiated by various South African stakeholders to make retail a career of choice.
   - Provide recommendations for an integrated strategy for all relevant stakeholders, especially the W&RSETA, to make retail a career of choice in South Africa.

3. **The researcher will**:

- Understand that the proposal will have to be approved by the CPUT Ethics committee and that all research must be conducted according to the CPUT Ethics policy.
- Provide evidence of the final report having been professionally edited
- If applicable, provide evidence from a statistician that the statistical methods have been checked
- Submit the report for assessment by Turnitin, or understand that it will be assessed by Turnitin.
- Submit the report in an electronic format plus a hard copy for evaluation by the retail chair before final publication thereof.
- Submit a draft copy of an article on the research which will be submitted to an accredited journal.
- Present the research as a paper at a conference organised or nominated by the retail chair.