



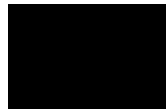
UNIVERSITY OF TM
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

**Factors that influence the students' career choice of Psychology at the University of
KwaZulu Natal**

By

Sbusisiwe Mdladla



214520477

**This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Social Science in Industrial Psychology, at the University of KwaZulu Natal
(Howard College)**

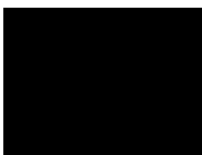
Supervisor: Dr. Shanya Reuben



Declaration

I, Sbusisiwe Felicity Mdladla, hereby declare that this thesis entitled: Factors that influence the career choice of psychology students in the University of KwaZulu Natal is my own work. All the sources used in the thesis have been duly acknowledged. This thesis reflects my understanding of the topic. All the data presented in this thesis was collected and analysed in the following ethical guidelines.

Signature: _____



Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore factors that influence the career choice of psychology students in the University of KwaZulu Natal. This study explored the personal, social and environmental factors that influence career choice. Literature reveals that career decision making is not a straight-forward process, rather, it is a process that is affected by a number of factors (Kulcsar et al, 2019). Literature also revealed that in a context such as the South African context career choice is also directly affected by its socio-political context (Chinyamurindi, 2016).

The theoretical framework that was used in this research study is the theory of reciprocal determinism coined by Albert Bandura, which suggests that a person's behaviour is influenced by their personal factors, their environment, and the behaviour itself (Bandura, 1978). This theoretical framework was used for this study because it allows for an exploration of how a person's behaviour is influenced or affected by different factors such as their personal factors and environmental factors. The study adopted a qualitative approach in exploring these factors. This current study used purposive sampling to gather a sample. The sample consisted of a total of eight participants of which were completing their Honours Degree at the time they participated in the study. All of the participants of this study were studying general psychology. A thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected by the researcher in order to show the perceptions of psychology students in the University of KwaZulu Natal. Different themes were formed from this data to present the different interpretations of the participants. The central themes that were discovered from the findings include social influences and personal determinants of career choice; university factors shaping career paths and perceived career outcomes and expectations. These findings indicated the interconnection between various factors that influence a participants' career choice. They showed the importance of career counselling at the university as it helped students make informed decisions about their study paths and future careers. Receiving such professional career counselling at the university thus has a great impact on one's career choice. Social and industry influence were also expressed as a push factor in furthering participants education to a master's degree level which would make it easier for them to be registered psychologists. Furthermore, the findings implied that career choices were also a result of personal interests which motivated one to pursue opportunities in a particular field.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to the following individuals who have shown me unwavering support throughout this journey:

- Dr. Shanya Reuben: I am sincerely thankful for your patience, understanding, and constant encouragement throughout the writing of this dissertation.
- My husband: Your relentless support and encouragement kept me going and prevented me from giving up.
- My parents: Thank you for your unwavering support and constant prayers during this journey.
- My siblings, Siyabonga and Sindiswa: I appreciate your continuous support and the reminders to stay focused.
- Apostle J.N. Hadebe: I am grateful for your prayers and emotional support.
- My participants: Thank you for your time and invaluable contributions to this study.
- The University of KwaZulu-Natal: I am thankful for the opportunity to complete my master's degree and for the resources and support provided.

CONTENTS PAGE

1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	- 1 -
1.1. Introduction.....	- 1 -
1.2 Background.....	- 1 -
1.3 Problem statement.....	- 2 -
1.4 Research Objectives.....	- 3 -
1.4.1. Objectives of the study.....	- 3 -
1.4.2. Research questions.....	- 3 -
1.5 Justification for the study.....	- 3 -
1.6 Delimitation	- 4 -
1.7 Structure of Dissertation	- 4 -
2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	- 6 -
2.1. Introduction.....	- 6 -
2.2. The impact of Apartheid on educational structures in South Africa	- 8 -
2.2.1. The Bantu Education Act 1953	- 8 -
2.2.2. Race Based Education.....	- 10 -
2.2.2.1 Education during the Apartheid Era.....	- 10 -
2.2.3. The Quintile System	- 12 -
2.3 Factors influencing Career Choice.....	- 14 -
2.3.1. Personal factors.....	- 14 -
2.3.2. Financial factors.....	- 15 -

2.3.3. Family Factors	- 16 -
2.3.4. Social factors.....	- 17 -
2.4. Career theories	- 19 -
2.4.1. Career theories in the South African context	- 21 -
2.4.2. Donald Super’s career model.....	- 22 -
2.4.3. John Holland’s theory of personality and occupational types.....	- 26 -
2.5. Indigenous model of career development.....	- 29 -
2.5.1. African Psychology.....	- 31 -
2.6. The Impact of South Africa's History on the Psychology profession in today’s context-	32
-	
3. CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	- 36 -
3.2. The theory of reciprocal determinism.....	- 36 -
3.2.1 Conceptualisation of the theory	- 36 -
Figure 1	- 37 -
3.2.2 The central ideas of Bandura’s theory	- 37 -
4. CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	- 40 -
4.1. Introduction.....	- 40 -
4.2. Research Objectives.....	- 40 -
4.2.1. Objectives of the study.....	- 40 -
4.2.2. Research questions.....	- 40 -
4.3. Research Paradigm.....	- 40 -
4.4. Research Design.....	- 41 -
4.5. Sampling technique.....	- 42 -

4.6. Procedure	- 43 -
4.6.1. Data instrument:.....	- 43 -
4.6.2. Data Collection	- 44 -
4.6.3. Data Analysis	- 45 -
4.7. Ethical considerations	- 47 -
4.7.1. Trustworthiness of study	- 48 -
Credibility	- 48 -
Dependability.....	- 48 -
Confirmability.....	- 49 -
Transferability	- 49 -
Reflexivity.....	- 49 -
4.8. Limitations	- 50 -
4.9. Research Methodology Summary.....	- 51 -
CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	- 52 -
5.1. Introduction.....	- 52 -
5.2. Theme 1: Social influences and personal determinants of career choice	- 53 -
5.2.1. Family dynamics in career decision-making	- 53 -
5.2.2. Personal factors in career decision-making.	- 57 -
5.2.3. Social issues or environmental issues in career choice.....	- 59 -
5.2.4. Personality factors that affect career choices.....	- 62 -
5.2.5. Personal factors in terms of own experience	- 64 -
5.3. Theme 2: University factors shaping career paths.....	- 66 -

5.4. Theme 3: Perceived career outcomes and expectations.....	- 69 -
5.5. Summary	- 72 -
6. CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	- 74 -
6.1. Overview of the Study	- 74 -
6.2. Conclusion about Research Findings.....	- 74 -
6.3. Recommendations for future Research.....	- 76 -
6.4. Limitations	- 76 -
6.5. Conclusion	- 77 -
REFERENCES	- 78 -
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	- 93 -
APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT.....	- 94 -
APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE	- 96 -

1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This chapter will provide the background and rationale for the study, which investigates the factors influencing student's career choice of psychology at the University of KwaZulu Natal. The process of making a career decision is a complex process that individuals have to go through in life. A career decision entails a person's personal preferences and the skills for the chosen career, among other factors. Making an informed career decision is important for leading a successful career that is fulfilling and achieving optimal job performance (Ajayi, Moosa & Aloka, 2023).

The chapter also highlights Psychology as a growing field of interest among students due to its relevance in today's society. As mental health becomes a more widely recognized concern, the demand for mental health services continues to increase. This has led to a gap in the availability of these services in the South African context, however steps have been taken to strengthen its treatment measures (Sorsdahl, Petersen, Myers, Zingela, Lund, & Van der Westhuizen, 2023). This has led to a greater number of students considering Psychology as a career, making it important to understand what drives this decision.

The rationale of the study will also be presented in this chapter. Breaking down the empirical and contextual gap that this research seeks to address. Equally as important is the history of the South African system which is embedded in the country's socio-political context which was historically characterised by colonialism and apartheid. During the apartheid the education system was divided according to race, ensuring inequality in terms of the quality of the education and access to education (McKeever, 2017). Post-apartheid a number of different policies were amended, and new ones introduced to counter the former disparities faced by individuals that were oppressed by the apartheid government. A thorough overview of the educational landscape from the time of apartheid to the present is given in the following chapter.

Background

The career choice of an individual is very important as it affects the social, economic, mental and physical aspects of life. As a result, career selection becomes one of the many important choices one will make in determining a good and secure future (Anghel et al., 2019; Kulscar et al., 2020). The kind of career one pursues can affect their lives in many ways (Anghel et al., 2019). A Career is defined as the total pattern of one's activities held during a person's lifetime (Andresen & Stapf, 2022; Tu & Okazaki, 2021). A career enables individuals to earn money or to provide for all their needs and wants. This means an individual's quality of life, socially and economically, can be affected by a career choice they make (Gati & Kulscar, 2021; Hirschi et al., 2020) and the salary and benefits structure of the chosen path. Studies worldwide have shown that it is difficult for students to make career choices (Chuang et al., 2020; Ran et al., 2022) as the choice of career is an in-depth process that requires serious considerations various factors (Anghel et al., 2019; Kulscar et al., 2020; Sharif et al., 2019). Psychology is the study of human behaviour and of the mind (Kuther & Morgan, 2024). It is a behavioural and human science which shapes and reinforces behavioural interventions and public health strategies (Pillay, & Barnes, 2020). Psychology as a career has developed over time, and it has grown in popularity as a major in recent years (Roscoe & McMahan, 2014). Society and organisations need psychologists as they help humans interpret the environment, human behaviour, and brain function (Karimi, 2022). With the increase in mental health sicknesses, there is evidence that psychological interventions can successfully treat a variety of these mental health conditions in children, young adults and adults. Psychology services thus have been demonstrated to help prevent such behavioural problems (van den Heuve, 2016), and this has led to increased interest in psychology as a career path. Because of the increased interest of students in psychology, this study sought to explore the different factors that influence students to make this career choice. This was imperative given the consensus in literature that career choices are difficult to make because they influence lifelong outcomes.

1.2 Problem statement

Career choice is a complex decision to make as it requires one to determine the kind of profession they intend to pursue in life and to also match their career preferences with their academic performance (Koech et al, 2016). According to Arbab et al. (2022) it is critical to understand the factors that motivate students to make certain career decisions. Understanding

the factors behind students' career choices is an area of research that has been explored by many researchers. For instance, Alvarez-Risco et al. (2021), as well as Su et al. (2021) who examined factors influencing choices linked to entrepreneurial careers. Kricorian et al. (2020) focused on factors influencing students to pursue careers in STEM fields. The gap that this study occupies is an empirical gap that particularly focuses on career decisions made to pursue psychology. At the same time, the study occupies a contextual gap because of its focus on UKZN. These gaps position this study to offer unique insights in a field of research that many researchers are interested in.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study was aimed at exploring the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students by looking at how career choice may be influenced by social, personal and family factors. This current study also explored how the university institution also influenced the career choice of students and also explored the psychology students' perceived career outcomes.

1.3.1. Objectives of the study

1. To explore social influences and personal factors that affect the students' career choice of psychology at the University of KwaZulu Natal.
2. To understand how the University influences the career choice of psychology students.
3. To explore the perceived career outcomes of the psychology students' career choices.

1.3.2. Research questions

1. How is the career choice of psychology students at the University of KwaZulu Natal influenced by social factors and personal factors?
2. How does the University influence the students' career choice in psychology?
3. What are the perceived career outcomes of the psychology students' career choices?

1.4 Justification for the study

There are two main factors that are justified in conducting this study. The first of those factors is that while there are many studies that focus on the factors that influence career choices, including Alvarez-Risco et al. (2021), Hassan et al. (2020), Lent and Brown (2020) and Meoli et al. (2020), this study took the unique stance of offering subject specific insights. While other studies offer general perspectives on career choice, this study was able to narrow down the factors that cause students to choose to follow a career path in the practice of psychology. The second factor is linked to the first one, thus while seeking subject specific factors for career choice the study was positioned to cover this gap within the current body of literature.

1.5 Delimitation

It was essential to establish the parameters of this study in order to shed light on the factors that influence the students' career choice on psychology. The research scope only included individuals who were all finishing their psychology honours degree at the time of the research which was a crucial delimitation of this study. By focusing only on this specific group doing honours, the study is able to analyse the viewpoints of a group it considers academically accomplished and motivated in their discipline of study. However, this delimitation potentially limits the generalisability of the findings of the study to a wider community as the experiences and perspectives of Honours students may differ from those in other academic levels or fields of study.

1.6 Structure of Dissertation

Chapter One serves as the introduction to the research. This chapter outlined the aims and problem statement of the study. It also provided an overview of the research' scope and objectives.

Chapter Two delves into a comprehensive literature review, exploring factors influencing career choices such as personal factors, peer influence, financial need, parental influences, societal expectations and gender roles. The chapter also looked at career theories that have been developed to guide career development such as the theory of Work-Adjustment, Holland's

Theory of Vocational Personalities in Work Environment, Indigenous psychology and African psychology among others. The chapter in addition looked at the history of education in the South African context and how it affected career choices. The chapter explored the inequalities created by the apartheid government and the effects thereof on career choice.

Chapter Three presents the theoretical framework that guides the research. It discusses the theory of reciprocal determinism, including its conceptualisation and central ideas, particularly as articulated by Bandura. The chapter emphasises the relevance of this theory to understanding the interplay between individual choices and environmental factors, setting the foundation for the subsequent analysis.

Chapter Four focuses on research methodology and interpretivist paradigms. The chapter discusses the qualitative research approach used for the current study to explore the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students at the University of KwaZulu Natal, which was a qualitative research approach. The chapter also presents the sampling methods, data collection, analysis procedures, and considerations for rigour and ethics.

Chapter Five presents the study results and organises them into thematic categories. The chapter reflects on the results and findings and discusses and synthesizes the findings from the thematic analysis.

Chapter Six provides recommendations, reflects on limitations, and offers insights from the researcher's perspective, concluding the study.

This chapter introduces the study, which investigates the complex process of making career decisions focusing on students taking their courses in psychology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It underlines several personal, social, and environmental elements besides the importance of career counselling in facilitating the informed choice of a career. This chapter locates the study in its broader socio-political context related to the South African historical education context, specifically the influences of apartheid and post-apartheid policies on access to education and career opportunities. This study fills existing gaps in the literature by offering detailed insights specific to the subject concerning the factors influencing career choices among psychology students. Additionally, the research objectives, questions, and the study's scope are delineated.

2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, literature relating to the topic of study on the factors influencing students' career choice of Psychology is critically reviewed. The chapter is divided into five sections, all of which contribute to a holistic understanding of the study and the realisation of its objectives. The sections contained in this chapter are therefore as follows:

- The impact of apartheid on educational structures in South Africa

This section explores the historical context of apartheid and its enduring influence on education. Under apartheid, racially segregated education policies like the Bantu Education Act (1953) systematically denied Black South Africans access to quality education and career development opportunities. The educational system reinforced white supremacy by underfunding Black schools, limiting their curriculum, and restricting access to higher education (McKeever, 2017). Despite post-1994 reforms such as the introduction of the quintile system and affirmative action, disparities in educational access and success persist, particularly among students from disadvantaged backgrounds. These inequities have long-term effects on career options and decision-making.

- Factors influencing career choice

The second section reviews the multifaceted influences on career decision-making, including personal, financial, family, and social factors. Personal interests, personality traits, and individual capabilities shape students' vocational preferences, while socio-economic status often restricts their choices due to limited financial resources or pressure to enter income-generating roles early (Alexander & Twinomurinzi, 2012). Family influence, especially parental expectations, plays a key role in career decision making especially in collectivist cultures like many South African communities where career decisions are often communal rather than individual. Social influences such as peer pressure, societal expectations, and cultural norms also affect career trajectories, particularly for psychology students who may face stigmas related to mental health or gendered career expectations.

- Career theories

This section presents foundational career development theories by Donald Super and John Holland and interrogates their relevance in the South African context. Super's theory of self-concept and career maturity outlines a life-span approach to career development, while Holland's RIASEC model links personality types to suitable work environments. However, both theories were developed in Western contexts and often fail to account for the socio-economic, cultural, and historical realities of South African students. Adaptations like the South African Career Interest Inventory (SACII) reflect efforts to contextualize these theories locally, yet the literature calls for the development of culturally appropriate frameworks that better reflect the lived experiences of South African youth.

- Indigenous model of career development

This section advocates for an indigenous approach to career development in order to address the limitations of western models. Indigenous psychology emphasizes interconnectedness, community values and ancestral wisdom things that are often overlooked by traditional models. The African philosophy of Ubuntu, the importance of spiritual and cultural identity, and communal decision-making are central to understanding career choices in African contexts. Although South Africa has yet to develop a widely accepted indigenous career theory, the literature highlights the need for such models to address local realities like poverty, unemployment, and language barriers.

- The impact of South Africa's history on the psychology profession in today's context

This final section looks at how the legacy of Apartheid has influenced today's disparities within the psychology profession. The field of psychology still has problems such as language barriers, lack of financial support and systematic inequalities that marginalize aspiring psychologists that come from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a result, this profession struggles to reflect South Africa's diverse society and there is a need for African-centered paradigms.

2.2 Career Psychology

Career psychology emerged as a field of study in the early 20th century. Various factors contributed to the development of career psychology such as the increasing need for career guidance and counselling to help people make informed career decisions as the value of education and vocational training expanded (Robertson et al., 2021). With the establishment of career guidance centres and the use of psychological tests, psychologists started offering career

counselling services in the United States in the 19th century (Brown & Lent, 2004; Finch & French, 2019; Goldstein et al., 2019; Miller & Lovler, 2018). In the South African context however, career guidance started in the early 20th century and was implemented as mandatory specially to white learners and later on to the other race groups. As the South African political context transition so did career guidance policies change (Jonck & Swanepoel, 2019). The emergence of several psychological theories and models, such as those by John Holland, Donald Super, and Anne Roe, has also had a major impact on the discipline of career psychology. These concepts offer conceptual frameworks for understanding decision-making, personality, and interest-related to vocation (Stromberg, 2008). In South Africa the application of these theories is unique because of the cultural, political and socioeconomic context which is important to consider when applying theories that were developed in a different context. This means that theories developed in Western contexts if applied as is within a South African context may not be relevant and effective in catering for its diverse needs. A direct application may not fully take into consideration the complexities of culture, customs, communal values, socio-economic inequalities, race and gender to ensure that the theory is relevant and effective for the South African context. Importing such a paradigm is contextually bound and blind (Stead & Watson, 2002).

Having briefly highlighted the emergence of career psychology and the influence of psychological theories, the next step would be to consider the factors that influence career choice, which is the focus of this study. There are many factors that influence the career choice of students, these include personal factors, environmental factors, family factors and social factors (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). Often, when students have to make a career decision or choice, it happens in a time whereby they are not entirely knowledgeable about the choice they make, and this is especially true in the context of SA (Patton, Creed, & Watson, 2003). Therefore, career counsellors can help these individuals to become fully informed or become better informed before deciding regarding their career (Kazi and Akhlaq, 2017). Given the importance that comes with making a career decision it is imperative that an individual is never coerced into choosing a particular career, as this could lead to “low self-esteem and poor performance” (Kazi and Akhlaq, 2017, p. 188).

When a student makes a career decision, they should choose a career that they are interested in as research shows a positive relationship between interests and career choice (Kazi and Akhlaq, 2017). Interests are significant since they reflect an individual’s preferences, values, and passions, which are important when choosing a career path. When a person chooses a career

that is in line with their passions, it can improve their overall well-being, motivation, and job satisfaction (Spehar, Forest, & Stenseng, 2016).

Due to historical injustices under the National Party, which ruled during apartheid, education is also another factor that influences career choice in the South African context. The shift to democracy also brought about significant changes in the types of career decisions people made and brought about a need for career guidance especially in the previously disadvantaged schools (Abrahams, Jano & Van Lill, 2015). These factors will be discussed in detail in the following section.

2.2. The impact of Apartheid on educational structures in South Africa

The Nationalist Party was in power during the apartheid era in South Africa was marked by systemic racism and discrimination. During the apartheid era people were classified using race: Black, Indian, Coloured and White. Black people were considered the most inferior race and the white people were said to be the most superior race (Thobejane, 2013). As it is known that South Africa was under the apartheid system for many years, this system affected how everything functioned in the country including the political context, social, educational and other areas (Davies, 2010). During this time schools that were well resourced with properly trained teachers were reserved for white learners only. While schools with poor funding, a lack of resources and poorly trained teachers were attended by black students which led to these learners achieving low educational outcomes (Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019).

2.2.1. The Bantu Education Act 1953

One example of the policies that were used to create segregation was the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which established a separate and inferior education system for black South Africans. The curriculum and resources supplied in these schools were inferior to those available to white learners, which fuelled the stereotype that black people were less valuable and continued to keep them out of the social, economic, and political opportunities afforded to white people (McKeever, 2017). The impact of these policies was so significant that they also denied access to training and career advancement opportunities to black teachers, resulting in black learners receiving a poor quality of education as compared to white learners. The education system at the time was designed in such a way that ensured that black people occupied the lowest ranked jobs and only manual labour jobs, while white people occupied top ranked jobs and had much better access to higher education as most universities were reserved for only whites (Thobejane, 2013).

The main aim of the Bantu education Act was to achieve indoctrination and social control. The history taught in the curriculum was distorted in a way that supported white supremacy and justified apartheid. Its goal was to make black learners feel inferior (Christie & Collins, 1982). By distorting the history of colonization, Bantu Education corrupted South African history. The system covered up the colonizers' harsh and exploitative nature by portraying them as helpful and civilized. The ancient civilizations in Africa before to colonization were also not included in the Bantu Education curriculum, giving the impression that there was no history or advancement in Africa. The Bantu Education system also devalued the accomplishments of African leaders who opposed colonialism, displaying them as violent and uncivilized and instead emphasized the superiority of white people (Wills, 2011). They attempted to erase black students' cultural heritage and instil a sense of inferiority in them by doing this. Additionally, this method was designed to discourage black students critical thinking and independent ideas that would oppose the regime of apartheid. The goal was to produce a workforce that would be willing to obey and follow orders without questioning them (Wills, 2011). The following section is a discussion on higher education during the Apartheid Era. In spite of the aim of the Bantu Education Act was to ensure that black schools would have the lowest quality of education and have poor academic outcomes, however, some schools under the Bantu Education Act managed to give a good education to the learners. One example is the Morris Isaacson High School (MIHS), established between 1958 and 1979, this school was well-managed and practiced high discipline. The discipline ensured that both teachers and learners had a strong sense of personal responsibility. Even though these teachers were not always well-qualified they worked diligently and dedicated themselves to do the best they could under the circumstances they had to work under. This school managed to achieve good academic results and some learners did well enough to further their education and study in university (Glaser, 2020).

There were many efforts made by schools under the Bantu Education Act to overthrow the system and receive better education. MIHS participated largely in activism resulting in its loss of its full high school status (Glaser, 2020). All efforts that were made to rebel against the Apartheid system at the time were punished. Despite these setbacks a number of high schools in Soweto were able to run successfully under the Apartheid (Glaser, 2020). The most significant rebellion against the law of Bantu Education was the Soweto uprising in 1976. The Soweto uprising was a significant protest by black school children in Soweto against the education system that was forced upon them (Chisholm, 2017). Thousands of students marched in order to demonstrate against the compulsory use of Afrikaans as a medium of

communication in schools and it was viewed as a tool of oppression and a form of hindrance to their education (Glaser, 2020). The Soweto uprising was not only a protest against unequal education but also a rebellion against the Apartheid government that was ruling at the time. This protest made a significant impact in contributing to the ultimate downfall of the apartheid regime (Ndimande, 2013).

2.2.2. Race Based Education

In a paper by McKeever (2017) suggests that apartheid policies and practices created and maintained significant disparities in access to education between white and black students. McKeever (2017) highlights that the main aim of the apartheid system was to ensure the preservation of white supremacy and segregation among the different race groups. Education was used as a tool to create and maintain social, economic and political inequalities between the different race groups. The apartheid government implemented a number of policies in order to restrict access to quality education for black learners to further their social, economic, and political exclusion. The white schools were also separated by language as Afrikaners wanted to keep Afrikaans as their medium of communication in schools therefore leading to the development of the Christian National Education as a way for Afrikaans speaking whites to retain their own sense of history and identity (McKeever, 2017). The main medium of communication that was used in schools was English and Afrikaans or both, this further excluded and oppressed black learners as they had to learn in a language that was not their native language.

2.2.2.1 Education during the Apartheid Era

Higher education was also distorted in ways that were meant to strengthen the authority and privilege of the ruling white minority during the Apartheid Era in South Africa (Johnson, 1982). The apartheid government's higher education policies, including the establishment of separate universities for different racial groups. The National Party government put in legal restrictions to stop schools intended for one race group's usage from accepting people from other races. For instance, a school designated for coloured students may only accept a student from one of the other three racial groups if the education department to which it was accountable approved of the registration. Only if it could be proven that no institution designated for the applicant's race group provided the desired study program would permits be issued. (Bunting, 2006). These policies resulted in the creation of inferior and poorly resourced institutions for black students. By providing White-only universities with preferential funding over Black-only universities, the apartheid government made sure that Black students remained at the bottom

of the classification ladder (Adams, 2020). This left people of color with minimal chances to choose the career of their choice, as their options were very limited.

After the apartheid in 1994 all the laws that were put in place during the apartheid had to be abolished. Democracy has played a significant role in attempting to foster social justice by playing a role in trying to reduce inequities and most importantly promoting equal opportunity for all (Graham, 2020). The new laws that were now put in place caused universities nationwide to get rid of the past policies and move towards redressing the past inequalities (Davies, 1996). According to Mzangwa (2019) before democracy a number of academic institutions in South Africa appeared to place little significance on the social inclusion of different groups, especially those from underprivileged origins, in the higher education system. Because involving students from disadvantaged and underrepresented social backgrounds as they are often seen as problematic and challenging to maintain. Universities that were reserved for white students became open to everyone. Thereafter, those previously oppressed now had the opportunity to choose from a wider range of careers and were no longer limited to just a few (Mzangwa, 2019).

Looking at the current statistics of students who were previously disadvantaged, they now have wider access to tertiary education in universities that were previously not opened to them. As per Census 2022, about 5 million individuals possess a post-secondary education qualification this makes it an increase of over two million more people from the 2011 census. Women make up more than 70% of those with educational credentials (Census 2022). By 2022, the percentage of female students surpassing that of male students (8,6% in 1996 to 12,3% in 2022 for males and 6,7% in 1996 to 13,1% for females) and the gender gap in higher education accomplishment is almost bridged (Census 2022). The statistics of South African universities show that the number of black students in universities has increased significantly over the years. The number of black students enrolled in universities and universities of technology has increased to being at nearly 80%, followed by white students at about 10,2% according to the 2021 statistics released in 2023 (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2023). As compared to 2018 whereby the statistics show that the number of black students that were enrolled in higher education institutions was sitting at only 19% with white students being the highest at over 50%, followed by Indian and coloured students at 46% and 15% respectively (Gore & Botha, 2022).

Even though the number of black students enrolled in higher education institutions has increased over the years, the success rate among black students is the lowest as compared to

the other populations (Gore & Botha, 2022). These figures imply that the policies aimed at addressing inequality have not been achieved. The increase in the number of black students in universities can be attributed to policies such as affirmative action which were put in place to redress the past inequalities experienced during the Apartheid. Historically, black students were denied access to a number of universities in the country and after affirmative action was put in place, black students then were the first to be admitted into higher education institutions (Herman, 2017). Even though black students now have more access to higher education, there are still a number of disadvantages that face the population that has led to the low numbers in their success rates.

2.2.3. The Quintile System

The quintile funding system was introduced post-apartheid in a redistributive approach of the State's resources in which public schools are classified based on variables such as social and economic disadvantage, poverty levels, and geographical location to correct inequalities in funding of schools across the different race groups. The way in which the system works is that the poorest and most disadvantaged schools were proposed to get funds first. The quintile system ranking is from 1 to 5, with quintile one being the poorest schools and quintile 5 being the most advantaged schools (Adams, 2020). The quintile system also considers household incomes when attempting to redress the inequalities. Despite the quintile system's intention to deliver resources to underprivileged schools, there have been questions about how much funding and support the system has actually given out. Numerous schools in Quintiles 1 to 3 still struggle with issues including poor facilities, a shortage of trained teachers, and a lack of suitable learning tools, which lowers the quality of education and results (Longueira, 2017). Van Dyk and White (2019) argues that the quintile method has not changed the educational gaps by addressing them as the schools that lacked resources and quality education have not seen any changes. The division of schools into quintiles has engendered stigma and strengthened unfavourable opinions about schools in underprivileged areas. For example, it seems that more affluent parents held township schools in lower regard for their quality of education even though those schools are in their own communities, and they would send their children to schools in different more affluent areas. As a result, efforts to enhance educational achievements have been hampered and has had a negative effect on the morale of learners, teachers, and the community at large (Van Dyk & White, 2019).

The quintile system might not correctly reflect the full extent of educational disadvantage. The classification may not accurately reflect the various socioeconomic factors influencing

academic performance since it is mostly based on the local community's income. As a result, certain schools that desperately require resources and help can be disregarded or ranked in higher quintiles, while others might not get enough support while being in underprivileged areas, “The principal noted that, “... our school situation is actually ridiculous – a black school in a white suburb.” The learners at the school do not reside in the same area”, (Van Dyk & White, 2019, p6).

According to StatsSA (2021) the number of students dropping out of school increased in the years 2020 to 2021, about 19,6% of students in the poorest income group (quintile 1 and 2) dropped out due to a lack of money for fees. While individuals that belonged in higher income households still had access to education. Even though universities are now accepting previously disadvantaged students the issue is that these students from disadvantaged backgrounds are not able to further their education due to lack of funding for higher education meaning that they left out due to not being able to afford school fees (Walker & Hoppener, 2017). Higher education therefore still remains a scarce commodity for the underprivileged populations. Students that are able to enter university end up having to drop out due to owing too much money and being unable to secure funding such as NSFAS which is a scheme that funds the underprivileged (Walker & Hoppener, 2017). To date higher education is mostly accessible to those individuals coming from middle to upper-class family households, which creates an even bigger gap between the rich and the poor.

Reflecting on the above section, one can conclude that the history of education in the South African context, produced notable differences between various racial and socioeconomic groups in terms of access to and quality of education. The Bantu Education was a policy that was introduced to control the kind of education received by black students in order to favour white supremacy and foster feelings of inferiority and discourage critical thinking. During apartheid the higher education policies favoured white students which resulted in the limited access to higher education for black students. After apartheid, efforts were made to redress the disparities through affirmative action and the introduction of the quintile system. The quintile system categorized schools based on how disadvantaged the schools were and it was aimed at supporting disadvantaged schools. However, this system was not able to accurately assess educational disadvantages which resulted in funding disparities. This further perpetuated inequality by denying opportunities to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Although there was progress in terms of access to education, challenges still persist in achieving equal opportunities, especially for the historically marginalized students. It is important to consider

the history of education in the South African context in relation to career choice because it highlights inequalities created by the apartheid government. These inequalities have had effects on career choices such as limited access to education limited students career options; economic constraints whereby individuals that come from disadvantaged backgrounds have to find employment and not further their education due to a lack of financial stability in the families (Shumba & Naong, 2013; Chiramba & Ndofirephi, 2023). Another factor is that individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds may be expected to pursue more stable and secure jobs and are not given the opportunity to explore entrepreneurial career options. This results in most individuals choosing very structured career paths (Siddiky & Akter, 2021). The following section will focus on the factors that influence career choice.

2.3 Factors influencing Career Choice

2.3.1. Personal factors

There are a number of factors that influence an individual's career choice, and, in this section, there will be a discussion of these factors including personal, social, family and environment. Under personal factors there are a number of aspects which include one's childhood fantasies, personality type, one's past experiences, personal interests as well as one's capabilities (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). In terms of the social factors these include influence from peers as well as friends.

A person's personality influences their career choice as people tend to choose careers that are in line with their personality. Personality type has a certain relationship with the career that an individual decides to pursue (Personality is all the characteristics, attributes or traits that make up a person's unique character (Oxford Dictionary, 2020). In other words, this is all the things that make an individual different from everyone else, this could include the things that motivate a person, their values, attitude, or behaviours. Even organizations use personality assessments as well as other cognitive assessments for selection purposes (Laher & Cockcroft, 2013).

Making a career decision requires an individual to understand themselves because career choice is made in relation to how a person understands themselves (Theresa, 2015). Super cited in Theresa (2015) stated that "psychologically, career choices are "drives" by self-concepts" (pg. 45). Career choice is influenced by an individual's personality; one's career choice is stated to be an expression of one's character or nature. Holland believed that people and particular working environments can be categorised and matched together, therefore suggesting that it is better to find a job type a person might be fit for instead of a specific job

(Theresa, 2015).

Personal financial needs and goals are important factors in career decision-making. Some people place higher importance on careers that offer high earning potential to achieve financial stability (Alexander & Twinomurinzi, 2012). In a country like South Africa with high unemployment rates peoples' career choice may be influenced by the need to find means to support themselves and their families (Alexander, & Twinomurinzi, 2012). Alexander & Twinomurinzi (2012) state that research shows that a high salary and job security and job availability are considered very important when it comes to career decisions. Others may prioritize job satisfaction and personal fulfilment over monetary gains, and choose careers that align with their passion, even if they may not be the highest paying.

Childhood fantasies can influence how one considers their future lives and careers. Such career-related fantasies are real and can last until a person turns 14 years (Rashid et al. et al, 2009; Yusran et al, 2021). Young children typically have idealistic dreams for their future careers, which typically change into more grounded possibilities as they become older (Gao & Eccles, 2020). To explain how children's expectations and goals for their careers evolved from fantasy-based conceptions to reality-based ones, Gottfredson (1981) proposed a theory of circumscription and compromise, where in the circumscription process, children learn to live up to expectations regarding their professional goals as a result of their developing psychosocial selves. Children thus explore careers in both formal and informal contexts as their self and career awareness develop when they visualise themselves in different job roles or work environments through fantasy and imagination (Howard & Ferrari, 2022).

2.3.2. Financial factors

In South Africa individuals that are coming from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to proceed to pursue tertiary education due to a lack of financial resources, therefore, they are not in a position to choose a career they would like to pursue (Ebrahim, 2009 cited in Shumba & Naong, 2013). Shumba & Naong (2013) also references a study by Dey, Roy, Joarder & Chakraborty (2011) that explored adolescents' aspiration and their parental relations among rural school adolescents. This study reveals that a student's family income can have a negative impact on individuals' career choice at university level. For example, if a student comes from a poor family, they have limited access to tertiary education and are less likely to achieve their desired career goals.

Similarly in Shumba and Naong (2013) study the results of the study show that a lack of

funds was the main reason why students were failing to achieve their career choice. Other reasons such as bad influence from peers and poor academic performance were the second highest ranked reason and a lack of support all contributed to this failure. Differences between males and females showed that males had challenges such as poor school performance and bad influences for their peers, while females had gender-related challenges and a lack of support which interfered in their ability to pursue their career choice.

Ebrahim (2009) cited in Shumba and Naong (2013) again reveals that students from low-income families experience pressure from their families to leave school and get jobs in order to contribute financially. This also limits these students further and they are not able to achieve their career goals. Another study that is consistent with this one is a review by Hartnack (2017) whereby it is found that household pressure is one of the reasons why students drop-out of school to look for jobs because of the family struggling to make ends meet. Students that come from disadvantaged backgrounds sometimes end up pursuing a career choice not out of interest but because they must choose a career that has high salary potential in order to be able to change their living conditions, along with that of their families. Therefore, economic factors play a role in the sense that certain professions may offer higher salaries than others, which may influence the career choice of psychology university students. Consider if this falls under family factors. As discussed in this section there are many factors that influence career choice of individuals including personal factors such as interest, personality traits, childhood fantasies, and past experiences.

It is therefore imperative to note that financial needs and goals also influence career choices, with some prioritizing high earning potential for financial stability. In countries like South Africa, high unemployment rates can affect career choices. Disadvantaged individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds face challenges in pursuing education, including family income, peer influence, poor academic performance, and lack of support. Household pressure also influences career choices. In the following section the focus will be on how family influences career choice.

2.3.3. Family Factors

Family plays an important role in terms of one's career choice and career development. The family has influence from childhood, the way in which the family is structured, the relationship that the individual has with each family member, the role the individual takes within the family, and these factors have a significant impact on a person's career choice (Palos & Drobot, 2010). Another factor that influences a person's career choice includes parental support and academic

performance. Family provides the individual with support when it comes to the decision of choosing a career (Palos & Drobot, 2010). Family plays a crucial role in career development of an individual and are said to influence young adults' choices on the type of studies they pursue and the type of career they choose. According to Tziner, Loberman, Dekel and Sharoni (2012) when young adolescents receive support from their parents with regard to their career this has a positive impact on the individual's willingness to engage in career exploration activities such as career counselling, job shadowing, and attending career workshops (Leong & Hartung, 2013). However, when the parents exert too much control over their children's career choice this has a negative impact. It is reported that students are more likely to share matters about their careers with their parents (Aharon et al, 2012). This is evident in the job characteristics of the career that the individual choose they are usually similar to the job characteristics of their parent's career. When there is a strong relationship between the parent and the individual, the individual perceives job characteristics that are descriptive of their parent's jobs as important (Aharoni et al, 2012).

Family expectations can shape an individual's career choices. Parents, siblings, or extended family members may have specific expectations regarding the career paths they believe their child should pursue. These expectations can be influenced by cultural or societal norms or the family's own experiences (Fouad, Kim, Ghosh, Chang & Figueiredo, 2016).

Many black families in the South African context come from disadvantaged family backgrounds and this has had an impact on their career choices and paths. For example, many individuals end up taking a gap year or years after matriculating because their families are unable to pay for higher education due to how expensive some of the programs are in universities (Mhlongo & O'Neill, 2013). In some cases, some students had no choice but to choose different careers that they could finish quicker in order to get employed and help out their families financially. As a result, this leads to many people careers they are not passionate about and end up being dissatisfied with their work leading to problems such as a lack of commitment and motivation (Mhlongo & O'Neill, 2013). These issues are due to limited access to education that black people were subjected to during apartheid which led to many of the black population especially the population to live have a very low socioeconomic standing.

2.3.4. Social factors

Equally as important as the above-mentioned family factors is social factors. The career goals of individuals, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds, are significantly shaped

by social variables, including cultural ideas and societal expectations. These elements frequently put pressure on people to choose employment that are safer and more stable than ones that are motivated by passion or a personal interest. Social factors also play a significant role in influencing the career choice of psychology university students. The social factors that influence the career choice of psychology university students in South Africa include cultural beliefs, societal expectations, and economic factors (Pillay & Parumasur, 2014). For example, cultural beliefs may influence the career choice of psychology university students as certain cultures may view mental health as a taboo subject. Societal expectations may also influence the career choice of psychology university students as certain professions may be perceived as more prestigious or desirable than others. Peers and friends can influence career choices through the interests they share, discussions concerning career aspirations, and exposure to different industries. People can be influenced by their peers' career choices and seek similar paths based on their social interactions (Mtemeri, 2020). Social factors, such as a desire for social impact and meaningful work, can influence career choices. Individuals' career choice may also be influenced by altruistic motives and the desire to contribute to society and serve people (Haruna & Sackey, 2023). Mtemeri (2020) states that students are more likely to listen to peer career advice if it is coming from peers, they trust than anyone else. According to research done in South Africa by Shumba and Naong (2012) students are student seek validation of their career choice from their peers at university level (Mtemeri, 2020). In the next section a discussion on career theories will be presented.

Social factors such as societal expectations and gender roles also influence career choice. For example, according to Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) males' career choices are most likely to be influenced to by the financial benefits of the career because they are expected to cover the expenses for the households in which they live. The career choice of females on the other hand, are more likely to be influenced by social values and a need to serve. Especially after the apartheid was over females gravitated towards careers such as "teaching, psychology, chemistry, medicine, philology and humanities" (Dalmau Valls, Sitges i Puy, & Tort Alier, 2018, p 5).

There is further empirical evidence which supports the various factors that have been identified in this subsection. One of the studies from each evidence can be obtained was conducted by Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018) who focused on the influence of culture. In this regard, they made a comparison of youths from collectivist and individualistic culture. This study is critical to this study because it supports the influence of family expectations as part of the broader

argument on culture. Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018) therefore found significant differences among youths from collectivist cultures and those from individualistic cultures. This study provides possible indications of the outcomes of this study. The nexus that it has with this study is that South Africa's population is largely comprised of black people who come from collectivist cultures. The country also has other race groups, for instance Indians with the same collectivist cultural background. As indicated by Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018) these students' career choices because of the influence of collectivism as part of culture are essentially family choices. In such cultures, parents thus indicate their expectations, in terms of the career paths of their children. To fulfil the obligations of the belief in collectivism, students will be influenced to make career choices that suit the immediate groups of people, most notably, family.

In related studies, Sawitri et al. (2014) were also able to prove that parental expectations were critical towards students' career decisions in collectivist cultures. What Sawitri et al. (2014) and Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018) highlight is that it is collectivist cultures students who do not make choices based on self-interests, unlike in individualistic cultures. Instead, they also take into consideration the views of people who are influential in their immediate social system, such as parents. Hence, Kantamneni et al. (2018) referred to this as sociocultural on students' career decisions. Through a study that that was conducted with college students who were first- generation attendees they were able to confirm that one of the important predictors of vocational decisions is ethnic identity. This shapes the values that people hold even in the career decision process.

2.4. Career theories

According to Jena and Nayak (2020) the different career trajectories that people follow for the achievement of their career and life goals can be understood through the lens of career theories. Career development theories provide valuable frameworks for understanding how individuals choose careers and navigate the chosen career paths. Within the auspices of these theories, there is an integration of the various attributes surrounding career decision making, which include, social, psychological and economic issues (Jena & Nayak, 2020). It is thus crucial to review the various career development theories to understand how different choices are made. An important factor to note about career theories is that they reveal the different priorities that people have when they choose specific career paths (Kwee, 2020). This point encapsulates the main reason behind gleaning career theories in this review. This study is premised on identifying the factors that influence student's career choice, specifically in the field of

psychology. It therefore is imperative to consider career theories, because they provide a theoretical foundation through which the main aim of this study can be achieved.

Coetzee and Schreuder (2016) define career development as the formation and application of self-concepts in the workplace settings. Career research in South Africa has primarily been influenced by American research and studies. South African researchers and counsellors have widely used and accepted career theories such as those by Donald Super and John Holland Before 1990. Majority of the career research that was done was done on a white sample (white participants) and this led to the assumption that the western heritage of South Africans would support the use of theories, constructs and instrument that were developed in western contexts (Stead & Watson, 1998). These theory constructs and instruments that were only tested on the white population were also being applied to other ethnic groups that were not part of the tested sample. This brings about questions on whether they are applicable in the South African context as it is such a diverse country.

There are a number of career theories that have been developed to guide career development, however, according to Leung (2008) the five theories of career development that have informed both practice and research in career counselling and guidance over the past few decades in the United States and globally are “(a) Theory of Work-Adjustment, (b) Holland’s Theory of Vocational Personalities in Work Environment, (c) the Self-concept Theory of Career Development formulated by Super and more recently by Savickas, (d) Gottfredson’s Theory of Circumscription and Compromise, and (e) Social Cognitive Career Theory (p.115). These theories were developed in America however they have been applied globally in different contexts. When looking at the South African context career theories used have been adopted and adapted from those developed in America.

The career theories that have been chosen for discussion in this paper are Donald Super’s career theory and John Holland’s theory of personality and occupational types. Both these theories will be discussed in detail below. The reason for choosing these theories for discussion is because the first theory that was developed was created by Frank Parson’s in the 1900’s and John Holland’s theory was developed based on the ideas of Parson’s theory (Sharma, 2016). Thereafter, the social cognitive theory was developed by Albert Bandura and later in the 1950’s Donald Super developed his career theory and continued to develop career theories. This shows how these theories were among the earliest career theories to be developed, and other career theories were developed over time based on the premises of the earlier career theories that were developed (Sharma, 2016).

2.4.1. Career theories in the South African context

To understand an individual's career interests, questionnaires are usually used. According to Watson & McMahon (2013) the Self-Directed Search (SDS) developed by John Holland is by far the most popularly used questionnaire in the South African context. This questionnaire enables individuals to explore and understand their career interests and make informed career choices by providing interest scores which are used in linking an individual's interests and a suitable work environment. Even though this questionnaire has been adopted for use in South Africa research on the use of it in this particular context is mixed. Watson and McMahon (2013) also mention that it has also been found that codes generated by the SDS do not match codes that are found in the "South African dictionary of occupations" (p. 475). Regardless of the challenges that were noted regarding the SDS, John Holland's theory continues to dominate career counselling and career development in South Africa. Its dominance can even be noted from the development of South African career interests that are based the theory. One such psychometric instrument is the South African Career Interest Inventory (SACII), which as indicated by Rabie and Naidoo (2019) was developed based on Holland's theory. This is a theory that has been operationalised in the South African context and there is empirical research to support its use. Four instance, Rabie and Naidoo (2019) were able to determine through a study which was conducted with secondary school students (n=266) that the SACII, which is based on the theory is valid, as well as reliable within the South African context. In another study, Morgan and de Bruin (2017) were able to prove the validity of Holland's circumplex model and the ordering of his occupational types in Southern Africa, including in South Africa. These studies thus provide an empirical foundation that supports the focus on Holland's theory in the context of this study.

Other tests that are widely used in South Africa for career guidance as well as for placement are "the Career Development Questionnaire (CDQ) (Langley, 1990); the Life Roles Inventory (LRI) (Langley, 1992); and the Values Scale (VS)" (Watson & McMahon, 2013). These tests are based on Super's approach on career development. The above-mentioned questionnaires have been used for a number of decades in the South African context, therefore the use of these theories or applicability of them in this context has to be discussed. The use of these questionnaires in the South African context has also brought about criticism in terms of the use of career tests locally (Watson & Mahon, 2013).

Apart from career questionnaires that were developed based on Super's approach, the motivation to focus on this theory in this study was obtained from the identification of similar

studies that have done so in the body of literature. These include Ajayi et al. (2019) in which the focus was on career decision making among Grade 12 students and Mokodutlo (2019) who concentrated on township children and their exposure to career development. Both these studies were conducted in South Africa and are evidence of the continued application of Super's theory within this context. Therefore, it is imperative for the theories informing both psychological tests and empirical studies (John Holland's theory and Super's theory) to be discussed as they are used widely in South Africa.

2.4.2. Donald Super's career model

Donald Super's career theory known as the developmental theory emphasizes the importance of understanding how an individual's self-concepts develop over time and how these self-concepts shape one's career choices and behaviour (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). According to Super, self-concepts are the set of beliefs that individuals hold about themselves, including their abilities, values, interests, and personality traits.

Super proposed that self-concepts develop over time through a process of socialization, which includes interactions with family, peers, and significant others. He believed that self-concepts play a critical role in shaping an individual's career development, as they influence the type of work that individuals find satisfying and fulfilling (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). Although various self-concepts may be connected, not all of them are applicable to all facets of life or work, and certain self-concepts may be positive while others may be negative.

Super also refers to the process of synthesis whereby learning takes place through role playing. Role playing starts in childhood and may even go into adulthood whereby the individual imagines or acts out specific roles, responsibilities and situations. This allows the individual to gain a deeper understanding of the demands, challenges and rewards associated with different occupations (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). By taking on different roles, individuals can explore their interests, test their skills, and assess their compatibility with specific career paths. Role playing can be conducted through imaginary play which involves engaging in imaginative activities or games where individuals pretend to be in specific careers. This can help individuals explore their interests, passions, and skills within a safe and creative environment. It can also involve career exploration exercises such as engaging in activities that expose individuals to various career options. This could include researching and presenting information about different occupations, conducting informational interviews, or participating in job shadowing experiences (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016).

The idea of career adjustment is also included in Donald Super's theory of career development. The practice of continuously adjusting and changing one's profession to conform to changes in oneself and the outside world is referred to as career adjustment. According to Super, individuals go through various stages in their career development, and at each stage, they may experience the need for career adjustment (Kosine & Lewis, 2008). A person's career adjustment process is continuous throughout their working life. It could be sparked by changes in values or interests, shifts in the employment market, or outside variables that affect career options. The ability to adapt and make effective career adjustments is crucial for staying relevant and achieving long-term career satisfaction. Another concept that Donald Super mentions in his theory is the theory of career maturity which refers to readiness and preparedness that individuals have to manage their own career development, whereby they have the necessary skills, attitudes and knowledge to make an informed career decision and navigate through their career path (Kosine & Lewis, 2008).

Super's concept of career maturity when looking at the black South African population it brings about challenges such as major socioeconomic differences, unequal access to opportunities and resources among the population. Access to high-quality education, career counselling, and exposure to a variety of professional alternatives are necessary for developing career maturity.

Super's idea of career maturity assumes that everyone has a universal understanding of career development, but in South Africa, cultural influences and circumstances can have an impact on how people choose their careers. People's career choices may be influenced by cultural factors, family expectations, and societal pressures; in some cases, financial stability and financial security may take precedence over personal fulfilment. This may make it difficult to establish a true sense of self and align it with career choices (Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). Looking at the South African context many people in poor communities end up dropping out of school to look for jobs so that they can take care of their families especially in child headed households whereby children need to look after their siblings and themselves because they are orphaned (Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). Another challenge with Super's theory applicability is that some individuals do not fully develop a sense of self due to expectations which have a major influence on how individuals behave and the choices that they make. For example, in some households if a child is coming from a poor family and they get an opportunity to get an education then that child would be forced to study careers that are believed to have high income. This leaves little room for a child to follow their passions because the priority is

financial security, some children don't even do well enough to be able to further their education due to their poor living conditions.

South Africa may not have enough representation and role models from different backgrounds in several sectors and industries. Because of this, it may be difficult for people, especially those from underrepresented groups, to picture themselves in particular professions and to achieve a sense of career maturity. Lack of role models might affect people's career goals and impede their career development. (Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). Even though more and more black people are seen in professional profession the number is still significantly lower than that of other races.

Super proposed that career development is a process that starts from childhood, and it continues throughout a person's life. He proposed five stages of career development. These stages include the growth stage, exploration stage, establishment stage, maintenance stage, and decline stage. The first stage is the *growth* stage which starts from birth right up to the age of fourteen. During this period, children develop their self-concept, which includes their understanding of their abilities, interests, and values. They begin to form initial ideas about possible careers, often influenced by their family, environment, and early experiences. Positive or pleasant experiences often shape their interests. During this stage, individuals explore different roles through play and develop a foundation for future career development (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016).

The second stage is *exploration* which starts from adolescence right up to the age of 25, this is where the individual finds out what is required for education and training and takes part in career-related activities like internships or part-time jobs. The exploration stage entails conducting self-evaluation, determining personal talents and interests, and making tentative career decisions. The individual may also make certain career choices because of the influence from family which later leads to uncertainty, dissatisfaction or a sense of disorientation when it come to their career paths, this when the individual is facing career crises. The third career development is *establishment* which is from the age of 25 to the age of 45, this is whereby the individual make their initial career decisions and join the workforce. They put a lot of effort into expanding their professional networks, becoming proficient in their chosen professions, and acquiring practical experience. People often create their professional identities and establish a name in their particular fields during this phase. Some individuals do not find their stability and they become frustrated resulting in stagnation or change. Those that are successful in finding stabilisation focus on career advancement

(Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016).

The fourth stage of Super's theory is *maintenance*, starting from 45 to 65, at this stage individuals have gained enough experience and expertise in their chosen fields to create a name for themselves in that field, and are now focused on advancement and moving up into leadership roles. They have often found their professional niche and have a good sense of job security and are valuable members of their organization. Other individuals that haven't really found their niche try to acquire new skills or even change careers due to them reaching a point of stagnation (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). Individuals at this stage also start to plan for the future in terms of retirement.

The last stage of Super's theory is called *decline* which starts at age 65, this is when individuals have reached old age, and they prepare for retirement and leave the workforce gradually. They might begin cutting back on work hours, coaching more junior professionals, and making plans for life beyond their jobs (Kosine & Lewis, 2008). The decline stage entails looking back on professional achievements and discovering fulfilment outside of the workplace. Retirement differs for each individual with some careers it is mandatory at a certain age but in other careers the individual may retire at an age they choose. Super's theories are not fixed in terms of ages as well as the characteristics as some characteristics found in one stage can be found in another stage (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016).

Looking at Super's theory of career development in the South African context, it's applicability is questioned especially among the black-African community as Super's developmental stages do not adequately reflect the career paths of black youth, who rarely have opportunities to explore and commit to long-term career. The developmental stages, self-concepts, career maturity and decision-making components of the theory according to Stead and Watson (1998) need to be relooked at or even interpreted when being applied in the South African context. For example, Stead and Watson (1998) state that it is challenging to effectively apply Super's developmental stages to the South African context due to the unstable and unpredictable environmental circumstances that are impacting youth in this country on a continuous basis, including issues such as unemployment, limited access to higher education due to low socioeconomic standing and poverty.

Hobololo (2020) mentions that career development theories were developed and implemented by middle-class scholars for "privileged populations and socioeconomic classes" (p3). When

career theories are used in the South African context they are adopted and changes to suit the context but that is not enough, it is important to develop context specific theories that will cater for that specific population (Hobololo, 2020). Since Super's theory was tested on White Americans and centred on White Americans and their life experiences and viewpoints during development, it's applicable in the western context and inapplicable in a different context such as African context due to differing contextual aspects such as culture, language, and psycho-social factors.

2.4.3. John Holland's theory of personality and occupational types

Holland's Career Theory, also known as the Holland Occupational Themes or the RIASEC model, was developed by John L. Holland. It proposes that individuals are more likely to be satisfied and successful in careers that align with their personality types and interests. The theory assumes that there are six primary personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). According to Holland realistic individuals are practical, hands-on, and enjoy working with tools, machines, and physical materials. They prefer occupations that involve manual or technical skills. Investigative individuals are analytical, curious, and enjoy solving complex problems through research and analysis. They prefer occupations that involve scientific or intellectual pursuits. Artistic individuals are creative, expressive, and enjoy using their imagination. They prefer occupations that involve artistic expression, such as singing, writing, or performing arts. Social individuals are empathetic, caring, and enjoy helping and interacting with others. They would be attracted in occupations that involve working with people, such as counselling, teaching, or healthcare. Enterprising individuals are ambitious, persuasive, and enjoy taking on leadership roles. They would most likely go into occupations that involve business, sales, or entrepreneurship. Conventional individuals are organized, detail-oriented, and enjoy working with data and numbers. They would be attracted to occupations that involve structured tasks, such as accounting, administration, or data analysis (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). When applying Holland's theory to this current study the participants who were selected for the study are studying psychology implying that they their social individuals who like helping people and are empathetic towards people.

Holland created a hexagonal model to illustrate how the six personality types interact with one another. The hexagon shows how neighbouring kinds are compatible with one another e.g., realistic and investigative, implying that people with adjacent types frequently have shared interests and might find it simpler to switch between related jobs (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016).

On the other hand, personality types that are opposite each other are the least related, e.g., artistic and conventional. Holland's theory has provided a valuable framework for understanding the relationship between personality types, work environments, and career choices. It has been influential in guiding career counselling and vocational assessment practices (Nauta, 2010).

John Holland's theory is very simple in that it offers a clear and structured framework for comprehending how a person's personality and professional interests relate to one another. It divides people into six personality types, which aids in identifying the major interests and preferences of both individuals and career professionals. Its simplicity makes the theory easy to apply and offers a useful resource for career counselling and guidance. To help people define their career goals and make informed decisions, career counsellors can administer user friendly tests and inventories based on the Holland Codes. It assists in directing people toward careers that are likely to bring them joy and satisfaction (Nauta, 2010). Holland's theory and assessments make it easier for individuals to consider different career paths through linking different personality types to various work settings. It assists individuals in determining prospective career paths that are in line with their values and interests. This process of exploration broadens people's understanding of other professions and inspires them to think about more broad career choices (Nauta, 2010).

Zainudin, Rong, Nor, Yusop, & Othman (2020) wrote a paper aimed at determining "the relationship between Holland's Theory and career decision making, and to identify the factors that affect career decision making", (p. 2). The authors did a systematic review of literature regarding vocational choices in relation to Holland's theory. The findings indicate that career guidance and student interest are collated. It is noted that career guidance provides students with information to help them discover their career paths and help them in career development.

According to Van Vuuren, Rabie, and Naidoo (2022) holland's idea was created and tested mostly in the setting of Western cultures, particularly American culture. It may not be universally applicable or generalised to various cultural contexts. The hypothesis might not sufficiently take into consideration how different cultural values, societal standards, and professional expectations exist across diverse populations. For instance, in the South African context there is a range of ethnicities, languages, and cultural customs, Holland's theory was established primarily in a western context and may not fully capture the diverse cultural values,

cultural expectations and career choice of South African cultural groups (Van Vuuren, Rabie, & Naidoo, 2022).

Bullock, Andrews, Braud, and Reardon (2009) note that Holland's theory focuses primarily on vocational interests and personality types, but it may fall short of fully accounting for other relevant elements in career choice, such as socioeconomic situation and educational systems as these factors vary across different context and differ from the American context in which the theory was developed, more research is needed in this area. If these aspects are overlooked, the comprehensiveness and accuracy of career assessments and interventions could be compromised. In the South African context, there are major socioeconomic differences, as well as a history of inequality and limited access to resources for specific population groups. Holland's theory overlooks the influence that socioeconomic circumstances have on career choices and prospects. The theory's emphasis on individual personality types and vocational preferences may be insufficient to overcome the institutional hurdles and social disparities that hinder professional growth in South Africa.

The theory assumes that people have a fixed personality type and that their interests remain consistent over time. However, research indicates that a person's vocational interests can vary and evolve through time, impacted by personal growth, experiences, and external variables (Nye, Wille, Amory, & De Fruyt, 2021). Holland's approach may fail to address these dynamic features of occupational development appropriately. A paper by Bleidorn, Hopwood, Back, Denissen, Hennecke, Hill and Zimmermann (2021) examines the nature, causes, and processes behind the stability and change of personality traits. In their paper Denissen, Hennecke and Zimmermann (2021) present evidence showing that personality traits may vary significantly over a person's lifespan especially during young adulthood. Young adults tend to gain more psychological maturity traits such as emotional stability, conscientiousness, and agreeableness. This has been found to be prevalent across "cohorts, genders, and, to a certain degree, also across samples from different cultures" (Bleidorn et al., 2021, p. 5).

In conclusion, looking at career theories in the South African context it can be difficult for people from underprivileged circumstances to acquire a strong sense of who they are and make appropriate decisions because they may have access to limited resources and services (Stead & Watson, 1998). Career guidance or career counselling should be made a priority; however, many young people make uninformed career decisions. This is due to a lack of availability of career guidance services which was the case even back in the apartheid era when it was

just available to white people. “Unfortunately, the services were available only to a select few, coinciding with the racist apartheid policies that favored specifically the country’s white minority (Pillay, 2020). Till this day career guidance is still lacking in schools that are in the townships as well as schools in rural areas, this has led to major consequences such as high drop-out rates in higher education institutions (Pillay, 2020). Communication and career development are greatly affected by language. South Africa has a number of official languages, so those who are not fluent in the main medium of communication may have trouble finding networking opportunities, accessing job information, and successfully expressing their skills and goals. Language limitations can hinder career maturity, especially when it comes to obtaining useful information and tools (Miller, 2006). In history most psychological assessments were only available in English and Afrikaans due to the laws of Apartheid, this led to people that were not good at communicating in English or Afrikaans having difficulty completing these assessments, resulting in unreliable test results that were still used, especially to promote the Apartheid notion of white supremacy (Laher & Cockcroft, 2014). In democratic South Africa there is still a very low number of psychological assessments that are available in other official languages such as isiZulu, isiXhosa, or other Nguni languages.

As a result of these challenges, there is an increasing demand for career theories and models tailored to the unique context of South Africa. Such philosophies should consider the diverse population, historical background, cultural values, and socioeconomic conditions of this country. Developing and implementing culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches to career development will benefit individuals as they will receive better support in making well-informed career decisions and successfully navigate the work environment within the South African context. An extensive explanation of an indigenous career paradigm that could work well in South Africa is presented below.

2.5. Indigenous model of career development

Psychologists in South Africa have been criticized for not critically considering local needs and being too conservative in their practice. The relevance of Western psychology in the country has been questioned, and there have been calls to include local concepts and theories to better understand the psychological wellbeing of South Africans. However, despite these debates, psychology in South Africa still heavily relies on Western ideas (Matoane, 2012). To make psychology more relevant and inclusive, there is a need for further progress in incorporating indigenous perspectives and adopting a more inclusive approach.

Indigenous psychology encompasses the unique and diverse ways of understanding human behaviour, mental processes, and well-being from the perspective of indigenous cultures and communities worldwide. It emphasizes the interconnectedness between individuals, their communities, and the natural environment, recognizing the importance of spirituality, ancestral wisdom, and collective identity (Matoane, 2012; Hobololo, 2020). Indigenous psychology values cultural traditions and indigenous knowledge systems and encourages holistic approaches to health and healing. It is aimed at addressing the historical and present effects of colonization while also promoting cultural renewal and empowering indigenous peoples in the field of psychology (Kim, 1990).

Indigenous psychology has a significant impact on career theories by challenging and expanding traditional Western perspectives on career development and vocational choices. Indigenous cultures often have distinct understandings of work, purpose, and success that may differ from mainstream Western ideals. Indigenous psychology highlights the importance of cultural values, community connections, and spiritual dimensions in shaping career paths and goals (Ebersohn, 2012). It acknowledges the importance of communal well-being, intergenerational knowledge transmission, and balancing individual desires and serving the community. Indigenous perspectives on career development are aimed at understanding how career decision making is influenced or impacted by the circumstances that are faced by people within their specific context. For instance, in a country like South Africa, it would consider the daily stressors faced such as poverty, limited access to higher education, lack of employment and high unemployment among graduates. Other complex issues that affect South Africans is the fact that career counselling is rendered to the population by professionals that are informed by “Western understandings of careers” (Ebersohn, 2012, p 801), and also use assessments that were standardised for populations in a different context, which ultimately ends up hindering these individuals from thriving in their careers. The incorporation of indigenous psychology into career theories will produce a more inclusive and culturally sensitive understanding of career development that acknowledges and values diverse ways of living and working within indigenous communities.

The majority of South African psychology research and practice has been indigenised to fit into the context, instead of developing indigenous knowledge that is culturally sensitive and suited for this context (Ebersohn, 2012). Only a few psychological assessments have been developed in and for the South Africa context, most widely used tests are Western. The discussion that follows is about an Afrocentric paradigm that focuses on the common African worldview.

2.5.1. African Psychology

African psychology is an approach to psychology that emphasizes the study of human behaviour, mental processes, and well-being from an African perspective (Makhubela, 2016). It seeks to understand psychological phenomena through the lens of African cultural, historical, and philosophical contexts. Traditional Western psychology has often been criticized for its Eurocentric bias, which may not adequately capture the experiences, beliefs, and values of people of African descent. African psychology, on the other hand, aims to rectify this imbalance by centering the experiences and perspectives of individuals with African heritage (Segalo & Cakata, 2017).

Key aspects of African psychology include cultural relevance, recognizing the importance of community, family, and collective identity in shaping an individual's psychological well-being. It also integrates the African philosophy of Ubuntu, which emphasizes interconnectedness, compassion, and humanity (Nwoye, 2021). Moreover, African psychology acknowledges the impact of historical oppression, colonialism, and systemic racism on the psychological well-being of people of African descent. African psychology is relevant in the South African context because it speaks to the nation's diverse cultural heritage and redresses historical injustices by incorporating indigenous African languages in the education curriculum (Segalo & Cakata, 2017).

Makhubela (2016) notes that one of the significance of African psychology focuses is on exploring the coping strategies of African individuals and communities. This incorporates traditional healing practices and spirituality as a part of mental health and well-being. It is imperative to understand the importance of the cultural beliefs that people hold as they interpret or do certain things according to their cultural beliefs. For example, Matoane (2012) notes that some behaviours are understood differently in the Western perspective than from an African perspective, for instance, particular symptoms or occurrences in the African traditional culture would be understood being a result of ancestors or from witchcraft. On the other hand, western perspectives would simply interpret the symptoms for what they appear to be on the surface level and not acknowledge or understand how maybe the person with these symptoms or behaviours may interpret them culturally.

African psychology challenges Eurocentric approaches in terms of psychological research and practice, it also attempts to decolonize psychological theories (Hobololo, 2020). It achieves this by including African viewpoints in the practice of psychology and in research. By adopting

an African psychology perspective South Africa can create an equal society that includes everyone. African psychology is a growing field of study that advocates for a more inclusive and culturally sensitive approach to understanding human behavior and mental processes. It aims to empower individuals and communities by valuing their cultural heritage and supporting their unique experiences in the pursuit of psychological well-being. By focusing on African perspectives, it seeks to contribute to a more holistic understanding of psychology that reflects the diversity and richness of human experiences worldwide (Nwoye, 2015).

By embracing African psychology in the South African context, individuals can make more informed and culturally sensitive career choices. Individuals are also more likely to find fulfilling careers that align with their cultural identity, values, and aspirations while positively impacting their communities and society as a whole. To date there still isn't a widely accepted indigenous career theory, however, a number of academics have created frameworks that include indigenous viewpoints in our knowledge of career development. These models are unique to particular indigenous cultures or tribes. The First Nations Career-Life Planning Model, developed by McCornick and Amundson in 1997 is an example of an indigenous career model that was developed to address specific issues faced by the First Nations youth in Canada. This career model was developed to address career counselling challenges such as youth not finishing school due to a lack of motivation that was not able appropriately address by the western career counselling approaches (Neumann, McCormick, Amundson, & McLean, 2000). The First Nations Career-Life Planning was successful in helping the First Nations youth as it addressed issues specific to them and was designed in a way that was culturally appropriate to the youth of the First Nations.

Looking at the African context, however, there still has not been a specific indigenous career model that has been developed that is culturally appropriate for the South African context. This brings about a need for such a theory to be developed. Thus far, in terms of career counselling only western or mainstream approaches have been used in career counselling (Hobololo, 2020). Equally as important, one needs to consider how the psychology profession is also affected by the country's past as well as the current context. Below is a discussion of the implications of counselling careers in the South African context.

2.6. The Impact of South Africa's History on the Psychology profession in today's context

Due to the apartheid-era restrictions that restricted access to education and employment prospects for black people, the field of psychology in South Africa has historically been

dominated by white psychologists. Even though significant advances toward promoting inclusivity and diversity within the field have been done in recent years, less than a quarter of psychologists are black African (Padmanabhanunni, Jackson, Noordien, Pretorius, & Bouchard, 2022). In South Africa white people constitute of the minority in the population yet in the field of psychology more than half of the psychologist are white. This reveals that there is a disproportionate distribution in terms of cultural representation.

According to Carolissen, Shefer, and Smit (2015) in undergrad there is a high number of black Africans which masks the racialized profile that persists among professionals, who are still disproportionately white and historically privileged communities. Black psychologists continue to be underrepresented in the field of psychology both nationally and internationally. HPCSA stats reveal that in all the fields of psychology, white people occupy more than half of the positions. Even after the apartheid era, the number of white psychologists has increased more than other races. As the majority of South African citizens are of black African descent bringing about a need for more black South African psychologists. Padmanabhanunni et al. (2022) note that “people in need of mental health care services prefer to see practitioners from similar racial or cultural backgrounds to their own” (p. 2). This is linked to language and cultural factors, making it easier for people to communicate how they feel and makes it easier for the psychologist to build rapport with the individual.

The limited presence of black psychologists in the profession can result in aspiring black students lacking role models and mentors who come from similar racial or cultural backgrounds. As a result, they may have limited visibility and awareness of psychology as a feasible career path (Wanelik, Griffin, Head, Ingleby & Lewis, 2020). Role models and mentors have a vital impact on the career decision-making process, particularly for those from marginalized communities. When young individuals observe professionals who share their background and experiences, it can inspire a belief in their own potential and drive. They can imagine themselves achieving success in the field and charting a path to reach their career aspirations. Limited access to information and resources about psychology as a profession can be a significant barrier for black individuals interested in pursuing a career in this field. The lack of representation of black psychologists in various media, educational materials, and professional settings means that there are fewer visible and accessible sources of information for aspiring black students (Wanelik et al., 2020). Black students may face additional challenges when navigating the educational system to pursue a career in psychology due to the lack of comprehensive information available to them (Buthelezi, Alexander & Seabi, 2009).

They may not be aware of scholarship opportunities or financial aid that could facilitate their journey towards higher education in psychology.

There is limited research that is directed at understanding the course of the “skewed demographics” when it comes to the field of psychology (Carolissen, Shefer, & Smit, 2015, p.7). This current study aims to understand some of the factors influencing students to choose psychology as a career and their future aspirations in this field.

In the literature review, the main ideas that were explored were how the career choice of students is affected or influenced by different factors such as personal factors, family factors, and social factors. Since this discussion is in consideration of the South African context, it was important to take into consideration the apartheid past of this country as it had a massive impact on the type of education that different people from different races received.

Bantu Education, in particular, was discussed as it was used to shape the education system that was offered to the black population. In the past black people did not have access to quality education as quality education was only reserved for the white population, while the Indian and coloured population also received education that was inferior to that of the white population it was superior to that of Bantu education. Career theories were also discussed in the literature review as they form a big part of career counselling. The reason for choosing John Holland’s Theory of Vocational Personalities in Work Environment and Donald Super’s developmental theory is because they are widely used in career counselling programs both globally and in the South African context. However, when looking into context the appropriateness of these theories when applied in the South African context, there are a number of challenges arise. This prompted the need for an indigenous career theory that can be applicable in this context.

The chapter focused on reviewing the current body of literature related to this study. The review began with a critical analysis of the impact of apartheid on educational structures in South Africa. It was imperative to commence with the review at that juncture because it presents the unique circumstances of South Africa’s educational system and how it impacts the development of students. Thereafter, the chapter focused on the factors that influence career choice, including personal, family, and social factors. A review of these factors enabled the researcher to glean from the perspective of other studies the main factors that have been identified as influencing students’ career choices. The chapter then focused on the career theories that underpin career psychology. Because these theories were developed from American and European perspectives, this highlights the need for theories that are better

aligned with the South African context, which this study addresses by introducing an indigenous approach to career development. This was critical because of the disparities that exist between the South African context and American, as well as European contexts. An Indigenous model enables a context-specific understanding of the topic of study. The last section of this literature review focused on the impact of South Africa's history on the psychology profession in today's context. This section highlighted the disparities created by South Africa's Apartheid past, which discriminated against the black majority and largely disadvantaged them from pursuing certain professions, including psychology. Although there are many studies that explore student career choices not many studies are focused on the South African context, this research study contributes in terms of looking at the factors that influence the career choice of psychology by exploring the personal, social, and environmental factors affecting students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal."

3. CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the theoretical framework that underpins the study is presented.

A theoretical framework as defined by Varpio et al. (2020) functions as the scaffolding of a study; hence it is based on theories that relate to the topic of study. The theory chosen should have logical connections with the central ideas of the study (Varpio et al., 2020). By locating a study within the confines of established theory, there is an increased understanding of the research questions and the main concepts within the study.

This study will draw on the theory of reciprocal determinism as the main theoretical framework. This study primarily focuses on the different factors that influence student's career choices. The theory of reciprocal determinism offers in depth insights that are critical in understanding how people make choices, including career choices. In this chapter, the main components of the theory are discussed and related to the present study.

3.2. The theory of reciprocal determinism

3.2.1 Conceptualisation of the theory

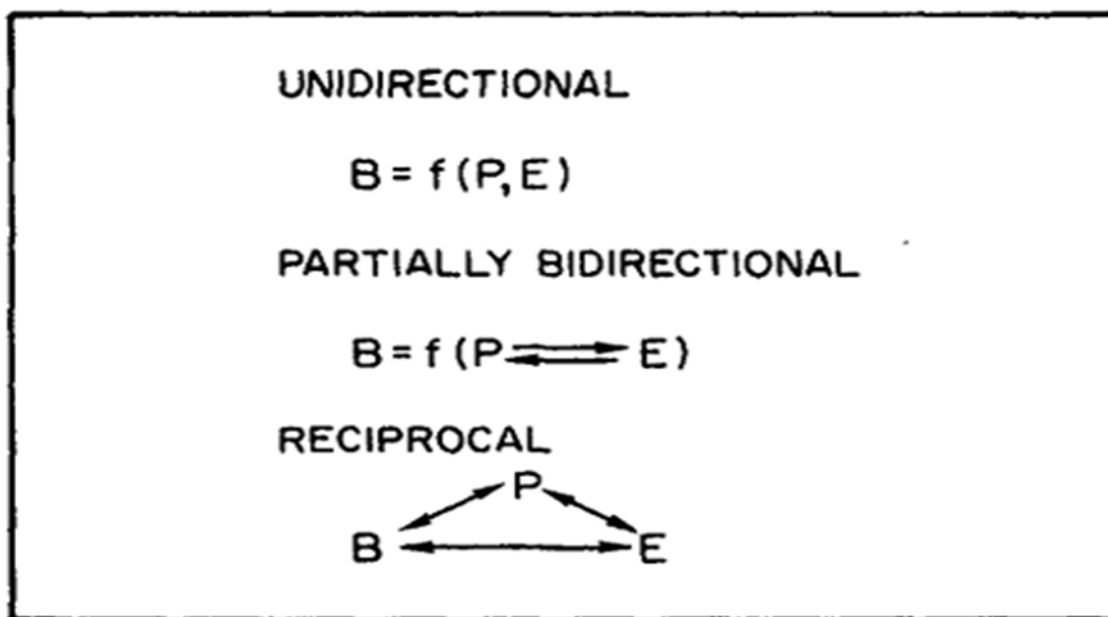
The theory of reciprocal determinism was developed by Albert Bandura. In his work titled 'The Self System in Reciprocal Determinism' Bandura (1978) took a stance against theories of human behaviour that preceded his own conceptualisation. He argued that that previous conceptualisation were unidirectional, thus they had the tendency to focus on either the environment or internal factors as the main determinants of human behaviour (Bandura, 1978). A deeper explanation offered by Bandura (1978) is that there were theorists who viewed human behaviour from the perspective of environmental determinism (whose focus was on the influence of situational factors), there were also others who favoured personal determinism, thus they focused on traits, drives and instincts, all of which are internal. Finally, Bandura (1978) indicates that there was another group of theorists, known at the time as interactionists who conceptualised behaviour with emphasis on both environmental determinism and personal determinism. However, their view was still with a unidirectional stance to understanding behaviour.

Bandura (1978) thus introduced the concept of reciprocal determinism. His main argument was that both environmental and personal influences are not independent determinants of behaviour. In other words, they influence each other; hence the reciprocal relationship. The

following figure, which was presented by Bandura (1978) highlights how the theory of reciprocal determinism offers a unique perspective on the behaviour of people, by focusing on the interaction of determinants.

Figure 1

Representations of the alternative conceptions of interaction of behavioural determinants



Source: This image was obtained from Bandura (1979, p. 345)

As explained by Bandura (1979, p. 345), “B signifies behaviour, P the cognitive and other internal events that can affect perceptions and actions, and E the external environment.”

3.2.2 The central ideas of Bandura’s theory

This theory states that a person’s behaviour is influenced by personal factors, environmental factors and the behaviour itself (Bandura, 1978). This theory suggests that these three factors are constantly interacting, all of these factors influence one another. In this theory Bandura does not define determinism the way it is understood which is that an individual’s actions or behaviors’ are determined by factors that are out of the person’s control but he defines it as “production of the effects by events that are probabilistic rather than inevitable in nature” (Maehr, Karabenick, Urdan, 2008). Personal factors include an individual's thoughts, beliefs, values, attitudes, and self-perceptions. Bandura stressed the significance of self-efficacy, or a

person's confidence in their own capacity to carry out tasks and achieve desired results (Maddux, 2002). An individual's interpretation and perception of their surroundings, as well as their behaviors and decisions, are influenced by personal characteristics. The effects and stimuli that an individual is exposed to on a daily basis are referred to as environmental factors. This encompasses one's immediate surroundings i.e., physical environment as well as interpersonal relationships, cultural norms, societal standards, and the impact of important people including family, friends, and role models i.e., social environment.

Individuals' actions, reactions, and discernible conduct are referred to as their behaviours. Bandura stressed that cognitive processes like attention, memory, and motivation have an impact on behaviour in addition to personal and contextual influences (Bandura, 1989). A feedback loop can be created between behaviours and environmental and personal factors meaning that each of the factors influence one another.

A study was done by Zubbir, Abas, Rahmat, Azam, Isa, & Dona (2023) to explore how undergraduate students studying Japanese at Malaysia's largest public university use learning strategies to achieve better outcomes. The main aim of the study was to investigate the learning strategies employed by undergraduate students studying Japanese using the concept of reciprocal determinism. They conducted a survey with 144 participants who were learning Japanese as a third language. The survey included questions about their behaviours, individual characteristics, and the learning environment. The results of the study reveal that students demonstrated positive learning practices, organizational skills, and critical thinking abilities. They also displayed positive metacognitive self-regulation, and a supportive learning environment was found to be significant. These findings also show that the relationship between behaviour, individual characteristics, and the learning environment were positively significant, suggesting interconnectedness. Improvements in one area tended to influence improvements in others, showcasing the combined impact on language learning outcomes. This study demonstrates how these three components (behaviour, personal factors, and environment) are interrelated.

A study done by Jenzer, Egerton and Read in 2021 was aimed at exploring alcohol use and how its consequences interact with the belief in control over drinking among college students. The study mentions that Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT) suggests that self-efficacy beliefs are influenced by drinking behaviour and also influence future drinking through reciprocal determinism. This means that college students who experience negative alcohol-related consequences may start to believe they have less control over their drinking

(decrease in DRSE). As a result, they may drink more, leading to more alcohol-related issues. This process creates a cycle which is how reciprocal determinism in Bandura's theory is explained (Jenzer, Edgerton & Read, 2021).

This theory was chosen as this study explores the personal, social, and family factors influencing the career choice of psychology students. When looking at this theory in the context of this study, this would mean that a psychology student first gets the thought of studying psychology, then those thoughts (personal) influence their behaviour as they would start finding out more about it and start applying at different universities to go study psychology and that would also influence their environment as they would now start attending university and spending more time at school with their schoolmates.

In conclusion, the theoretical framework of this study is premised on a theory that was developed by Albert Bandura. This theory was chosen because it is relevant to the aspects that are covered in this paper in terms of the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students. These factors include personal, social and environmental factors. The following chapter will cover the methodology used in this research.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This study chapter will give an overview of the methodology used for this study. It gives a breakdown of the kind of research approach that was adopted or used for this study. The criteria that were used to select participants and the sampling method that was used for the study is highlighted. Lastly, the procedure, data collection, and analysis process will be discussed along with ethical considerations.

4.2. Research Objectives

This study was aimed at exploring the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students by looking at how career choice may be influenced by social, personal and family factors. This current study also explored how the university institution also influenced the career choice of students and also explored the psychology students' perceived career outcomes.

4.2.1. Objectives of the study

1. To explore social influences and personal factors that affect the students' career choice of psychology at the University of KwaZulu Natal.
2. To understand how the University influences the career choice of psychology students.
3. To explore the perceived career outcomes of the psychology students' career choices.

4.2.2. Research questions

1. How is the career choice of psychology students at the University of KwaZulu Natal influenced by social factors and personal factors?
2. How does the University influence the students' career choice in psychology?
3. What are the perceived career outcomes of the psychology students' career choices?

4.3. Research Paradigm

The research paradigm that was adopted in this research study is the interpretivist paradigm. This paradigm came about due to the dominance of the positivist paradigm, which has the ideology that there is a single world that we can know objectively. Interpretivism, on the other

hand, sees reality as socially produced and argues that truth is created rather than discovered. It stresses how our experiences impact our sense of reality (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016).

Understanding phenomena through the perspectives of the participants is part of the interpretive phenomenological approach. Over time, researchers acquire qualitative data, generally through methods such as interviews, observations, field notes and documents. According to Rehman and Alharthi (2016) the criteria that is used to test trustworthiness for interpretive research is “credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability) and confirmability (objectivity)” (p. 6). The researcher’s honesty and thoroughness results in the findings of the study being relevant to individuals in different contexts. The interpretive paradigm is said to be “soft,” resulting in a lack of the ability to produce theories that can be applied to a broader audience. Richards (2003), cited in Rehman and Alharthi (2016), argues that although positivist research has its advantages, the interpretivist approach allows for the exploration of the complexities and conundrums that are in our extremely complex social environment. Positivist research makes use of surveys and closed-ended questionnaires to understand certain social phenomena. However, they are not best suited for understanding certain complex social phenomena. One advantage of this paradigm is that interpretivist researchers can use their various points of view on phenomena to not only describe things, people, or events but also to deeply understand them in their sociocultural contexts because they think that people in the society, they live in have similar belief systems (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). The interpretivist approach also allows the research to examine and set off issues that cannot be observed, and this is done through the technique of an interactive interview. This enables the researcher to get into the “interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, viewpoints, emotions, and perspectives” (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022, p. 422).

4.4. Research Design

The research approach that was used for the study was a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is an approach used to gather in-depth insights and understanding of people's experiences, perceptions, and social phenomena. “Qualitative method is used to understand people’s beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behavior, and interactions” (Pathak, Jena & Kalra, 2013, p. 192). Qualitative research involves collecting non-numerical data, such as interviews, observations, and text, and analysing it through thematic analysis, content

analysis, or other qualitative methods (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013). Qualitative approach helps in providing the researcher with rich and detailed data that allows for deeper understanding of the research topic. It also allows for exploration of complex issues that are difficult to understand (Tenny, Brannan, Brannan, & Sharts-Hopko, 2017). Qualitative research also allows the researcher to get a better understanding of the context in which the participants live and interact on a daily basis.

In the South African context, a qualitative research approach helps the researcher in understanding the unique social, cultural, and historical dynamics of the country. South Africa is uniquely culturally diverse having a range of ethnic and cultural groups, qualitative research helps in exploring the different cultural beliefs and perspectives of the different individuals and how these aspects influence the way in which they interact with the world (Korstjens, & Moser, 2017). The apartheid history in South Africa and the subsequent democratic transition have affected the country's society and continue to have an impact on a variety of aspects of people's lives. The historical and sociopolitical factors that have affected people and communities, such as concerns of racial and socioeconomic injustice, identity, and social justice, can be explored through qualitative research (Albien & Naidoo, 2018). Other contextual factors such as socio-economic economic inequalities and disparities in education are factors that can be explored. The research participants that were part of the study come from different backgrounds and grew up being exposed to different environments and as well as different family settings, adopting a qualitative approach allowed the researcher to go deeper in understanding the different upbringing and different social influences that the participants are exposed to from early in their lives.

4.5. Sampling technique

The method that will be used to select the participants is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling, also known as purposeful or selective sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique commonly used in qualitative research. It involves selecting participants or cases based on specific criteria that are relevant to the research objectives and the characteristics of interest. The criteria that were used in this research to select participants was that the study was conducted on students that were doing their Honours Degree in Psychology .All of the participants were all studying general psychology at the time they participated in this study. y. The participants were recruited from the University of KwaZulu Natal. These students were studying their degree on a full-time basis at the time they participated in the study. No students that were doing their undergraduate studies were chosen for the study; no master's

students' participants were selected for the study and the study only had students that were studying psychology at the time the data was collected. In total, eight students were recruited to participate in the study: four females (n = 4) and four males (n = 4). The students that were interviewed were all born and raised in South Africa from various rural areas and townships. The participants' age range is between 20 to 25. Unlike random sampling, purposive sampling focuses on purposefully selecting individuals or cases that possess the information or insights needed to address the research questions (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015). This type of sampling allowed the researcher to choose a specific sample within the population to cater for the specific aims of the study. All the participants were completing their honours qualification in Psychology at the time of the study; this was part of the inclusion criteria for this research study. The reason for this is because students that are doing their Honours degree are usually students who have demonstrated a strong interest and aptitude in their field of study, and it shows that they are invested in their career choice (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). The participants were asked to mention which field in psychology they were majoring in which were general psychology.

4.6. Procedure

4.6.1. Data instrument:

The students were interviewed using semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A). Semi-structured interviews are a good tool to use when doing qualitative research because they combine elements of structured interviews and unstructured interviews. This tool allows for the researcher to have a flexible way of interviewing, they may have prepared questions but also allow for further exploration and probing of the responses given by the participant (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). All the participants that were recruited participated in the study; there was a participant that withdrew from the study. The final sample was comprised of eight participants. To conduct the semi-structured interviews an interview schedule was drafted, and it was informed by the research objective as well as the research questions as the main purpose of the study is to answer the research questions. The questions were also informed by the research study as they were mostly open-ended questions. Open-ended questions provide respondents with the freedom to deliver a variety of responses. Open-ended questions give the researcher the opportunity to ask to follow up questions as some of the responses that they will get will be unexpected and would need more exploration (Hyman & Sierra, 2016). After the interview schedule was drafted, it went through the Research Ethics committee for approval along with the research proposal. Another factor that informed the interview questions was the

theoretical framework as the main research questions are informed by the theoretical framework.

4.6.2. Data Collection

The data collection method used in this study was in-depth semi-structured interviews. This kind of technique allows the researcher flexibility as the researcher is able to prepare questions before the interview, but they are able to further explore any ideas that the participant might bring up that were not included in the initial interview questions, which the researcher might feel are important and need further exploration (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). Interviews as a data collection method enable the researcher to build rapport with the participants for them to be comfortable with sharing information with the researcher.

The participants were recruited using telephone calls. Their contacts details were obtained from a fellow colleague who was a general psychology student as well. The researcher received one contact number thereafter this one participant contacted other students that met the recruitment criteria asking if they would like to become a part of this study. They agreed and after they agreed they told their classmates about the study and asked them to share their contact details to be contacted. The participants were recruited through their classmates due to the COVID restrictions. During the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were restrictions put in place that restricted people from going to campuses physically, and therefore, online learning was introduced in many Universities around the country. This method of recruit is called snowballing. Snowball sampling is done when the researcher selects one participant or a few participants then that participant(s) refers the researcher to other potential participants that will take part in the study and contribute to the information being collected (Parker, Scott & Geddes, 2019). It was hard to recruit participants therefore this method was helpful. The platform that was used to perform the interview was zoom meetings as the researcher could not physically meet with the participants. The Zoom meeting interviews were recorded, and the participants were informed that they were being recorded. The participants were sent informed consent forms (see Appendix B) that they signed and sent back allowing them to be recorded and for these records to be kept safe. Informed consent when conducting research is important because it is put in place to protect the participants from any potential harm that the study might expose them to. The informed consent form should clearly state the purpose of the study, the benefits and risks of the study, and the researcher should ensure that the participants fully understand what the study is about and what role they will be playing (Nnebue, 2010). The interviews had an average time of 30 minutes or longer.

Building rapport is important as it brings about positivity and friendliness in the interaction between the researcher and the participant. According to Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990), rapport has three components, which are mutual attentiveness, positivity, and coordination. The first component, attentiveness, means that both individuals who are interacting show mutual attention and are equally involved in the interaction. The second *positivity* component suggests that while interacting with each other and having rapport, the participant and researcher are caring and friendly towards one another. The third component, coordination, is whereby the interaction is balanced or flowing (Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1990).

4.6.3. Data Analysis

The method that was used to analyze the data is thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method used to analyze qualitative data, such as interviews, focus groups, or written texts, to identify and interpret patterns or themes within the data. It involves a systematic process of coding and categorizing data to generate meaningful insights and understandings (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). In order to make sense of the material acquired, the thematic analysis was helpful in identifying themes and classifying the data (Guest, Mac Queen, & Namey, 2012). The data was transcribed verbatim when it was collected. When verbal data is replicated verbatim, all of the spoken words in the tape are written exactly as they were heard (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). The thematic analysis consists of six stages, which are familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes in the data, reviewing the themes created, refining and naming themes, and lastly, producing a report.

The first stage is when the researchers familiarise themselves with the data. During this stage the audio data was changed into written data. The audio data is the recordings that were taken during the individual semi-structured interviews. The process of changing audio data into written data is called transcription. The transcription method that was used was verbatim. Verbatim is when the audio data is written word for word, nothing that is said is changed (Poland, 1995). Thereafter the data was thoroughly read after being transformed into written data. Initial ideas were noted down, which were the issues of focus. The first step was that I listened to the recordings of the interviews and transcribed the interviews in full verbatim (word for word). I did this for all of the eight interviews. Since the participants also spoke in IsiZulu (they mixed isiZulu and English) I made sure to maintain the meaning when translating the IsiZulu passages into English. The second phase is whereby the initial codes are generated.

Coding is the process of categorizing data for the purpose of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this phase the data is divided into the different categories that are linked to the research aim. Thereafter the remaining data is systematically put under the relevant codes. The way in which this was done is that the data was transcribed, I started reading the data and re-reading it in order to generate codes from the data. Thereafter, I started generating codes using the data on an Excel spreadsheet as I was working with a smaller data set. The data was inputted into the excel spreadsheet putting the interview responses I wanted to analyse in one column with each row having a different piece of data. This data is the interview responses. I ensured that the data was organized correctly in each row and that nothing was left out. After I had organised the data I started coding the data. In this phase, the focus was on assigning descriptive labels to sections of data linking it to the research questions, ensuring that no ideas or concepts were left out. After assigning the descriptive codes, I then moved to more focused coding, whereby I identified reoccurring ideas and concepts within the data set. The third stage of the thematic analysis then starts which is searching for themes. At this stage, the codes are examined, and themes are developed from the codes that were produced in the previous stage. In order to identify probable themes, some codes are then combined, and the data was further classified (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I looked at the data as a whole to find any recurring themes or patterns. I searched for any repeating themes or ideas. I made a list of themes. Then, in a separate document, I made a list of themes that I discovered throughout this procedure. Reviewing themes is the fourth stage of the thematic analysis. Here, the prospective themes are examined to see if they match the codes developed in the second stage and the complete data set. As a result, developing a "thematic map" of analysis is necessary. A thematic map is a graphic representation of the themes, codes, and connections between them. This contains a thorough explanation of each theme and every element that makes up each theme (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). The naming and defining of themes are the fifth step in the thematic analysis process. Here, overlapping concepts are brought together and the themes are clarified. The topics are identified and given precise names. Each definition of the themes has to have a specific statement about what each topic is about. A thorough analysis is given for each theme in connection to the study questions (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). The interpretation of findings and producing a report is the last step in thematic analysis. A report is given, and it contains examples of the themes. In order to provide context and interpret the data, researchers then look into the themes that have been identified. They create a convincing narrative, provide data proof to back up their conclusions, and take theoretical and practical implications into consideration. The report should provide a detailed explanation

of the data.

The thematic analysis was chosen to analyse this study because it allows for a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the data and career theories especially in the South African context is a very complex topic which needs to be understood at a deeper level so as to understand how the context affects it. It allows the researcher to explore the nuances and complexities that may not be fully captured by other methods (Austin & Sutton, 2014). The most crucial factor in thematic analysis is that the entire process should be systematic to ensure that the final product is of high quality. This entails reading and rereading the transcripts in a systematic way. The thematic analysis also provides a systematic approach to organising and making sense of the transcribed data. The coding of data is an organised way that helps the researcher manage and analyse large amounts of data. The thematic analysis also allows the researcher to conceptualize the themes in a number of ways giving a more holistic perspective (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). Looking at the current point is very important because South Africa's unique cultural and historical context cannot be ignored when trying to understand the influences affecting the career choice of students.

4.7. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations include the protection of the rights and welfare of the participants (Durkheim and Blanche, 2006). There are four philosophical principles that guide ethical research, and these are autonomy and respect for the dignity of people, nonmaleficence, beneficence and justice (Durkheim & Blanche, 2006). The participants of this study were allowed to make autonomous decisions. None of the participants were forced to participate in the study; their participation was voluntary. Before the participants entered the study, the whole scope of the research study was explained to them, their informed consent was requested, and they signed informed consent forms.

The participant's identities were not disclosed, so anonymity was kept whether they wanted to provide their names or not. It is the responsibility of the researcher to keep the participants' identities confidential (Neuman, 2002). The information provided by the participants will be kept private and handled with privacy. As the researcher, I ensured that the selection of participants was fair and did not discriminate against vulnerable or marginalized groups. This is important because the participants of the study should be protected against any exploitation or harm (Barrow, Brannan & Khandhar, 2017).

In terms of nonmaleficence (Do no harm) it is about the assess the potential risks that could be

posed by the study, and potential harm should be mitigated. If the study has any potential risks, these should be fully disclosed to the participants by the researcher before they become a part of the study (Barrow, Brannan & Khandhar, 2017). The wellbeing of the participants should be prioritised, for example, the participants should not feel burdened by the research process. Physical danger, loss of privacy, unanticipated side effects such as mental distress or humiliation, monetary expenses, physical discomfort, and lost time are a few examples of potential participant risks (Barrow, Brannan & Khandhar, 2017).

4.7.1. Trustworthiness of study

Trustworthiness relates to the accuracy of the research design as well as the soundness of the methodology, which is the way in which the data is collected and processed. It also refers to the study question's suitability (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). This means that trustworthiness is whether the findings are valuable. In terms of the current study, the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students, the information was sought from reliable and credible sources, therefore ensuring that the findings are trustworthy. Below it will be explained how the findings are credible, dependable, transferable, and confirmable.

Credibility

In qualitative research, credibility is defined as “The confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. Credibility establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants’ original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants’ original views” (Korstjens & Moser, 2022), p.121). It is the confidence the researcher has about how true the findings are, and the findings have to be strong and undisputed by the researcher and others. All the information that the participants of this study shared in terms of the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students was included and nothing was left out. The findings section includes the participants' opinions, both positive and negative. The participants that took part in the study were taken from the same level; they were all doing their postgraduate studies (Honours in general psychology).

Dependability

According to Bitsch (2005), dependability is defined as "the stability of findings over time". Additionally, it refers to how well the study can be replicated by other researchers without the results changing; in other words, the results that the other researchers come at should be comparable to those of this study. This could be regarded as the reliability of the results. This was accomplished by thoroughly describing each step that was performed while gathering the

data, and by justifying each choice made. For example, the method that was used to collect the data was in-depth semi-structured interviews which allow for flexibility and thorough exploration of the topic.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the ability of the researcher to provide the findings in a way that accurately reflects the opinions and prejudices of the participants rather than their own (Stahl & King, 2020). Confirmability also ensures the researcher to remain neutral and refrain from applying their own personal biases and beliefs on the data during interpretation and reporting of the findings. It also has to do with whether the data and interpretations of the findings are taken from the actual data and not just figments of the researcher's imagination (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). The interpretations in this current study were taken from the data collected for the purpose of this study and nowhere else. This was achieved by making constant reference to the transcribed data and field notes.

Transferability

Transferability refers to “the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents. The researcher facilitates the transferability judgment by a potential user through thick description” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 cited in Korstjens & Moser, 2018). This means that the findings of the study can be used across different contexts. Due to the fact that participants were chosen from UKZN, the environments in which these students live vary meaning that their contexts also differ. It is to determine if the insights drawn from a certain research study are relevant and transferable to other similar circumstances or with different populations (Stahl & King, 2020). The participants had differing views therefore giving a wider or diverse set of perspectives. When it comes to transferability it is the responsibility of the researcher to provide a rich description of the participants' context and not just their experiences and perspectives in order to enable the reader to determine whether the findings can be transferred to their own context.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the process of critical self-reflection whereby the researcher takes a close look at themselves, and they examine their own biases, preferences as well as any preconceived ideas that they might have regarding the study. This process also involves them reflecting on the kind of relationships that they have with the participants and how that might influence how the participants answer the questions (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Reflexivity in research is

important because the researcher needs to be self-aware and be reflective throughout the research journey. They need to be mindful of the role that they play as they are gathering the data, analysing, and interpreting the data as well as being mindful of any pre-existing assumptions that they might have about the research topic of the study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The way in which reflexivity was exercised in this current study about the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students is that the researcher noted down their own reflections and thoughts while the researcher was conducting the interviews and analysing the data. These reflective notes included the feelings that the researchers had about the setting of the research study as they are familiar with the University in which the study took place as well as their own preconceived ideas about the topic itself.

The way in which I exercised reflexivity in this research as a researcher and a person that has a personal connection with the environment in which the study took place is that I took notes during the interview process which helped in capturing the participants' responses accurately and also allowed me to reflect more meaningfully on my own part. I was aware that my shared background with the participants could shape my understanding of their experiences. I had to constantly reflect on any presumptions that I might be bringing into the research due to this familiarity. This helped me to assess whether my personal experience was influencing the way in which the interview questions were framed or the way in which the participants' responses were interpreted.

I considered how my own views might shape the interpretation of data and tried to separate my personal narrative from that of the participants. This ensured that the research outcomes were grounded in the authentic perspectives of the participants. During the analysis I took the time to understand each of the participants' unique socio-cultural context, as the participants grew up in different environmental settings. It was important for me as the researcher to understand the participants' sociocultural environments because it shapes their behaviors, beliefs and experiences. This factor is vital when it comes to meaning making. Self-reflection in terms of the role I played in the research process helped in ensuring that the findings were both meaningful and reflective of the actual context in which they occurred and this allowed me to contribute more thoughtfully to the research.

4.8. Limitations

The study was conducted in a qualitative manner and in line with that research orientation, a small sample size was chosen for the study. This sample was chosen using non-probability sampling which allows for the selection of participants without the underlying need to

generalise the findings to the population. Therefore, because of the nature of qualitative research which focuses mainly on the generation of in-depth insights, rather than generating quantifiable data, sampling bias was necessary through the non-random selection of participants. The participants that were selected for the study needed to suit specific criteria in line with the study phenomenon and the objectives that guided the research. Again, because of the specific criteria that study participants needed to match, mainly that they needed to be pursuing a Bachelor of Social Science Honours Degree at UKZN, the target population from which the sample was drawn was also limited.

4.9. Research Methodology Summary

The objectives of this study were to explore social influences and personal factors that influence students' career choice of psychology at the University of KwaZulu Natal, to understand how the University itself influences the career choice of psychology students, and to explore the perceived career outcomes of the psychology students' career choice. The research paradigm that was used in this study is the interpretivist paradigm approach that was used in this study was a qualitative research approach. The interpretive paradigm emerged as a response to the positivist view, which notes that a single objective reality can be known.

Participants were sampled using purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique. Participants were selected based on a specific criterion that was relevant to the research objectives. This research study sample consisted of students that were doing their Honours Degree in Psychology. A total of four females and four males were part of the study. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews from the participants. The interviews were done online due to COVID-19 restrictions at the time of data collection. The participants were asked for their consent forms, and they signed them before conducting the interviews.

The data was analysed using the thematic analysis technique, and each step of the method was followed. Research ethical guidelines were also followed, ensuring that the participants were protected from harm throughout the study. Ethical Clearance was obtained from the University prior to data collection (see Appendix C). The researcher ensured that the findings are credible, dependable, transferable and confirmable. The researcher also ensured that reflexivity was exercised in order to be aware of any pre-existing assumptions that they might have had regarding the research topic.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter offers the study's main findings in response to these factors by investigating and exploring the factors influencing psychology students' career choices. These results are analysed critically in light of the study's objectives and research questions, linking it to applicable literature and theoretical frameworks that place the debate within the theories of Bandura's Social Learning Theory (reciprocal determination), Donald Super's career theory, and Holland's career theory. By addressing these components, this chapter provides a thorough examination of the social and personal characteristics, academic factors, and perceived job expectations that shape psychology students' career paths.

Themes	Sub-Themes
Social influences and personal determinants of career choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family dynamics in career decision-making• Personal factors in career decision-making• Social issues or environmental issues in career choice• Personality factors that affect career choices• Personal factors in terms of one's own experience
University factors shaping career paths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The power of career counselling in career choices
Perceived career outcomes and expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Variety of expectations and career• Outcomes

5.2 Themes

Social influences and personal determinants, university factors and perceived career outcomes and expectations play a great role in shaping psychology students' career choices. This chapter offers the study's main findings in response to these factors by investigating and exploring the factors influencing psychology students' career choices. These results are analysed critically in light of the study's objectives and research questions, linking it to applicable literature and theoretical frameworks that place the debate within the theories of Bandura's Social Learning Theory (reciprocal determination), Donald Super's career theory, and Holland's career theory. By addressing these components, this chapter provides a thorough examination of the social and personal characteristics, academic factors, and perceived job expectations that shape psychology students' career paths.

Through a detailed and critical analysis of the study findings, this discussion contributes to and extends the ongoing conversations around the factors shaping career choices among psychology students. Three major topics emerged from the study. The first theme examines personal characteristics and social effects on career choice, emphasising their role in shaping, guiding, and assisting people as they pursue their professional career choices. It examines the role of family expectations, society, personality traits, and individual values in shaping one's career choices. This theme showcases that societal and parental narratives around what the ideal career is sometimes impacted students' choices regarding certain career paths. In addition, a person's chosen career path might also be influenced by their personal experiences, which are a sum of their values, interests, and aspirations. Personal experiences also are a result of obstacles experienced, successes acquired, exposure to other environments, and the impact of role models.

The second theme, university factors that shape career paths, focuses on how universities as institutions can assist students in choosing their future careers. Through this theme, the study highlights how academic support systems, such as career counselling, influence students' paths and choices of careers. As such Universities will provide their students with career and mentorship opportunities, to help them in making informed career choices. The final theme considers career outcomes and expectations perceived by the students as factors that influence career choices. Many students also prioritize career choices based on their values and

expectations. This thus leads others to pursue their studies further; to look for work; gain experience and engage in board registrations. Each of these themes is critically discussed below and together, they offer a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence career choice among psychology students.

5.2. Theme 1: Social influences and personal determinants of career choice

As discussed above, theme one engaged with the personal factors and social effects on career choice, emphasising their role in shaping, guiding, and assisting people as they pursue their professional career choices. The theme emerged as one of the critical determinants of students' career decisions. The identification of this theme aligns with the broader imperative in this study, which is to explore the social influences, as well as personal factors that affect the students' career choice of psychology at the University of KwaZulu Natal. In this section therefore, specific results relating to this theme that are presented and discussed include family dynamics, the personal interests of students, and the social or environmental factors that surround their career decisions. Below we will look at the sub-themes that came out of this main theme.

5.2.1. Family dynamics in career decision-making

As previously mentioned, family dynamics play an important role in shaping career decision-making. Family support in particular serves as a key determinant in a person's career path. Family guidance, expectations, and resources can influence career aspirations and opportunities (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018; Mhlongo & O'Neil, 2013). Strong family support thus provides individuals with the confidence to pursue their passions and helps them make informed career decisions.

As discussed at length in the literature review, peoples' career paths and personal development are influenced by their families. Family has a considerable impact on one's childhood experiences, family dynamics, interactions with family members, and the function that every person plays within the family. Thus, this family influence reaches important facets of a person's career choices. Additionally, academic achievement and family support play an important part in determining career paths, with families playing a crucial role in helping their children make decisions (Palos & Drobot, 2010). This evidence from the literature highlights that family expectations can shape an individual's career choice. Parents, siblings, or extended family members may have specific expectations regarding the career paths they believe their child should pursue. These expectations can be influenced by cultural or societal norms or the

family's own experiences (Fouad, Kim, Ghosh, Chang & Figueiredo, 2016). Individuals are also more likely to share their career choices with their families in search of advice on what to do.

This current study's results confirmed existing literature. The results show that some of the participants believe that their parents had an influence on their career choice in different ways, and this collaborates. Some of the participants believed that the support and guidance they received from their parents influenced their decision regarding their career path. P1, for example, described a scenario in which their parents initially did not understand the career path they had chosen, and P1 explained to them what it was before they agreed that P1 could continue with it. In response to the question of whether their parents' advice affected their career choice, P1 responded that:

P1: No like at first, they didn't understand it. Then I made them understand it then they said okay it's fine.

P6, P5, and P8 also give further evidence to support this, as they too had parents who showed interest in wanting them to pursue a different career path than the one they had chosen.

P6: Yah especially my dad, uuum well my dad is a person that thinks constructively so if there's person I'd take advice from is my dad, um we were actually, before I actually even entered varsity [inaudible] I wanna (want to) do that, I wanna do that you know, and this is gonna land us here you know, yah so uh yah

P8: So manje she once told me ukuthi she wanted to be a doctor and then I fell inlove with i-psychologist yabo.

P5: Mmmmh I just chose what I wanted to do, their advice was that if you are meant to do something else, you this kind of advice from home, yah you have to do nursing, you have to do, this and this, I was like no I'm just gonna do this before I like this so yah, it's basically that.

The above responses reflect a common dynamic whereby parents may have preconceived ideas or limited knowledge about certain career paths, especially if such a career falls within the non-traditional career path or it is a career in an emerging field. Similarly, Polenova et al. (2018) support this notion, focusing on the preconceived ideas of parents. They indicate that in

specific cultures, parents tend to favor certain professions, and they pressure their children into following those career paths. In instances such as the one presented by P1 where a child decides to follow a different career path, parents may then not understand the chosen profession, resulting in resistance. Fortunately, P1 was able to explain her career choice through open communication and the parents were able to accept P1's chosen career path. This is not often the case for everyone. This emphasizes how important it is for family structures to have open communication and understanding, as children may need to teach their parents about new or unfamiliar career choices. Such open communication might not be available in African communities where the parents have the final say in determining the future of their children.

Family factors in terms of career decision-making can be understood through Albert Bandura's theory of reciprocal determinism, which states that human behaviour is shaped by a continuous interaction between personal factors, environmental influences, and the behaviour themselves (Bandura, 1978). In the case of career decisions, this theory can help explain how family dynamics (environmental factors) interact with an individual's traits and behaviours, leading to the point where an individual makes a career choice. Family support and advice do not operate in isolation but continuously interact with the person's motivations and aspirations therefore influencing each other (Wright et al., 2020). When applying this theory to the P1's response, we see the interaction between personal factors (the participant's determination to pursue their chosen career path) and environmental factors (their parents' initial resistance), as well as the behaviour (the participant educating their parents and seeking their approval). Thus, the individual and their environment influence each other, leading to the participant feeling supported in their decision. This aligns with reciprocal determinism in the sense that the individual is actively shaping their environment while at the same time being shaped by it.

On the other hand, P2 shows that they received more initiative-taking support from their family, particularly their mother. P2 mentioned that his mother not only gave him emotional encouragement but also leveraged her professional network to help him explore his interest in psychology, "*...so they would go out of their way to get me information about psychologists as soon as I showed interest in it. So much so that my mother, aah, since her friends are psychologists, she gave me their numbers...*". P2 also mentioned that their mother asked one of her friends, a psychologist, to help him in selecting his final year modules. This active involvement shows how family support can go beyond emotional reassurance to providing

practical guidance directly influencing or shaping career decision-making. The findings are thus in line with research carried out by Nawabi et al (2019) and Lestari and Rosman (2024), whose analysis shows that the most important individuals in a child's life are their parents, who have a strong and enduring impact on their children's professional growth and career goals. As such, students most frequently seek parental counsel and approval for their careers. The experience of P2 also supports arguments raised by Wright et al. (2019) regarding the positive influence of family support, including informational support. According to Wright et al. (2019), family support and informational support facilitate positive career development. P2's experience also brings to the fore issues of parental style, which are discussed by Salim and Preston (2019), who make distinctions between demandingness and responsiveness. In the case of P2, the mother exhibited a parenting style that is premised on responsiveness, making it easier for her child to make her career choice. The mother took steps to offer support to the child to make an informed decision based on the child's interest and not their own.

Another participant (P3) reflected on how their mother provided unconditional support without giving them direct advice on their career choice. The emotional support that they received created an environment in which P3 felt free to explore different career options based on their interests and motivations. The participant was able to make their career choice based on their personal interests and career goals, and the emotional support provided by their mother helped them gain stability and confidence to make independent choices. These results are in line with previous research by Baranowski et al. (2002) that one of the many ways that parents might affect their children's career choice habits is when there is open communication between parents and children on potential career paths and choices. Research conducted by Najjar and Oweni (2023) supports this notion further when it also suggests that there is a positive relationship between parental support and the career choices that students make. Salami (2006) highlights that the most important predictor of career choice in fields, especially of the predominance of women, is the extent to which parents or other family members are involved in their children's career plans. Families have the power to influence a young person's career choice directly or indirectly by offering information and guidance. The level of parental support, encouragement, approval, and responsiveness regarding their children's career plans is an aspect of family involvement that will affect the career choice of students.

As discussed earlier, the theory of reciprocal determinism states that a person's behaviour is influenced by personal factors, environmental factors, and the behaviour itself, which

includes modelling a behaviour where several actors influence one, including the context in which they live, their aptitudes, social contacts, and educational attainment. With modelling, commonly, parents tend to show additional support for occupational choices that reflect their preferences (Ebeh et al 2023:124). The above responses provided by the participants show that family support, whether through guidance, resources, or emotional support provides individuals with the confidence to pursue their passions and make informed career decisions. The findings reveal that family support is indeed an important factor in career development. Donald Super's theory further agrees with this as it states that over time socialisation, which includes interactions with family, peers, and significant others is expressed in their career choices. Super proposed that career development is a process that starts from childhood and continues throughout a person's life. During the exploration stage (between ages 14–25), parental guidance and support are especially important, and an individual may also make certain career choices because of the influence of family. Donald Super's theory thus integrates parental influence within the broader framework of career choice making it a valuable model for understanding how family as an environmental factor shapes career paths over time. From our data, this position is seen in some participants' responses when they mention that the advice they received from parents was based on the experience of seeing friends or family members succeed in particular professions, highlighting the consistency of following those career routes. Of importance is also the fact that others highlighted that they received practical parental support that prioritised financial security and economic stability.

Further analysis of this theme highlights that a variety of parental viewpoints emphasizes the complex process of career guidance within families, where people must weigh a variety of factors, including advice from family members, when deciding which career path to pursue. This theme emphasises that there may be a difference between parents' expectations and their children's career aspirations when it comes to job choices. Therefore, parental influence may inadvertently restrict or promote a child's capacity to thoroughly pursue their own professional goals, leading to conflict between the two. Therefore, the results highlight the need for open communication and understanding between parents and children when it comes to career choices. This, when implemented, will lead the children to make career choices that are driven by personal factors, and which suit their personal goals.

In conclusion, this theme explored how parental expectations and family influence impacted the career choices of students. The study revealed that social factors, such as family support, were perceived by student participants to be the major environmental contributors to embarking

on a particular career. The Family environment has a major effect on encouraging university students' interest in entrepreneurship (Herdjiono et al., 2017). Most parental guidance places a high priority on economic stability and financial security. Additionally, family background has been shown to affect earnings expectations (Gradin et al., 2020), which emphasizes the need to investigate whether students are expecting this wage difference as they prepare to enter the workforce. Overall, Parental opinions and family advice have an impact on career counselling within families, where choosing a career path is required. As a result, parental influence may unintentionally limit or encourage a child's ability to fully pursue their own career goals, which could cause conflict between the two. Consequently, the findings emphasize how important it is for parents to be understanding of their children's career choices, and in instances where they can allow them to make their own choices, they give them the necessary support. It is therefore recommended that further investigation be carried out that will consider and mitigate the role of the family in influencing the attitudes of students towards their career options.

5.2.2. Personal factors in career decision-making.

As discussed above, this theme further sheds light on personal factors that influence the career choices of students. These personal factors include factors such as financial needs, personality, and interests of the person (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017; Shumba & Naong, 2013; Theresa, 2015). Many participants tended to choose a career path that was in line with their personality and interests. This is clearly captured by P8 who states that:

P8: "Yeah, OK, OK, I am saying that when I first chose it, the first and the second choice, those that I was telling you about including psychology you see. I chose them because of the salary and not because I loved them. I don't know if I'm answering your question. "

Interviewer: So for you, it's more of a passion. You're driven by passion.

P8: Yeah

These same sentiments were also shared by P1, P2 and P5 when they said the following:

P1: Me for me psychology helped me to find the type of person that I am because at first, I did not know what type of a person I am, my personality. I have a personality that's like this and that, I wasn't sure, yeah. When I study psychology the more, I learn the more I realized that oh these are the types of personalities that a person has so this

is the one that corresponds with the way I am.

P2: You know but but but ke hey life's unpredictable you know, it it it kinda blended well with my personality aaah because I've always there patience, patience, patience I'm extremely patient, I like being helpful, aah interacting I talk a lot, I'm sure you've noticed

*P5: *giggles* like the background eh the environment where I grew up yah just that it makes you understand a lot of things, make you be able to understand yourself yah, and what you want, everything. For me! It makes me realize a lot of things that I was not aware of, but now that I'm aware of yeah.*

The current study's findings about career decision-making align with the ideas covered in the literature review. The literature study emphasized the notion presented by Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) that there is a positive correlation between an individual's career decisions and their interests by highlighting how it was of importance for students to match their career choices with their interests. More research reveals a relationship between personal preferences and career choices. For example, in a study by Zheng, Bui, Nguyen & Tran-Chi (2022), factors influencing career choice among social work graduates were explored. The results of this study suggest that internal factors are important in determining students' career choices. Especially choosing a career that fits one's interests is crucial when it comes to the internal component. This is consistent with the results of our study and supports the notion that students' decisions about their careers are mostly shaped by their interests.

Furthermore, we find that this theme also correlates with a previous study conducted by Siddiky & Akter (2021) who also investigated students' career choices and job preparedness strategies. The study sought to propose a theory that would explain students' career decisions in terms of their social and environmental context. It consisted of 120 students from 14 different departments of a university. Personal interests were one of the factors that had a significant connection to student career decision-making. This thus highlights the importance of students' personal interests in determining their job choices. Identification of students' personal interests as a major influence on the career choices they make also aligns with Bandura's (1978) theory of reciprocal determinism. In the theory, personal factors are identified as one of the key determinants of behavior. The implication of this is that in making career choices, students will also consider issues personal to them, such as their interests. Further critical engagement with

Bandura (1978)'s theory leads to the realisation that the relationship between personal factors and behaviour is not unidirectional, but reciprocal. What this means in the case of this study is that personal factors do not influence career choices in a unidirectional manner, meaning that students will select career paths that positively influence their interests, personality, and even financial needs. The study that was conducted by Querido et al. (2018) proves this point further when it revealed that students tend to match personal needs to career paths when making career decisions. When taken as a whole, this study adds to an in-depth understanding of the complex ways that personal interests, internal factors, and outside influences affect students' career decisions.

In conclusion, students' interests thus are recognised as playing a significant role in influencing career decision-making. In the context of this study this implies that when students are choosing a career, they will consider factors like their interests and personalities.

5.2.3. Social issues or environmental issues in career choice

This sub-theme on social issues or environmental issues in career choice provides additional insight into the factors that impact students' career choices. The results of the study revealed that social and environmental issues were also critical determinants of the choice made by students at UKZN to study psychology, including cultural beliefs, societal expectations, and economic factors (Pillay & Parumasur, 2014). Social influences and personal determinants both play an important role in shaping career choice and guiding individuals as they navigate their career paths. As South Africa has a complex socio-economic environment resulting from historical and cultural dynamics that have influenced access to opportunities, the interplay between social and personal determinants becomes especially significant in shaping an individual's career paths (Sharif et al., 2019). To this effect, the topic of employment options is a variable that has held great significance, and this is seen in a study done by Mhlongo and O'Neill (2013), where the issue of employment options was emphasised. Certain students in this study conveyed that they were reluctant to pursue careers with restricted employment prospects due to frequent family pressure to pursue courses that would nearly guarantee employment. This again highlights the centrality of the role of parents in the career choices of students where a lucrative salary is involved. Studies conducted by Griffin and Hu (2019), Querido et al. (2018), and Sharif et al. (2019) all indicate how students are pressured by their parents to choose specific good-paying career paths. The current study depicts the same results. One participant shared that their parents were encouraging them to pursue a career that had good employment opportunities and a good salary. This is what they said:

P4: Yah, they did give me any career advice, but they were more, they were not like uhm you should do what you're passionate about, they weren't those kinds of parents I'm gonna lie, they weren't like no you should follow your dreams you should No no no no no! They were like uhm just look for anything that has a job and it pays well. Those were that's the career advice they gave me, it has job opportunities, and it pays well then go for it don't chase your dreams or whatnot like just look for something that you can get hired for and then get paid well that was the advice.

Other participants shared a similar opinion, emphasizing that the idea that a career in psychology offered significant income potential is one of the factors that drove them to decide to pursue it as a career path. For them, a profession's financial aspect was an important variable in determining which career path to take. We see these examples from P6 and P1 when they say:

P6: Yeah yeah, yah yah I'm doing it because of internal motivations and external motivations as well, altogether in one aaah yeah, yeah and the money

P1: Yah, obvious , obviously there is money there but not that much, yes.

This point of view highlights the economic aspects that people consider while making job decisions, recognizing that elements like income and future financial prospects have a big role they play in career choice. This result also implies that people have a realistic outlook on life and understand the importance of financial security for their total professional fulfillment and personal objectives. When navigating the complicated world of choosing a career in psychology, people's perspectives are multifaceted due to the combination of their passion for psychology and the perceived financial benefits. The findings of this study are thus consistent with those found in previous empirical research. In a study by Badrolhisam et al (2019), they found that employee career decision-making was also influenced by salary and benefits. In their context, they found that where a company can provide overtime pay and other benefits to employees to help them raise their standard of living, pay loans, and other expenses that would be a reason for securing a job in that company. This indicated that the majority of people would choose a job that offers a high salary or additional benefits. In another study done by Nyamwange (2016) about 296 students from different universities in Kenya were selected for the study to investigate how students' career choice is influenced by their interests. The study results also found that students make inquiries about careers to know the remuneration

potential of the career, to understand how marketable the career is, to understand the work habits of the career, and to know the importance of the career. The results reveal that 55,7% of the students inquired mostly about the remuneration potential of the career. This reveals how important earning potential is when students decide on a profession. The reasons given by the participants in the current study for selecting psychology as their career path are inserted below:

P5: Yeah yeah, yah yeah, I'm doing it because of internal motivations and external motivations as well, all together in one aaah yeah, yeah, and the money.

P3: I think okay well first [laughs] of all it's the money.

P8: Yeah, OK, OK, I am saying that when I first chose it, the first and the second choice, those that I was telling you about including psychology you see. I chose them because of the salary and not because I loved them. I don't know if I'm answering your question.

Earlier discussions in chapter two emphasize Bandura's theoretical position that a person's behaviour is affected by thoughts, beliefs, values, attitudes, and self-perception. An individual's perception of their surroundings is influenced by personal characteristics which in this case we will argue includes remuneration as a factor. The social environment encompasses one's physical environment, interpersonal relationships, cultural norms, societal standards, and the influence of family, friends, and role models. Financial issues which include earning potential, perceived more favourable job markets, and prestige has been seen as influential factors when it comes to the choice of career path (Gedde et al 2005, p1249) and thus are a strong environmental factor that impacts career choice. In South Africa high poverty rates and high unemployment rates are major challenges and social grants have contributed to poverty alleviation as a form of income (Chagunda 2019, p1245). With high poverty levels, remuneration becomes a potential push factor for career choices. However, not all research supports the notion that career choices are mainly driven by financial factors. A study by Jeske (2017) does not fully agree with this notion and brings to the fore the idea that other factors are also involved in career decision-making. For them, choosing suitable employment is not merely a money problem, but it goes beyond understanding the needs of both employers and employees. For Jeske, career choice thus is an interplay of good relationships at home that have an impact on the drive to look for and keep a job; having access to education and scholarships can help young people find good jobs that allow them to effectively assume breadwinner responsibilities and lastly workplace respect at the potential employment place which are core

in finding and choosing a career (2017, p42). This means that at times career choices have been made not because the pay remuneration was high, but people made work-related decisions not only for individual monetary gain but to also to have their dignity respected (Jeske 2017, p41). This from a broad perspective does not specifically aligns with the reasons given above by the participants on the importance of good financial remuneration.

Our study, we can conclude, shows that when it comes to choosing a career, young people are impressionable and are influenced by their families and the financial gain associated with the job. This theme thus explored the arguments made by participants and their parents on economic and financial remuneration as an important environmental factor that leads students to choose a particular career. The current study reveals a positive affirmation of the influence of family influence and future financial prospects on remuneration on the kind of career one will choose. In conclusion, this theme thus illustrates how important a factor compensation is when one is making a career decision.

5.2.4. Personality factors that affect career choices

This theme follows personal factors as a career determinant. We will analyse John Holland's theory and Donald Super's theory concerning the study in question as we look at personality traits. John Holland's theory of personality and occupational types suggests that people are more likely to be happy and successful in jobs that complement their personality types and interests (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). This position is supported by the study findings as well as supported by the concept of reciprocity by Bandura (1978). The participants of this study shared how they believe that the career path they have chosen was aligned with their personalities. When it comes to the six primary personality types that Holland (1996;1997) identifies the career choice of psychology would fall under the social category as it suggests that social individuals are said to have empathy and compassion, they desire to help people and interact with them. Some participants described themselves as individuals who had empathy, compassion, and a desire to help people and interact with them. These traits made psychology a career choice avenue that would allow them to express their personality. Below are extracts from the data collected from the participants:

P4: Alright um first of all uum I like interacting with people you know I like interacting with people so when you're a psychologist you are working with people which is something I like you know, not like being in a lab or you know being stuck in an office or something.

P6: Oh yes, so I think so I definitely think, um yah I think Imma (I'm a) social person

umm I'm able to socialize with people I think people feel comfortable around me and I feel comfortable around people as well. Um, I feel comfortable around people as well ummm yeah, I don't think I can explain it further than that um yah.

P7: So, in that in that sense, yes, I do think that my personality) would fit into psychology because I don't want to go diagnose people doing psychopathology etc. In clinical psychology, I want counselling psychology but, in a school, setting where I will be able to work with children that's how I feel my personality will be best suited.

These data results are tallied with previous research by Kulcsár et al. (2020) who concluded that among the factors associated with job decision-making challenges are personality qualities. These participants show that their positive personality traits like extroversion, openness to new experiences, and conscientiousness make them the right candidates for the psychology profession.

As explored earlier in the literature review Donald Super's developmental theory of career development further highlights the significance of individual self-concepts and their evolution over time and how these self-concepts influence one's behaviour and job choices. Whereby Super defines these self-concepts as a person's perception of their own identity, interests, skills, morals, and personality traits (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). In his theory, he highlights how these self-concepts are important in career development and can influence the type of career choice an individual makes. In addition, Super also mentions in his theory that individuals go through several stages as they pursue their careers. These different stages include the growth stage, exploration stage, establishment stage, maintenance stage, and decline stage (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016) as mentioned earlier in the literature review. These stages were discussed in detail in the literature review section. In terms of the exploration stage, individuals engage in actions to develop their professional identities throughout the discovery period. This includes looking at other career paths, participating in educational training programs, apprenticeships, and other work-related experiences. People's self-concepts are improved as a result of these experiences, which provide them with new perspectives on their skills and interests (Kosine & Lewis, 2008). Super asserts that individuals should use their self-concepts for their professional and personal responsibilities by matching their interests and skills with different careers through the knowledge they have acquired throughout their exploratory process.

The main goal of this stage is for individuals to gain practical knowledge of various careers and use the knowledge that they have gained to align their interests and abilities to particular career fields to make informed career decisions (Kosine & Lewis, 2008). To help them make

an informed career selection and be able to pursue it, some participants in the current research study disclosed that they had engaged in career exploration activities such as professional career counselling. One participant decided to study psychology instead of their original degree because they felt psychology was more in line with their interests and skill set.

*P7: *giggles* yah there is, um I was a law student, before I branched over to psychology um, unfortunately, the Degree wasn't something that I was looking forward to pursuing in my um my personal life further so what had happened was um I got some ah counseling per se and they steered me into the root of psychology it turned out that I like it so I started continuing pursuing the career path of psychology.*

This participant used a career exploration process to better understand their interests and abilities. Even though psychology was not initially something they had wanted to pursue, their interests and traits then helped them not to settle for a career path that did not align with their interests. As explored earlier in the literature review, Donald Super's developmental theory of career development further highlights the significance of individual self-concepts at the heart of how people choose their careers or job choices. Super defines self-concept as a person's perception of their own identity, interests, skills, morals, and personality traits (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). In his theory, he highlights how these self-concepts are important in career development and can influence the type of career choice an individual makes. In addition, Super also mentions in his theory that individuals go through several stages as they pursue their careers. These different stages include the growth stage, exploration stage, establishment stage, maintenance stage, and decline stage (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016) as mentioned earlier in the literature review. In terms of the exploration stage, individuals engage in actions to develop their professional identities throughout the discovery period. This includes looking at other career paths, participating in educational training programs, apprenticeships, and other work-related experiences. People's self-concepts are thus improved as a result of these experiences, which provide them with new perspectives on their skills and interests (Kosine & Lewis, 2008). Super asserts that individuals should use their self-concepts for their professional and personal responsibilities by matching their interests and skills with different careers through the knowledge they have acquired throughout their exploratory process. The main goal of this stage is for individuals to gain practical knowledge of various careers and use the knowledge that they have gained to align their interests and abilities to particular career fields to make informed career decisions (Kosine & Lewis, 2008).

From participant 7, the knowledge received from career exploration helped them to match their interests and abilities with a career path that they felt more aligned with their self-concepts (Jena & Nayak, 2020). Thus, one can conclude that career exploration is a much-needed process for one to better understand their interests and abilities before choosing a career path. Also, people are more likely to be happy and successful in careers that complement their personality types and interests, and they thus chose those career options.

5.2.5. Personal factors in terms of own experience

Drawing from the above discussion, personal experiences can influence a person's interests, values, and aspirations, which in turn influences the career path they choose to take. These experiences might include challenges, achievements, exposure to different surroundings, and role models. These experiences can offer insightful information and inspiration that direct people toward specific professions or industries that fit with their life goals and personal development (Gretchen Adams 2014). Some participants in our study shared that their own experience and interaction with actually qualified psychologists sparked an interest in choosing a career in psychology. Other participants shared that they got exposed to psychology through other experiences such as family members having to undergo therapy or even getting career guidance from an educational psychologist.

P5: Mmm I just said that because of my personal experience, I can't disclose it yah something that happened in the family uh I went to a psychologist myself then yah that motivated me too.

*P7: And the surprising part is umm I've been exposed to psychologists um from a very early age so it's kinda (kind of) surprising, well I mean, it was *laughs* school mandated [Researcher: Mm] so it's kind of weird foor umm my parents or whoever in the African, in my space [Researcher: Mmh] to seek psychological help at a very old age when, mostly likely 12ish...educational psychologist yes and then, so I've been exposed to psychologists for the better half of my life.*

P4: Yes, I did. Uhhhm okay uhm I was visiting my mom at work, aah she works at Vryheid District uuhm she works at the Department of Education, she was at the Department of Education, so I met this lady who was a psychologist uhm Educational Psychologist you know, she was an Educational Psychologist... So, I started like interacting with her, asking questions, like how things are going you know, and what is psychology and everything, and then uhhm just to keep the story short... Okay, she

explained to me what psychology is when I started having an interest in it.

From the respondents' data above, we can see how the theory of reciprocal determinism was seen in the findings. Looking at personal factors in terms of Albert Bandura's theory of reciprocal determinism, a person's internal factors affect their career choice or the choice to study psychology. Personal internal factors could include a person's interests or passions. From the above, some individuals choose a career path according to how they were impacted by the experience of meeting a psychologist. If such an encounter had not happened, the participants would not have known and developed an interest in the profession.

The theory of reciprocal determinism includes not only personal factors it also addresses environmental factors which include a person's immediate surroundings, including their physical surroundings, the people they interact with, the cultural norms and values they come across, the standards of society, and the influence of important figures such as friends, family, and role models as mentioned earlier in the literature review. The kind of environment that an individual is exposed to can influence their career choice. There might be a strong desire for change and improvement in a challenging setting. It may encourage people to look for training, professions, and educational opportunities that provide a brighter future not only for themselves but also for the community in which they live (Richard, 2018). These types of circumstances can also inspire individuals to choose occupations that entail assisting those facing difficulties. This would enable the individuals to make a positive impact in their communities. One participant shared how they want to help bring a change in their community because of the lack of access that the community has to services such as counselling services. Especially in the rural areas whereby they experience traumatic situations such as rape and don't have access to counselling services that will help them cope healthily.

Participant 1: Okay, so the reason I chose clinical is because of the place I come from, the rural areas hey... Yah so... some things would happen like cases of rape and victims would not get help like getting counselling so that they get help regarding their cognitive state of mind and broaden their minds. So, things that I wish to do with my career are that I would like to give back to the community.

In conclusion, it can be noted that personal experience and encounters with a psychologist impacted the career choices of some of the students. After encountering the profession, a desire to help and provide such services as encountered then became an additional push factor for career choice for some. This supports literature that says that a connection exists between empathy and future compliance in helping others (Bohns & Flynn 2021).

5.3. Theme 2: University factors shaping career paths.

University factors shaping career paths is the second theme that emerged from the data which was provided by participants. This theme validates the study's second research question, and highlights how the university environment and its internal structures actively shape students' career choices. This research's sole goal is to comprehend how students and university officials view the function and significance of career counselling at the collegiate level. Career counselling helps society as a whole by providing ideas about career options, subjects, and job scopes that will generate a sufficient income. Given their academic history up to the intermediate level, universities provide a valuable forum for career counselling. It boosts their self-esteem, gives them a growing number of income options, and allays their concerns about their professional future.

Perceived from the vantage point of Bandura's (1978) theory, counselling is an environmental factor that influences both behaviour and personal attributes. Career counselling at the university offers a range of services and support which is meant to help students make informed decisions about their study paths and future careers. One of the fundamental functions of university career counselling is providing academic guidance to students (Akhter, Ali, Siddique & Abbas, 2021). Career counsellors help students navigate and figure out which field of study is best suited for them. They assist students in aligning their academic pursuits with their interests, skills, and long-term career goals (Argyropoulou & Kaliris, 2018; Maree, 2019; Stipanovic et al., 2017). They do this by offering insights into various academic programs and their associated career opportunities, career counsellors empower students to make informed decisions about their career paths.

The results in this study revealed that career counselling offered to students through the university also helps to shape their career paths. A few participants in our study mentioned that they received professional career counselling from the university, and this has had an influence on their career choice in a way that helped them find their suitable career path. For example Participant 5 when responding to the question whether they had received any career guidance highlighted that :

P5: Yah, sort of Yah, at first year. It's like you were just told to be a psychologist, how many years it takes yah, how long are we gonna study, just that if you are like really interested in it then you have to do it but if you are not sure you have to change now. We were told that at first year, yah.

This result is in line with the previous study by Bester (2011) who says that to better understand the role or contribution of counselling to their career choice, it is crucial to look at the career-related barriers that college and university graduates perceive and experience, particularly in South Africa (Bester 2011, p2). The fact that a few of the participants received career counselling shows that barriers thus exist in accessing such services.

Akhter et al (2021) in their study states that career counselling is often offered to help people find appropriate placements or jobs. The respondents agree with this as evidenced below. Career counselling helps people get assistance from professional career counsellors who may contextualize an individual's credentials, experience, strengths, and weaknesses. This is seen from the statements made by the participants below.

Participant 6: it was like aah it was people who came to school um yah they came to school when I was still in High School uum yah and then they made us do like those tests um yah, yah just like stuff like that. They made us do those tests like what are you good at, are you good in Maths? Are you good in physics? Are you good socially? You know like those types of things. Yep, yah so I did.

Participant 4: so I met this lady who was a psychologist uhm Educational Psychologist you know, she was an Educational Psychologist

These participants received counselling from professionals which assisted in their career choices. Through their counselling and teaching abilities, career counsellors can also help people better understand what matters to them personally, how to plan their careers on their own, how to make tough decisions, and how to get through difficult times (Savickas, 2019). The findings show that the perception of students about counselling is apparent. Few participants who gave opinions think that counselling is a valuable activity; it gives easy solutions. In short, counselling is about finding solutions to problems by consulting an expert on matters, clearing one's understanding, clearing one's confusion, and improving one's adjustment in society. As a result, counselling services in higher education must at the very least be conducted transparently and methodically. Because the University is the point where a student as mature person comes to finalize their plans about careers, therefore, at the university level, there were incredibly positive and very quality opinions about the role and importance of career counselling, its usefulness, and its uses. Because the choices are narrow at the university

level, thus there is much need for career counselling at the university level, however we argue that career counselling should also be initiated long before one attends university education for more impact.

These findings also show how the South African context has changed since the Apartheid Era, although there is still a lot of change that still needs to happen in terms of access to higher education. This is in line with current research. It has been said that the majority of Black people continue to receive insufficient career counselling (Maree 2009, p445). Additionally, Bester is of the view that it is critical that college and university career counselling focus more on offering thorough counselling services to students from low-income families. A supportive learning environment is needed and there must be teaching that values students' diverse identities especially those from various racial-ethnic backgrounds (Bester 2011, p2). Career counselling that offers such an environment and because of this, career counsellors are more crucial in helping people plan their careers effectively in an era where learning new skills is always needed (Maree, 2009).

Though access to career counselling has increased and is now more available to a wider population according to these findings. However, it can still be said that access to career counselling is still available to just those that come from better financial backgrounds and who have a better educational history. Research shows that career counselling is still very scarce in rural areas. A study done by Maila and Ross (2018) indicates that students from rural areas lack the necessary career guidance services to help them transition from matric to tertiary education. On the other hand, students from better socioeconomic backgrounds have access the counselling services and receive the necessary support. This point is proven by P 7 who indicated the following:

*"No, it was not, it was not. It was actually my second career choice and um like I said I had switched over from a law degree onto art, and um I decided to go onto academic counselling to find my niche basically, so I did find my niche in psychology and here I am right now at the honours level, I'm even surprised that I got into honours but *laughs*"*

The impact of career counselling is seen in our study as reported by some participants. Some had chosen a career path based on information they had received from a career counsellor. A participant in (P7) in the study shared that they first chose a different career path before however, they realized that their passion lies within psychology, therefore, changing over to

study psychology when they engaged the services of an academic counsellor.

*P7: No, it was not, it was not. It was actually my second career choice and um like I said I had switched over from a law degree onto an Arts, and um I decided to go onto academic counselling to find my niche basically, so I did find my niche in psychology and here I am right now at the honours level, I'm even surprised that I got into honours but *laughs**

Another interesting finding in the study is that for most of the participants, psychology was not their first choice of study. Some participants ended up doing psychology as a result of the career counselling they received or advice that they had received before being accepted to the University of KwaZulu Natal while others received career counselling after they had started studying at the University. This evidence reveals how important career counselling is and how it helped steer the career choice of the participants. Below is another example of how career counselling influenced the student's career choice.

Researcher: Okay, do you mind going into detail in terms of what kind of advice or career guidance you received?

P5: It's like you were just told to be a psychologist, how many years it takes yah, how long are we gonna study, just that if you are like really interested in it then you have to do it but if you are not sure you have to change now. We were told that in the first year, yeah.

Career counselling thus from the study plays an important role in helping individuals make informed and satisfying career choices. This process is structured to empower individuals to explore their career options, set goals, and make decisions that are aligned with their interests and skills (Roy, 2020). Making career decisions can be an incredibly challenging task. Career counsellors help individuals by providing them with valuable guidance and support at different stages of their career decision-making journey. Career counsellors also assist individuals in evaluating various career options, considering factors such as personal values, lifestyle preferences, and job satisfaction. This decision-making process ensures that individuals are well informed when choosing a career path (Akhter, Ali, Siddique & Abbas, 2021).

In conclusion, this theme shows the power of career counselling in career choices. A majority of the respondents in our study seem to have an extremely high cheerful outlook toward career counselling as a push factor in career choice. These findings would suggest the need for educational institutions to consider introducing courses to develop career counselling to

increase the impartation of skills and knowledge related to career choice, equipping them to choose the appropriate career option. It is thus seen from the study that career counselling services for university students are vital. It is suggested that considering the impact that career counselling has universities should be provided frequently at the time of admission, during the course of the degree, and at the end of the degree.

5.4. Theme 3: Perceived career outcomes and expectations.

Lastly, as discussed above, theme three engages with the perceived career outcomes and expectations of participants. This theme revolves around the beliefs that the participants have concerning the results that are going to be yielded by their career decisions to pursue psychology.

The students who participated in the study indicated a range of career outcomes and expectations. All the career outcomes and expectations of students revolved around needing to qualify for one of the professions in Psychology. On this theme, some students highlighted that they wanted to further their education, while others leaned toward obtaining experience in the field as the next step toward being able to secure the type of employment they envisioned for themselves. Participants highlighted this desire to further their education in securing a master's degree.

P 4: Okay, after I complete my Honours Degree I'll be able to be accepted at Masters' Level because right now that's actually my main priority, you know. As we were talking I kinda mentioned Masters like quite often you know, like it's really important

P6: ...um if I get to Masters then I can actually just open like my own consulting firm, yeah I like that one better. Yes I do, as I said like Ukzn declined my offer to actually get into Masters but um I'll try again next year, and hopefully I'll try at Unisa cause I think like applications are still open and stuff, so yeah. That's the goal.

Gleaning in this point reveals that students are aware that they need to be distinctive by furthering their education in the field of psychology. Donald explains this factor et al. (2018) who indicates how economic decline and increased higher education participation have resulted in reduced employment opportunities. Therefore, students have to choose careers and career paths that will give them an advantage over others in the labour market (Donald et al.,

2018). In addition, they also need to be qualified for this advantage. While many participants stated that they intended to continue their education, some mentioned other options, such as volunteering to obtain real-world experience as important. This aligns with research which shows that many new graduates find it difficult to break into the sectors they were aiming for when they do not have experiences (Helyer & Lee 2014), and experiences have become one method of student employability into workspaces.

Furthermore, a single participant expressed a particular interest in psychometry as a career path while others mentioned being a counsellor as an option. From our study, it can be seen that the different participants have varied career goals. This demonstrates the perception and desire amongst the study participants to take a differing career path that will make them employable in the future. An example of this can be drawn from P7 who realised that the Honours Psychology Degree was not enough to pursue a career in the field of psychology. This realisation resulted in them taking additional career steps that were required to reach the perceived career outcomes.

P7: After I graduate my honours um there aren't any opportunities unless like I said you go on to do an accreditation course for psychometrics um certificate so that you can be a psychometrist or you go on to a 6-month accreditation course to become a counselling psychologist um that's the two I'm aware of now because with honours you can't do anything other than get an entry-level job but not in the psychology sector...

The views of P7 are supported by a study that was done by Duiker and Booysen (2022) that was aimed at exploring the lived experiences of psychology honours students concerning training opportunities and career prospects. A number of the students believed that an honours degree in psychology was not as valuable or did not hold much weight in a professional setting. The students stated that the main goal of earning an honours degree in psychology is to position themselves academically and get prepared to pursue a master's degree in psychology. The current study exploring the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students at the University of KwaZulu Natal shows similar results to the study done by Duiker and Booysen (2022) in terms of the students agreeing that the main reason for doing an honours degree in psychology is to help them get prepared for studying further and doing a master's degree in psychology. The students of the current study also agree that there are few employment opportunities an individual has with just an honours degree in psychology. For instance, P3, P4 and P8 said the following:

P3: I want to continue and do my Masters uhm I like Clinical Psychology because you

know when it comes to Schizophrenia like disorders like I get fascinated like I really really love it I think after I graduate, I'll continue and apply until I get into master's you see. Also...yah I don't know if volunteering would help just to better my chances of getting into Masters.

P4: So, I told myself like maybe I'd use that opportunity to keep on volunteering um work maybe be a guidance counsellor just do my best, eh yah that's [inaudible] if masters are out then um will continue...I just want my master's degree, if I keep it short let me just say that so if I get my Honours, I'm one step closer to that.

P8: For honours, yeah, I think I can be a counselor. But it's just that for now I'm not ready to start a career I just want to continue with studying you see, I don't know but I think I can be a counselor, Yeah, but next year I will be doing, or I want to do masters.

The above extracts thus emphasize how students studying their Honours in Psychology are planning to use this Degree to progress to Masters. This is a prime example of how behavior is determined by environmental influences. Thus, the participants expressed that they feel that in the South African labor market, an Honours Degree in Psychology is not enough to get them started but they need to move on to a master's and continue registering as psychologists. Research shows that in South Africa, master's and doctoral enrolments and graduations have increased more than threefold over the years (Mouton 2007) as people seek to obtain better employment opportunities based on higher education qualifications. They would have been an important question to debunk in light of this finding. Is this a reality in South Africa that those with higher qualifications or experience in a particular field will experience favourable employment outcomes? However, it goes beyond the scope of our study, and this might be an area of further research in the field of psychology.

To sum up, perceived career expectations highlight that students in the department have a variety of expectations and career outcomes. The majority of the student's expectations and career outcomes were centered on their need to be eligible for a psychology-related profession after the degree. It is clear though from this that psychology students understand the importance of furthering their education to widen their opportunities of being employed in the future.

5.6. Summary

The above discussion highlighted the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students at the University of KwaZulu Natal. The students noted that for some of them studying psychology was not their first choice of study but was due to particular influences such as family, career guidance, or exposure to the field through meeting an actual psychologist and then taking an interest in studying psychology. Family influence emerged as a strong factor that was a push factor in career choice. This was also coupled with the issue of remuneration and good salary as well as determining factors of where one would choose to settle career-wise.

The findings also show that even though Donald Super's career development theory is not entirely suited for the South African context it can still be relevant in terms of the stages that Super presents such as the exploration stage whereby which is where the individual finds out what is required for education and training and take part in career-related activities like job shadowing or career exhibitions. In democratic South Africa students are now presented with opportunities to get career guidance and be able to choose their careers with enough information available to them. This is an important factor where more can be done to further its impact. This finding presents a similar perspective to what is presented in the literature review.

The findings also reveal that students also choose a career based on their interests as well as their personality traits. The students shared that they believe that psychology would allow them to express their personalities. John Holland's theory asserts that individuals are naturally drawn to careers that align with their personalities (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). This is in line with what the research findings suggest. However, on the other hand, it is important to note that psychology for most of the participants was not the very first career choice they had chosen. Indeed, the finding shows that personal factors, societal, and institutional influences, and own experiences and perceptions play a great role in shaping psychology students' career choices. The following chapter will conclude the research study and the findings and also offer recommendations for future research.

6. CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Overview of the Study

This research study was aimed at exploring the factors that influence the career choice of psychology students at the University of KwaZulu Natal. The study explored personal factors and social factors that influence psychology student's career choice. It also explored how the institution in which the students are studying influences their career choices. Lastly, the study explored the students' perceived career outcomes. These factors were explored using a qualitative research approach.

The research paradigm used to understand and guide this research study was the interpretive approach. The method that was used to identify and recruit the participants was purposive sampling, whereby there was a specific criterion that was followed to recruit the participants. The data was collected from the participants using semi-structured interviews that were done on an online platform. The interview schedule is attached to appendix 1. The interviews that were conducted were recorded and the participants were notified of this and asked for their consent.

6.2. Conclusion about Research Findings

The research findings to this study show that when it comes to the career choice of students, the factors that influence it cannot be separated from the contextual context as this has a major impact on how each individual's process of choosing a career goes. For example, during the apartheid many individuals did not have the opportunity to study as they had to start working after matric or even before reaching matric because of poverty as well as access to education at the time (Shumba & Naong (2013). After the apartheid was abolished changes were made in the education system and more learners had access to education, however, some are still hindered by poverty in terms of being unable to access education. This situation leaves young individuals with limited career options as the main aim is for them to contribute financially to their homes.

In the case of this research study the participants shared that their parents and families were mostly supportive of their career choice. This indicates that learners now have slightly better opportunities to pursue careers that they want instead of careers chosen by their parents. However, some parents still prioritise the earning potential of careers chosen by their children. For example, one participant shared that their parents were always concerned about him

choosing a career whereby he will be earning a good salary otherwise they are less likely to approve of that career and as a result this participants' career choice was also influenced by this notion. This is in line with what literature suggests, Alexander & Twinomurinzi (2012) noted that personal financial needs and goals are important factors in career decision-making. Some people place higher importance on careers that offer high earning potential to achieve financial stability. This is influenced by the need to provide for their families.

Some participants share that their families at first were not supportive of their career choices and needed a bit of convincing on their end. This shows how parents are now more open to different career choices, even ones they might not be familiar with. Literature revealed that parental support has a positive influence on student's career choice. A study done by Tziner, Loberman, Dekel, and Sharoni (2012) revealed that when young adolescents receive support from their parents with regard to their career this has a positive impact on the individual's willingness to engage in career exploration activities. This is in line with the findings of this current study.

Personal interests and traits also influence career choice as persons interests reflect their passions and values and these are considered important for overall wellbeing and job satisfaction (Spehar, Forest & Stenseng, 2016). The findings of the current study revealed the importance of personal interests as the participants shared how their career choice of psychology was based on their personal interest in it as well as having a passion for it. This also indicates a transition from the way careers were chosen back in the apartheid era as compared to now. Individuals did not have many careers they could pick from as well as they did not have the opportunity to pick a career based on their passions, but it was rather based on the need to survive and make ends meet.

Although literature showed that the number of black psychologists in the South African context is still very low as compared to the other race groups the findings of the study indicate that an increasing number of black students are pursuing psychology as a career (Padmanabhanunni, Jackson, Noordien, Pretorius, & Bouchard, 2022). The findings also show that the perceived career outcomes of the psychology students reveal that their goal is to go all the way to Masters level and continue until they become psychologists as they are not planning to just stop a Honours level because they believe that getting an Honours degree in psychology is just a stepping stone to go further in their careers and is not sufficient to get them to where they intend to get. This also shows how things are changing over the years and the impact that the apartheid

system has had on the kinds of careers that individuals could choose in the past as compared to now. Recommendations for future research are discussed in the section that follows.

6.3. Recommendations for future Research

There is still a need for an indigenous career theory that is suitable for the South African context, as the context influences career choice in many ways, as discussed in this research study. As mentioned above to this day there are no actual career theories developed specifically for the South African context and most theories used in this context are borrowed from western approaches. The development of an indigenous theory within South African psychology research and practice will ensure that cultural sensitivity and relevance to the local context is prioritized (Ebersohn, 2012).

Currently, the majority of psychological assessments used in this context are of western origin and further emphasize the need for the creation of more assessments specially tailored to the South African context. Career theories such as Donald Super's career theory and John Holland's theory are widely used globally and in the South African context; however, their applicability in such a context is questionable. There are a few issues that come up when examining whether these theories are appropriate to use in the South African setting (Hobololo, 2020). A number of issues arise when applying these theories as career development in South Africa is highly influenced by its socio-political setting which needs to be considered when discussing career choice. Now, the political system has shaped education, access to education, and access to resources for different racial groups.

The development of an indigenous theory will help enhance the effectiveness and appropriateness of psychological assessments for the diverse South African population. South Africa is a culturally rich country as there are many cultures that exist within this context, and they have an influence on the way in which individuals interact. The political landscape is continually being transformed to address the past disparities caused by the apartheid system, and therefore, the psychology practice needs to also transform and take this into consideration. The following section will discuss the limitations of this study.

6.4. Limitations

The participants in the study were all black; therefore, this study was lacking in terms of diversity. The interviews, therefore, ended up being conducted in English and IsiZulu. This meant that the researcher had to translate some of the things shared by the students. Even

though the interviewer conducted the interviews in English the participants gave their responses in both English and used IsiZulu in some of their responses. As the interviews were transcribed verbatim the researcher made sure to translate accordingly from IsiZulu to English. This thesis does not integrate the findings with principles of African Psychology and IKS and thus does not extend career theory from an Afrocentric perspective. This is a limitation and a future opportunity for research.

6.5. Conclusion

This study was aimed at exploring the personal and social factors influencing the students' career choice of psychology in the University of KwaZulu Natal. The personal factors that were identified in this study were personal interests including passions and personality traits. The findings show that career choice is highly influenced by a persons' interests among other factors. Stemming from their childhood in some cases and as well as the kind of environment they grow up in. The social factors that were identified in this study were family in terms of advice from family and family support. Family support was identified as contributing positively to the career decision making process among the students that participated in this study. Family support coming from the parents and not necessarily the extended family. The study also identified social factors such as peers, how peers can influence one's career choice.

In addition, another factor that was explored in this study was how the University itself influenced the career choice of psychology among these students. The findings show that the University influenced the career choice through career guidance as some of the participants shared that they received career guidance within the university to help them in making their choice. Career guidance was emphasised as important in helping individuals make an informed choice and this was the case with some of the participants.

The perceived career outcomes of the students were also explored in this study and the findings of the study reveal that most of the participants are planning on continuing to further their studies in order to get to become fully fledged psychologists and they view their Honours Degrees as a steppingstone to moving forward in their career journey.

REFERENCES

- Abrahams, F., Jano, R., & Van Lill, B. (2015). Factors influencing the career choice of undergraduate students at a historically disadvantaged South African university. *Industry and Higher Education*, 29(3), 209-219.
- Ajayi, O. B., Moosa, M., & Aloka, P. J. (2023). Relationship between Career Interest and Career Decision-Making of Grade 12 Learners in Township Secondary Schools in South Africa. *Athens Journal of Education*, 10(2), 307-322.
- Akhter, N., Ali, M. S., Siddique, M., & Abbas, R. (2021). Exploring the Role and Importance of Career Counselling in Developing Awareness of Graduate Students' Career Choices during Covid 19. *Multicultural Education*, 7(11), 603-615.
- Akosah-Twumasi, P., Emeto, T. I., Lindsay, D., Tsey, K., & Malau-Aduli, B. S. (2018). A systematic review of factors that influence youths career choices—the role of culture. In *Frontiers in education*, 3(58), 1-15.
- Akosah-Twumasi, P., Emeto, T. I., Lindsay, D., Tsey, K., & Malau-Aduli, B. S. (2018). A systematic review of factors that influence youths career choices—the role of culture. In *Frontiers in education*, 3(58), 1-15.
- Albien, A.J., Naidoo, A.V. (2018). Barriers and Enablers for Career Development Among Marginalized South African Youth. In: Cohen-Scali, V., Rossier, J., Nota, L. (eds) *New perspectives on career counseling and guidance in Europe* . Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-61476-2_10
- Alexander, P. M., & Twinomurizi, H. (2012). Changing career choice factors as the economic environment changes. In *Proceedings of the South African Institute for Computer Scientists and Information Technologists Conference* (pp. 295-305).
- Alvarez-Risco, A., Mlodzianowska, S., García-Ibarra, V., Rosen, M. A., & Del-Aguila-Arcentales, S. (2021). Factors affecting green entrepreneurship intentions in business university students in COVID-19 pandemic times: Case of Ecuador. *Sustainability*, 13(11), 6447.
- Andresen, M., & Stapf, J. (2022). Is career what you make it? A critical review of research on social origin and career success. *European Management Journal*.
- Anghel, E., & Gati, I. (2021). The associations between career decision-making difficulties and

negative emotional states. *Journal of Career Development*, 48(4), 537-551.

Arbab, A. H., Eltahir, Y. A., Elsadig, F. S., & Yousef, B. A. (2022). Career preference and factors influencing career choice among undergraduate pharmacy students at University of Khartoum, Sudan. *Pharmacy*, 10(1), 26.

Argyropoulou, K., & Kaliris, A. (2018). From career decision-making to career decision-management: New trends and prospects for career counseling. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, 5(10).

Austin, Z., & Sutton, J. (2014). Qualitative research: Getting started. *The Canadian journal of hospital pharmacy*, 67(6), 436.

Badrolhisam, N. I., Achim, N., & Zulkipli, N. (2019). Employee career decision making: the influence of salary and benefits, work environment and job security. *Journal of Academia*, 7, 41-50.

Bandura, A. (1978). The self systemself-system in reciprocal determinism. *American psychologist*, 33(4), 344.

Bandura, A. (1989). Social cognitive theory. In R. Vasta (Ed.), *Annals of child development. Vol. 6. Six theories of child development*. 1-60. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Barrow, J. M., Brannan, G. D., & Khandhar, P. B. (2017). Research ethics.

Bester, J. (2011). The perception of career barriers among South African university students (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).

Bleidorn, W., Hopwood, C. J., Back, M. D., Denissen, J. J., Hennecke, M., Hill, P. L., ... & Zimmermann, J. (2021). Personality trait stability and change. *Personality Science*, 2, 1-20.

Bohns, V. K., & Flynn, F. J. (2021). Empathy and expectations of others' willingness to help. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 168, 110368.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

Brown, S. D., & Lent, R. W. (Eds.). (2004). *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work*. John Wiley & Sons.

Bullock, E. E., Andrews, L., Braud, J., & Reardon, R. C. (2009). Holland's theory in an international context: Applicability of RIASEC structure and assessments. *Career planning*

and adult development journal, 25(4), 29-58.

Buthelezi, T., Alexander, D., & Seabi, J. (2009). Adolescents' perceived career challenges and needs in a disadvantaged context in South Africa from a social cognitive career theoretical perspective. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 23(3), 505-520.

Carolissen, R., Shefer, T., & Smit, E. (2015). A critical review of practices of inclusion and exclusion in the psychology curriculum in higher education. *Psychology in Society*, (49), 7-24.

Chagunda, C. (2019). The South African social grant system: A positive effect on poverty alleviation and unforeseen socio-cultural consequences. *Gender and Behaviour*, 17(4), 14237-14250.

Charara, R., Najjar, I. M., & Oweini, A. (2023). The Influence and Involvement of Family Members in Career Decision-Making. *Psychology & Psychological Research International Journal*, 9(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.23880/pprij-16000393>

Chinyamurindi, W. T., (2016). Using narrative analysis to understand factors influencing career choice in a sample of distance learning students in South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 46(3), 390-400.

Chiramba, O., & Ndofirepi, E. S., (2023). Access and success in higher education: Disadvantaged students' lived experiences beyond funding hurdles at a metropolitan South African university. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 37(6), pp.56-75.

Chisholm, L. (2017). *Between Worlds: German missionaries and the transition from mission to Bantu Education in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Christie, P., & Collins, C. (1982). Bantu education: Apartheid ideology or labour reproduction?. *Comparative education*, 18(1), 59-75.

Chuang, N. K., Lee, P. C., & Kwok, L. (2020). Assisting students with career decision-making difficulties: Can career decision-making self-efficacy and career decision-making profile help?. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 26, 100235.

Collier, D. (1995). Translating quantitative methods for qualitative researchers: The case of selection bias. *American Political Science Review*, 89(2), 461-466.

Coetzee, M., & Schreuder, A. M. G. (2016). *Careers: An organisational perspective* (5th ed.). Juta Legal and Academic Publishers.

Dalmau Valls, X., Sitges i Puy, G., & Tort Alier, M. (2018). Influence of gender stereotypes on

career choice: a cross-sectional study on Catalan adolescents.

Dawadi, S. (2021). Thematic analysis approach: A step by step guide for ELT research practitioners. *Journal of NELTA*, 25(1-2), 62-71.

Dodge, E. A., & Welderufael, M. (2014). Factors that influence career choice in South African township high school students.

Donald, W. E., Ashleigh, M. J., & Baruch, Y. (2018). Students' perceptions of education and employability: Facilitating career transition from higher education into the labor market. *Career development international*, 23(5), 513-540.

Dumper, K., Jenkins, W., Lovett, M., & Perlmutter, M. Rose M. Spielman Formerly of Quinnipiac University. (2014). *Psychology*.

Ebeh, R. E., Ohazurike, E. U., & Omaku, S. A. (2023). Social Media Modelling, Mentoring And Parental Support As Predictor Of Undergraduates' career Choice. *African Journal Of Social And Behavioural Sciences*, 13(1).

Ebersohn, L. (2012). Imagining career resilience research and training from an indigenous knowledge production perspective. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 26(1), 800-812.

Finch, W. H., & French, B. F. (2018). *Educational and psychological measurement*. Routledge.

Fouad, N. A., Kim, S. Y., Ghosh, A., Chang, W. H., & Figueiredo, C. (2016). Family influence on career decision making: Validation in India and the United States. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 24(1), 197-212.

Gao, Y., & Eccles, J. (2020). Who lower their aspirations? The development and protective factors of college-associated career aspirations in adolescence. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 116, 103367.

Gati, I., & Kulcsár, V. (2021). Making better career decisions: From challenges to opportunities. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 126, 103545.

Gedde, S. J., Budenz, D. L., Haft, P., Tielsch, J. M., Lee, Y., & Quigley, H. A. (2005). Factors influencing career choices among graduating ophthalmology residents. *Ophthalmology*, 112(7), 1247-1254.

Glaser, C. (2020). Beyond the legacy of 1976: Morris Isaacson High School, popular memory

and the struggle for education in central Soweto. *African Studies*, 79(1), 21-36.

Goldstein, G., Allen, D. N., & DeLuca, J. (2019). Historical perspectives. In *Handbook of psychological assessment* (pp. 3-27). Academic Press.

Gore, O., & Botha, J. (2022). Exploring Inequality in South African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) through Vignettes. *Bulgarian Comparative Education Society*.

Graham, V. (2020). SOUTH AFRICA'S DEMOCRACY The Quality of Political Participation over 25 Years. *Journal of African Elections*, 19(1), 28-51.

Griffin, B., & Hu, W. (2019). Parental career expectations: effect on medical students' career attitudes over time. *Medical education*, 53(6), 584-592.

Guest, G., Namey, E. E., & Mitchell, M. L. (2013). Qualitative research: Defining and designing. *Collecting qualitative data: A field manual for applied research*, 1-40.

Halcomb, E. J., & Davidson, P. M. (2006). Is verbatim transcription of interview data always necessary?. *Applied nursing research*, 19(1), 38-42.

Harrell, M. C., & Bradley, M. A. (2009). *Data collection methods. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups*. Rand National Defense Research Inst santa monica ca.

Hartnack, A. (2017). Background document and review of key South African and international literature on school dropout. *Cape Town*.

Hartung, P. J. (2013). The life-span, life-space theory of careers. *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work*, 2, 83-113.

Haruna, P., & Sackey, G. M. (2023). Influence of Altruistic, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation on the Choice of Teaching Career in Basic Education. *International journal of research and innovation in social science*, 5, 964-979.

Hassan, A., Saleem, I., Anwar, I., & Hussain, S. A. (2020). Entrepreneurial intention of Indian university students: the role of opportunity recognition and entrepreneurship education. *Education+ Training*, 62(7/8), 843-861.

Helyer, R., & Lee, D. (2014). The role of work experience in the future employability of higher education graduates. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 68(3), 348-372.

Herdjiono, I., Puspa, Y. H., Maulany, G., & Aldy, B. E. (2017). The factors affecting entrepreneurship intention. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Knowledge*, 5(2).

Herman, H. D. (2017). Affirmative action in education and Black Economic Empowerment in the workplace in South Africa since 1994: Policies, strengths and limitations. BCES Conference Books.

Hidi, S., & Renninger, K. A. (2006). The four-phase model of interest development. *Educational psychologist, 41*(2), 111-127.

Hirschi, A., Steiner, R., Burmeister, A., & Johnston, C. S. (2020). A whole-life perspective of sustainable careers: The nature and consequences of nonwork orientations. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 117*, 103319.

Hobololo, B. (2020). Traditional career development models lack the African woman voice.

Holland, J. L. (1996). Exploring careers with a typology: What we have learned and some new directions. *American psychologist, 51*(4), 397.

Holland, J. L. (1997). Making vocational choices: A theory of vocational personalities and work environments. *Psychological Assessment Resources*.

Howard, K. A., & Ferrari, L. (2022). Social-emotional learning and career development in elementary settings. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 50*(3), 371-385.

Hyman, M. R., & Sierra, J. J. (2016). Open-versus close-ended survey questions. *Business Outlook, 14*(2), 1-5.

Jena, L.L., & Nayak, U. (2020). Theories of career development: An analysis. *Indian Journal of Natural Sciences, 10*(60), 23515–23523.

Jeske, C. (2017). Why Work? Do We Understand What Motivates Work-Related Decisions in South Africa? *Journal of Southern African Studies, 44*(1), 27–42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057070.2018.1403219>

Jenzer, T., Egerton, G. A., & Read, J. P. (2021). Learning from drinking experiences in college: A test of reciprocal determinism with drinking refusal self-efficacy. *Psychology of addictive behaviors, 35*(1), 85.

Jonck, P. & Swanepoel, E. (2019). Investigating career guidance implementation between historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools. *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa 15*(1), a637. <https://doi.org/10.4102/td.v15i1.637>.

Kantamneni, N., McCain, M. R., Shada, N., Hellwege, M. A., & Tate, J. (2018). Contextual factors in the career development of prospective first-generation college students: An application of social cognitive career theory. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 26(1), 183-196.

Kazi, A. S., & Akhlaq, A. (2017). Factors Affecting Students' Career Choice. *Journal of Research & Reflections in Education (JRRE)*, 11(2).

Kim, U. (1990). Science and Applications. *Applied cross-cultural psychology*, 14, 142-160.

Koech, J., Bitok, J., Rutto, D., Koech, S., Okoth, J.O., Korir, B. and Ngala, H., 2016. Factors influencing career choices among undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya: A case study of university of Eldoret. *International Journal of Contemporary Applied Sciences*, 3(2), 50-63.

Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2017). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 2: Context, research questions and designs. *European Journal of General Practice*, 23(1), 274-279.

Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1), 120-124.

Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2022). Series: practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 6: longitudinal qualitative and mixed-methods approaches for longitudinal and complex health themes in primary care research. *European Journal of General Practice*, 28(1), 118-124.

Kosine, N., & Lewis, M. (2008). Growth and exploration: Career development theory and programs of study. *Career and Technical Education Research*, 33(3), 227-243.

Kosine, N., & Lewis, M. (2008). Growth and exploration: Career development theory and programs of study. *Career and Technical Education Research*, 33(3), 227-243.

Kricorian, K., Seu, M., Lopez, D., Ureta, E., & Equils, O. (2020). Factors influencing participation of underrepresented students in STEM fields: matched mentors and mindsets. *International Journal of STEM Education*, 7, 1-9.

Kulcsar, V., Dobrean, A., & Gati, I. (2019). Challenges and difficulties in career decision making: Their causes, and their effects on the process and the decision. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*.

Kulcsár, V., Dobrean, A., & Gati, I. (2020). Challenges and difficulties in career decision making: Their causes, and their effects on the process and the decision. *Journal of Vocational*

Behavior, 116, 103346.

Kulcsár, V., Dobrean, A., & Gati, I. (2020). Challenges and difficulties Incareer decision making: Their causes, and their effects on the process and the decision. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 116*, 103346.

Kuther, T. L., & Morgan, R. D. (2024). *Careers in psychology: Opportunities in a changing*
Kwee, C. (2020). *The application of career theories in teachers' professional development and career decision: A literature review. Universal Journal of Educational Research, 8(9)*, 3997-4008.

Laher, S., & Cockcroft, K. (2014). Psychological assessment in post-apartheid South Africa: The way forward. *South African Journal of Psychology, 44(3)*, 303-314.

Lent, R. W., & Brown, S. D. (2020). Career decision making, fast and slow: Toward an integrative model of intervention for sustainable career choice. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 120*, 103448.

Lestari, N., & Rosman, D. (2024). Factors influencing hospitality students' career goals in Indonesia. *Academica Turistica-Tourism and Innovation Journal, 17(1)*.

Leung, S. A. (2008). The big five career theories. In *International handbook of career guidance* (pp. 115-132). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.

Lingappa, A. K., Shah, A., & Mathew, A. O. (2020). Academic, family, and peer influence on entrepreneurial intention of engineering students. *Sage Open, 10(3)*, 2158244020933877.-

Longueira, R. (2017). *Exploring the functionality of the South African education quintile funding system.*

Maddux, J. E. (2002). The power of believing you can. *Handbook of positive psychology, 277-287.*

Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *All Ireland Journal of Higher Education, 9(3)*.

Maila, P., & Ross, E. (2018). Perceptions of disadvantaged rural matriculants regarding factors facilitating and constraining their transition to tertiary education. *South African Journal of Education, 38(1)*.

Makhubela, M. (2016). " From psychology in Africa to African psychology": Going nowhere

slowly. *Psychology in Society*, (52), 1-18.

Maree, J. G. (2009). Career counselling in the 21st century: South African institutions of higher education at the crossroads. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 23(3), 436-458.

Maree, J. G. (2019). Group career construction counseling: A mixed-methods intervention study with high school students. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 67(1), 47-61.

Matoane, M. C. (2012). Locating Context In Counselling: the Development Of Indigenous Psychology In South Africa. *Psychotherapy and Politics International*, 2(10), 105-115.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ppi.1263>

Meoli, A., Fini, R., Sobrero, M., & Wiklund, J. (2020). How entrepreneurial intentions influence entrepreneurial career choices: The moderating influence of social context. *Journal of Business venturing*, 35(3), 105982.

Mhlongo, Z. S., & O'Neill, V. C. (2013). Family influences on career decisions by black first-year UKZN students. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 27(4), 953-965.

Miller, A. (2006). *A sample survey of the career maturity of disadvantaged learners in the Western Cape* (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).

Miller, L. A., & Lovler, R. L. (2018). *Foundations of psychological testing: A practical approach*. Sage publications.

Mlachila, M. M. & Moeletsi, T., (2019). Struggling to make the grade: A review of the causes and consequences of the weak outcomes of South Africa's education system.

Mokodutlo, B. (2019). The Exposure Of Township Secondary School Learners To Career Education In Lejweleputswa District. [Masters Dissertation, Central University of Technology].
Sabinet African Journals.
<http://ir.cut.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11462/2233/Mokodutlo%2c%20Berlina%20Mapogisho.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Morgan, B., & De Bruin, G. P. (2018). Structural validity of Holland's circumplex model of vocational personality types in Africa. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 26(2), 275-290.

Mouton, J. (2007). Post-graduate studies in South Africa: Myths, misconceptions and challenges. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 21(8), 1078-1090.

Mtemeri, J. (2020). Peer pressure as a predictor of career decision-making among high school students in Midlands Province, Zimbabwe. *Global Journal of Guidance and Counselling in*

Schools: Current Perspectives, 10(3), 120-131.

Mzangwa, S. T. (2019). The effects of higher education policy on transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. *Cogent Education, 6(1), 1592737.*

Nauta, M. M. (2010). The development, evolution, and status of Holland's theory of vocational personalities: Reflections and future directions for counseling psychology. *Journal of counseling psychology, 57(1), 11.*

Nauta, M. M. (2010). The development, evolution, and status of Holland's theory of vocational personalities: Reflections and future directions for counseling psychology. *Journal of counseling psychology, 57(1), 11.*

Nawabi, S., Javed, M. Q., Shujaulla, S., & Ulfat, H. (2019). Parental influence on career choice of their children: literature review. *International Journal of Advanced Research, 7(3), 221-227.*

Neumann, H., McCormick, R. M., Amundson, N. E., & McLean, H. B. (2000). Career Counselling First Nations Youth: Applying the First Nations Career-Life Planning Model. *Canadian Journal of Counselling, 34(3), 172-85.*

Nguse, S., & Wassenaar, D. (2021). Mental health and COVID-19 in South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology, 51(2), 304-313.*

Nicholas, L., Naidoo, A., & Pretorius, T. B. (2006). A historical perspective of career psychology in South Africa. In *Career psychology in the South African context* (pp. 1-10). Van Schaik.

Nnebue, C. C. (2010). Informed consent in research. *Afrimedical Journal, 1(1), 5-10.*

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International journal of qualitative methods, 16(1), 1609406917733847.*

Nwoye, A. (2015). What is African psychology the psychology of?. *Theory & Psychology, 25(1), 96-116.*

Nwoye, A. (2021). African psychology: from acquiescence to dissent. *South African Journal of Psychology, 51(3), 464-473.*

Nyamwange, J., (2016). Influence of Student Interest on Career Choice among First Year University Students in Public and Private Universities in Kisii County, Kenya. *Journal of*

Education and Practice, 7(4), 96-102.

Nye, C. D., Wille, B., Amory, J., & De Fruyt, F. (2021). Are work activities related to interest change over time? A 22-year longitudinal study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 121(4), 865.

Paloş, R., & Drobot, L. (2010). The impact of family influence on the career choice of adolescents. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(2), 3407-3411.

Padmanabhanunni, A., Jackson, K., Noordien, Z., Pretorius, T. B., & Bouchard, J. P. (2022). Characterizing the nature of professional training and practice of psychologists in South Africa. In *Annales Médico-psychologiques, revue psychiatrique*, (Vol. 180(, No. 4), pp. 360-365). Elsevier Masson.

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and policy in mental health and mental health services research*, 42, 533-544.

Parker, C., Scott, S., & Geddes, A. (2019). Snowball sampling. *SAGE research methods foundations*.

Pathak, V., Jena, B., & Kalra, S. (2013). Qualitative research. *Perspectives in clinical research*, 4(3).

Patton, W., Creed, P. A., & Watson, M. (2003). Perceived work related and non-work related barriers in the career development of Australian and South African adolescents. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 55(2), 74-82.

Pervin, N., & Mokhtar, M. (2022). The interpretivist research paradigm: A subjective notion of a social context. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 11(2), 419-428.

Pillay, A. L. (2020). Prioritising career guidance and development services in post-apartheid South Africa. *African Journal of Career Development*, 2(1), 1-5.

Pillay, A. L., & Barnes, B. R. (2020). Psychology and COVID-19: Impacts, themes and way forward. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 50(2), 148-153.

Polenova, E., Vedral, A., Brisson, L., and Zinn, L. (2018). Emerging between two worlds: a longitudinal study of career identity of students from Asian American immigrant families.

Emerg. *Adulthood*. 6, 53–65.

Rabie, S., & Naidoo, A. V. (2019). Validating the adaptation of the first career measure in isiXhosa: the South African Career Interest Inventory–isiXhosa version. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 49(1), 109-121.

Ran, Z. O. U., Zeb, S., Nisar, F., Yasmin, F., Poulova, P., & Haider, S. A. (2022). The impact of emotional intelligence on career decision-making difficulties and generalized self-efficacy among university students in China. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, 865-874.

Rehman, A. A., & Alharthi, K. (2016). An introduction to research paradigms. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 3(8), 51-59.

Richard, D. (2018). The influence of socioeconomic status and subjective social status on the career development of college students [The University of Southern Mississippi].

Robertson, P. J., Hooley, T., & McCash, P. (Eds.). (2021). *The Oxford handbook of career development*. Oxford University Press.

Roscoe, L. J., & McMahan, E. A. (2014). Outcomes of introduction to the psychology major: Careers and opportunities course. *Teaching of Psychology*, 41(2), 110-114.

Roy, P. (2020). Career Guidance: A Way of Life. *Tathapi Multidisciplinary Journal*.

Salami, S.O. (2006). Influence of culture, family and individual differences on choice of gender-dominated occupations among female students in tertiary institutions. *Gender and Behaviour*, 4(2): 814– 833

Salim, R. M. A., & Preston, M. (2019). Parenting styles effect on career exploration behaviour in adolescence: Considering parents and adolescent gender. *Humaniora*, 10(3), 249-254.

Sawitri, D. R., Creed, P. A., & Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J. (2014). Parental influences and adolescent career behaviours in a collectivist cultural setting. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 14, 161-180.

Segalo, P., & Cakata, Z. (2017). A psychology in our own language: Redefining psychology in an African context. *Psychology in Society*, (54), 29-41.

Sharif, N., Ahmad, N., & Sarwar, S. (2019). Factors influencing career choices. *IBT Journal of Business Studies*, 15(1), 33-46.

- Sharif, N., Ahmad, N., & Sarwar, S. (2019). Factors influencing career choices. *IBT Journal of Business Studies (JBS)*, 1(1).
- Sharif, Nimra & Ahmad, Nawaz & Sarwar, Samiullah. (2019). Factors Influencing Career Choices. *IBT Journal of Business Studies*. 15, 33-46.
- Sharma, P. (2016). Theories of career development: Educational and counseling implications. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology ISSN*, 3116(63), 2348-5396.
- Shumba, A., & Naong, M., (2013). The influence of family income on students' career choice at universities of technology. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 27(4), 1021-1037.
- Siddiky, M. R., & Akter, S. (2021). The Students' Career Choice and Job Preparedness Strategies: A Social Environmental Perspective. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 10(2), 421-431.
- Siddiky, M.R. & Akter, S., (2021). The students career Choice and job preparedness strategies: A social environmental perspective. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 10(2), pp.421-431.
- Spehar, I., Forest, J., & Stenseng, F. (2016). Passion for work, job satisfaction, and the mediating role of belongingness. *Scandinavian Journal of Organizational Psychology*, 8(1), 17-27.
- Sorsdahl, K., Petersen, I., Myers, B., Zingela, Z., Lund, C., & Van der Westhuizen, C. (2023). A reflection of the current status of the mental healthcare system in South Africa. *SSM-Mental Health*, 4, 100247.
- Stahl, N. A., & King, J. R. (2020). Expanding approaches for research: Understanding and using trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 44(1), 26-28.
- Stead, G. B., & Watson, M. B. (1998). *Career research in South Africa: Challenges for the future*. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 52(3), 289-299.
- Stead, G. B., & Watson, M. B. (1998). The appropriateness of Super's career theory among black South Africans. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 28(1), 40-43.
- Stipanovic, Natalie, Sam Stringfield, and Eric Witherell. "The influence of a career pathways model and career counseling on students' career and academic self-efficacy." *Peabody journal of education* 92.2 (2017): 209-221.

Stromberg, C. A. (2008). *Career aspirations: Similarities and differences between adolescence with learning disabilities and adolescence not receiving special education services*. Rochester Institute of Technology.

Su, Y., Zhu, Z., Chen, J., Jin, Y., Wang, T., Lin, C. L., & Xu, D. (2021). Factors influencing entrepreneurial intention of university students in China: integrating the perceived university support and theory of planned behavior. *Sustainability*, *13*(8), 4519.

Tenny, S., Brannan, G. D., Brannan, J. M., & Sharts-Hopko, N. C. (2017). Qualitative study.

Theresa, L. D. (2015). Factors That Inform Students' Choice of Study and Career. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *6*(27), 43-49.

Tickle-Degnen, L., & Rosenthal, R. (1990). The nature of rapport and its nonverbal correlates. *Psychological inquiry*, *1*(4), 285-293.

Tu, M. C., & Okazaki, S. (2021). What is career success? A new Asian American psychology of working. *American Psychologist*, *76*(4), 673.

Tziner, A., Loberman, G., Dekel, Z., & Sharoni, G. (2012). The influence of the parent offspring relationship on young people s career preferences. *Journal of work and Organizational Psychology*, *28*(2), 99-105.

Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H., & Bondas, T. (2013). Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing & health sciences*, *15*(3), 398-405.

van den Heuvel, M., Barozzino, T., Milligan, K., Ford-Jones, E., & Freeman, S. (2016). We need psychologists! *Paediatrics and Child Health*, *21*(1), e1-e3.

van Vuuren, N. J., Rabie, S., & Naidoo, A. V. (2022). Enhancing Career Interest Assessment in South Africa: Lessons Learned From the Development of the South African Career Interest Inventory-IsiXhosa Version. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*.

Varpio, L., Paradis, E., Uijtdehaage, S., & Young, M. (2020). The distinctions between theory, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework. *Academic medicine*, *95*(7), 989-994.

Walker, M., & Hoppener, M. (2017). ACCESSING UNIVERSITY.

Wanelik, K. M., Griffin, J. S., Head, M. L., Ingleby, F. C., & Lewis, Z. (2020). Breaking

barriers? Ethnicity and socioeconomic background impact on early career progression in the fields of ecology and evolution. *Ecology and evolution*, 10(14), 6870-6880.

Watson, M., & McMahon, M. (2013). Qualitative career assessment in South Africa. In S. Laher & K. Cockcroft (Eds.), *Psychological Assessment in South Africa: Research and applications* (pp. 474–487). Wits University Press. <https://doi.org/10.18772/22013015782.37>

Wills, I. R. (2011). *The history of Bantu education: 1948-1994* (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University).

world. Sage Publications.

Wright, S. L., Kacmarski, J. A., Firsick, D. M., Jenkins-Guarnieri, M. A., & Kimm, A. J. (2020). Family influences on college students' anticipated work-family conflict, social self-Efficacy, and self-Esteem. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 68(2), 112-128.

Yusran, N. A., Puad, M. H. M., & Omar, M. K. (2021). Role of career exploration in influencing career choice among pre-university student. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 29, 77-99.

Zainudin, Z. N., Rong, L. W., Nor, A. M., Yusop, Y. M., & Othman, W. N. W. (2020). The relationship of holland theory in career decision making: A systematic review of literature. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, 7(9), 884-892.

Zheng, G., Bui, T. D., Nguyen, P. T. H., & Tran-Chi, V. L. (2022). Factors Influencing Career Choice Among Social Work Graduates. *Journal of educational and social research*, 12(3), 62-69.

Zheng, G., Bui, T. D., Nguyen, P. T. H., & Tran-Chi, V. L. (2022). Factors influencing career choice among social work graduates. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 12(3), 62.

Zhou, M. & Xu, Y., (2013). University students' career choice and emotional well-being. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 3(7), 243-248.

Zubbir, N., Abas, N. A., Druckman, Z. A., Rahmat, N. H., Azam, N. S., Isa, Z. M., & Dona, M. A. (2023). Exploring The Use of Language Learning Strategies Through Reciprocal Determinism. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 13(3), 1740 – 1758.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview Schedule

Interview schedule for the study “Factors that influence students’ career choice of psychology in a University in the KwaZulu Natal Province”.

My name is Sbusisiwe Zondi. I am currently an Industrial Psychology Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. I am conducting a study on the “Factors that influence students’ career choice of psychology in a University in the KwaZulu Natal Province”.

I am now going to ask you questions that I need you to answer honestly and if you are not willing to answer a particular question it is okay you can say so. If there is a question you are not clear with or that you need me to repeat, please say so.

- 1) Did you seek or receive any professional career guidance before choosing your career path?
- 2) Did you receive any career advice from your peers?
- 3) Is career advice given by your peers, valuable to you?
- 4) Do you think that your parents’/guardians’ career had an influence on your career choice?
- 5) Did your parents/guardian give you any career advice?
- 6) Do you think that your extended family had effect on your career choice?
- 7) Did the University have any influence in you choosing your career?
- 8) Was psychology your very first career choice?
- 9) Is psychology a career that would allow you to express your personality?
- 10) What made you choose this field in psychology?
- 11) Was your choice of pursuing within psychology influenced by any internal motivations?

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant,

I am Sbusisiwe Zondi, currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Industrial Psychology with the Faculty of Social Science under the school of Applied Human Sciences. Under the supervision of Mr Dean Isaacs, I am conducting research which is part of my degree requirements. The title of my research study is 'Factors that influence students' career choice of psychology in a University in the KwaZulu Natal Province'.

The research objectives are:

1. To explore social influences and personal factors that affect the students' career choice of psychology in a University in KwaZulu Natal.
2. To understand how the University itself influences the career choice of psychology students, and;
3. To find out the perceived career outcomes of the psychology students' career choice.

Your participation in this study is very much appreciated and valued as it will help me get the necessary information that is needed in relation to the research topic. Participation in this study is voluntary. Therefore, if you no longer want to be participant in the study; you are free to withdraw at any point. There will be any negative consequences.

All the information that you provide will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Confidential information will not be used without your permission. If you agree to do an interview over skype, zoom or any video calling platform that you are comfortable with, you will be given the option to choose a pseudonym for the purpose of this research. This will be done to ensure that your real identity is protected throughout the study. I request your permission to record the interview. The data will be kept securely for five years for purposes of verification by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Should you request, an electronic copy of the final projects will be sent to you on completion.

Thank you for your time.

Signed consent

I (Name) understand what the study (Factors that influence students' career choice of psychology in a University in the KwaZulu Natal Province) is all about and I am willing to participate in the study conducted by researcher (Name).....

- I understand that the purpose of this interview is for solely academic purpose.
- I understand I may choose to remain anonymous. (Please choose whether or not you would like to remain anonymous.)
- I understand that I may choose whether or not my name will be quoted in remarks and or information attributed to myself in the final research documents.
- I understand that I will not be paid for participating.
- I understand that I reserve the right to discontinue and withdraw my participation any time.
- I consent to be frank with the information I give.
- I understand I will not be coerced into commenting on issues against my will, and that I may decline to answer specific questions.
- I choose to use a pseudonym, not my real name.
- I consent to the interview being recorded.

By signing this consent form, I adhere that I have and read and understand everything on it and I agree.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

Name of Researcher

Signature

Date

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



18 November 2020

Ms Sbusisiwe Felicity Zondi (214520477)
School Of Applied Human Sc
Howard College

Dear Ms Zondi,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00001741/2020
Project title: Factors that influence students' career choice of psychology in the University of KwaZulu-Natal.
Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 06 July 2020 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL** on the following condition:

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 18 November 2021.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS