

Up to their Ear-rings in Credit Card Debt

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Table 1. National Statistics on Student Credit Card Usage

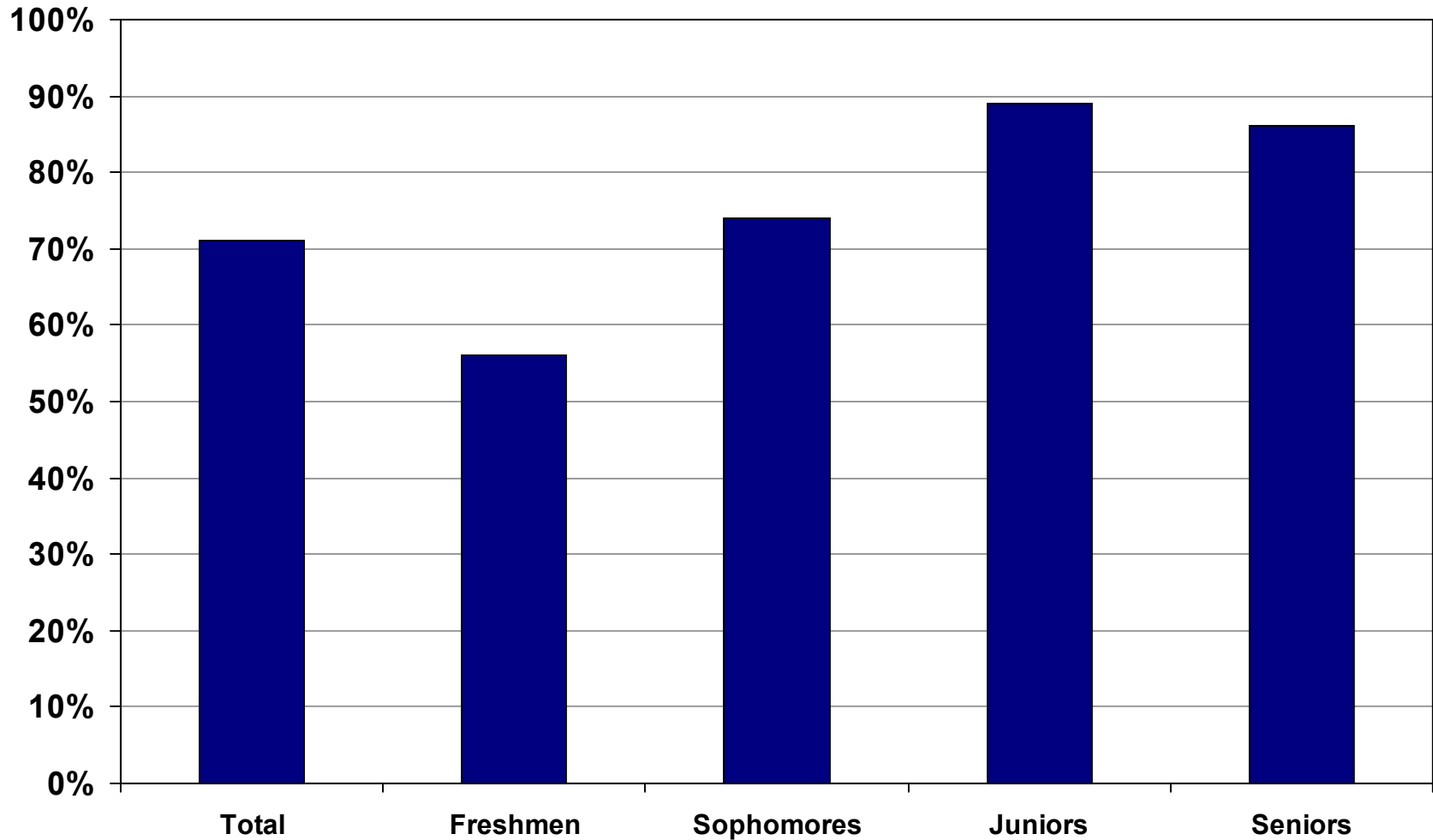
	1997	1990
College students with credit cards	67%	24%*
Average balance		
Undergraduates	\$2,226	\$900
Graduates	\$5,800	Not available

*Source: Nellie Mae

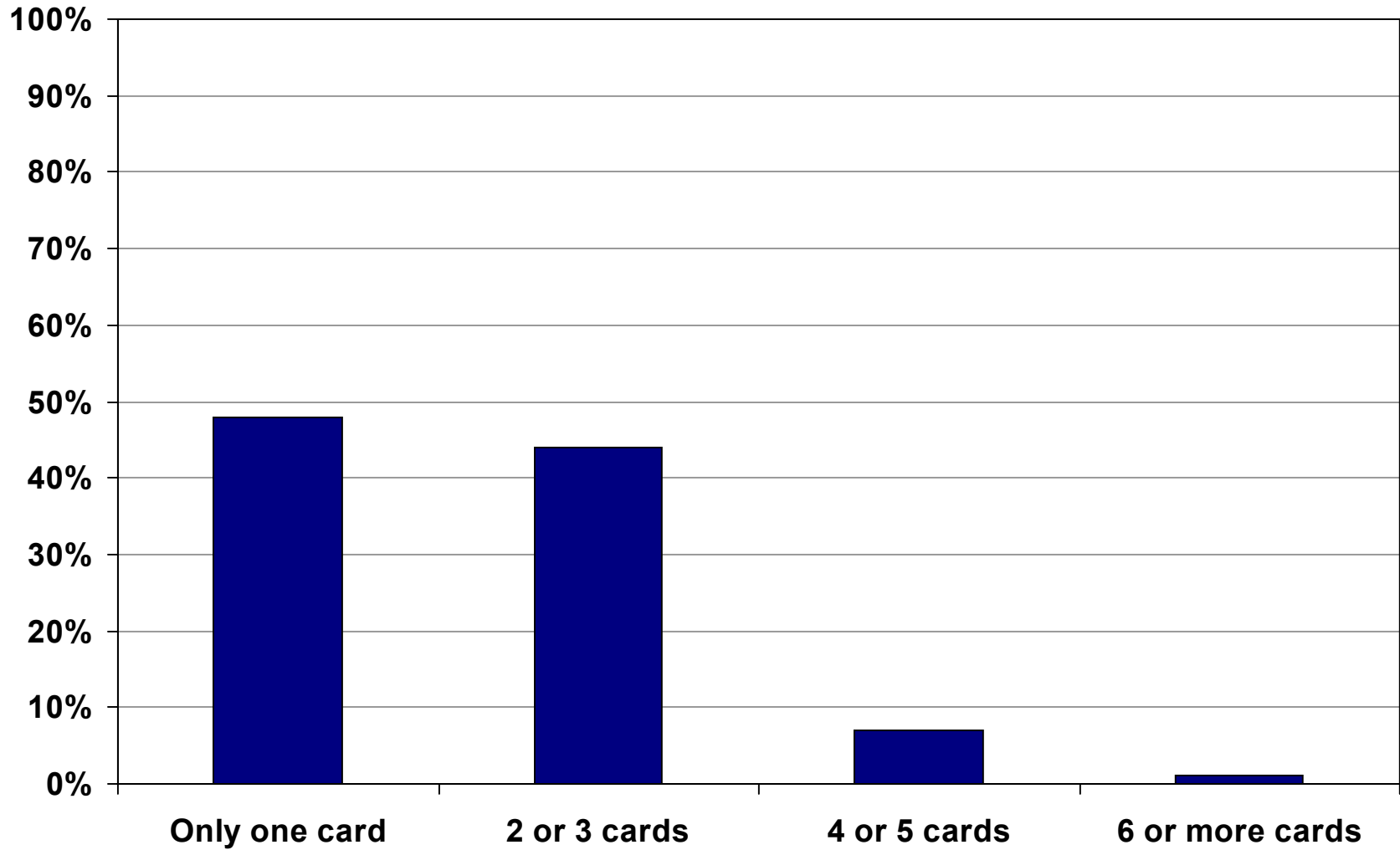
Table 2. Comparison of family income, financial aid, and unmet need between students who indicated it was important or not important to obtain a credit card to fill the gap between financial aid and college cost

	Use of credit card to fill gap	
	Important	Not important
Estimated student budget	\$30,000	\$30,000
Gross family income	\$56,000	\$68,000
Gross financial need	\$18,000	\$15,000
Institutional cap on aid	\$15,000	\$15,000
Unmet need	\$3,000	\$0

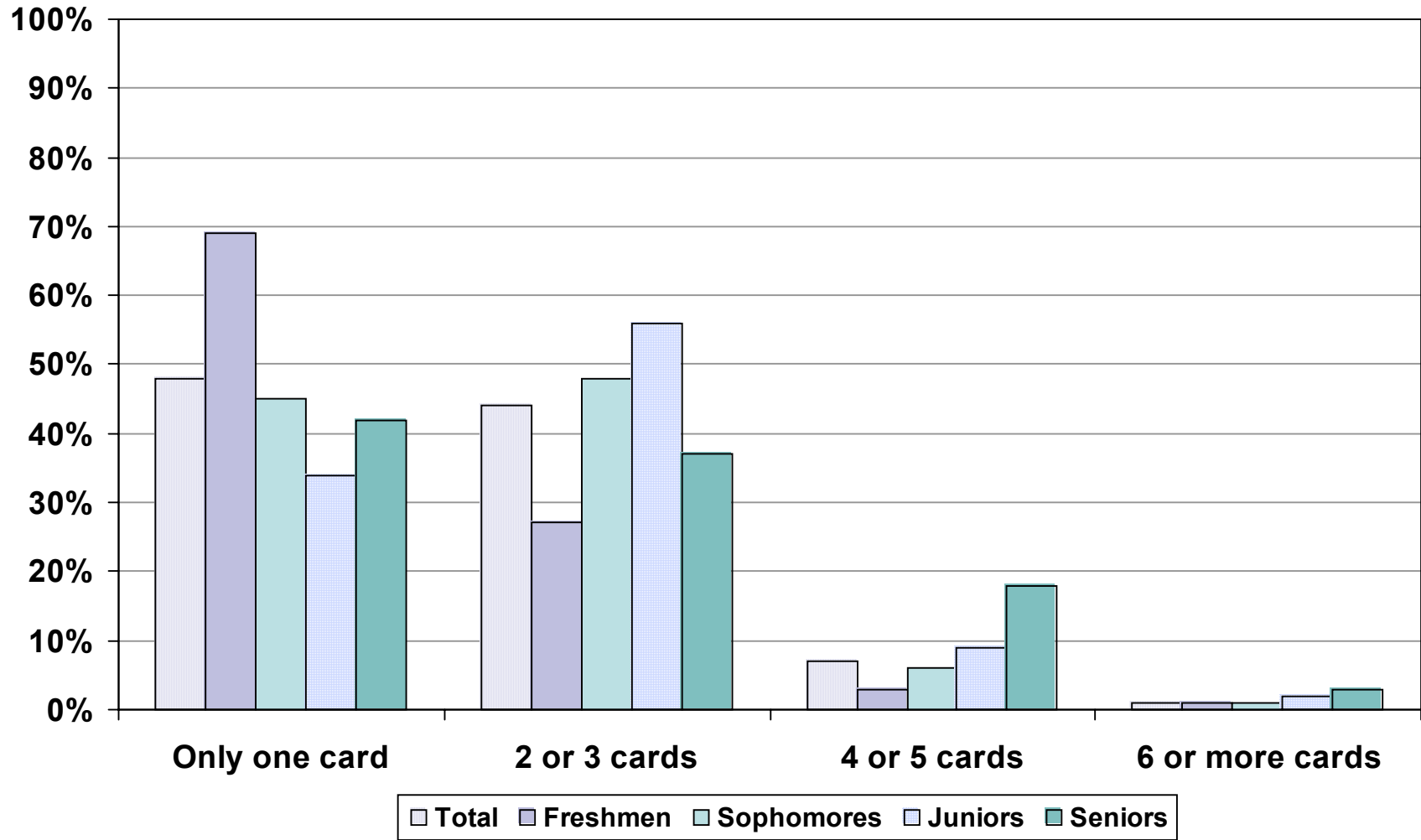
Graph 1. Percentage of students who own at least one credit card



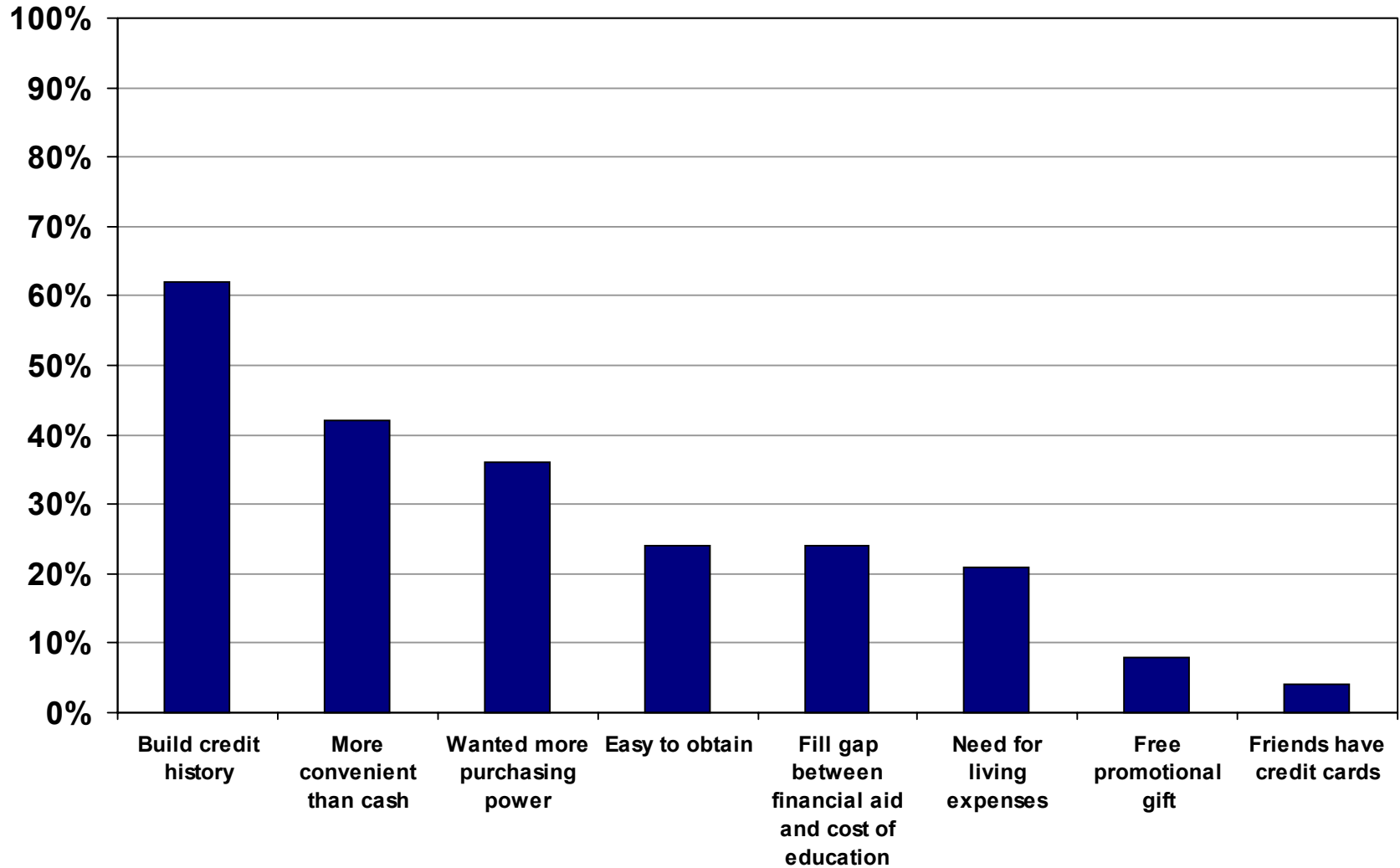
Graph 2. Number of credit cards used



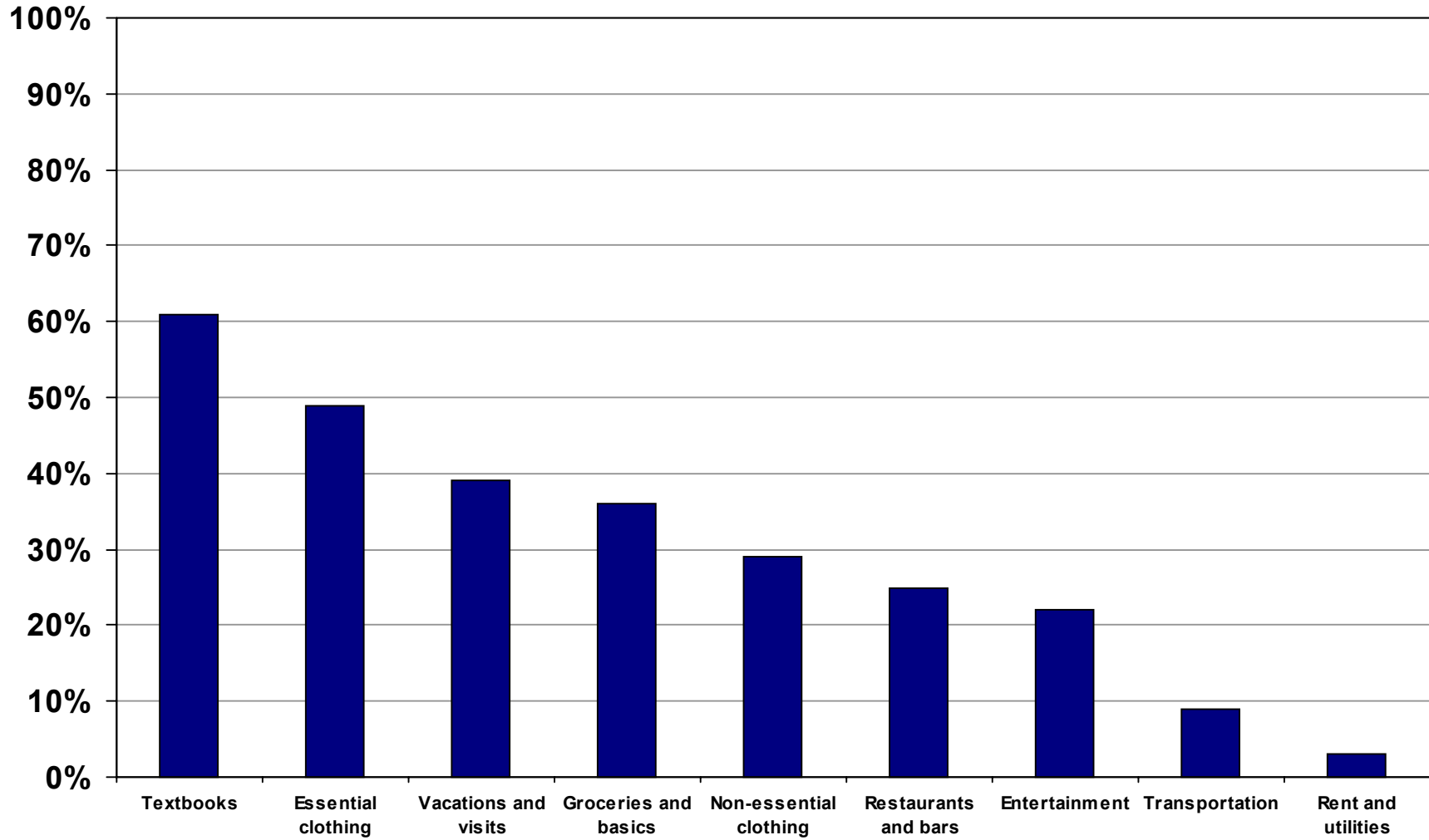
Graph 3. Number of credit cards used by year in school



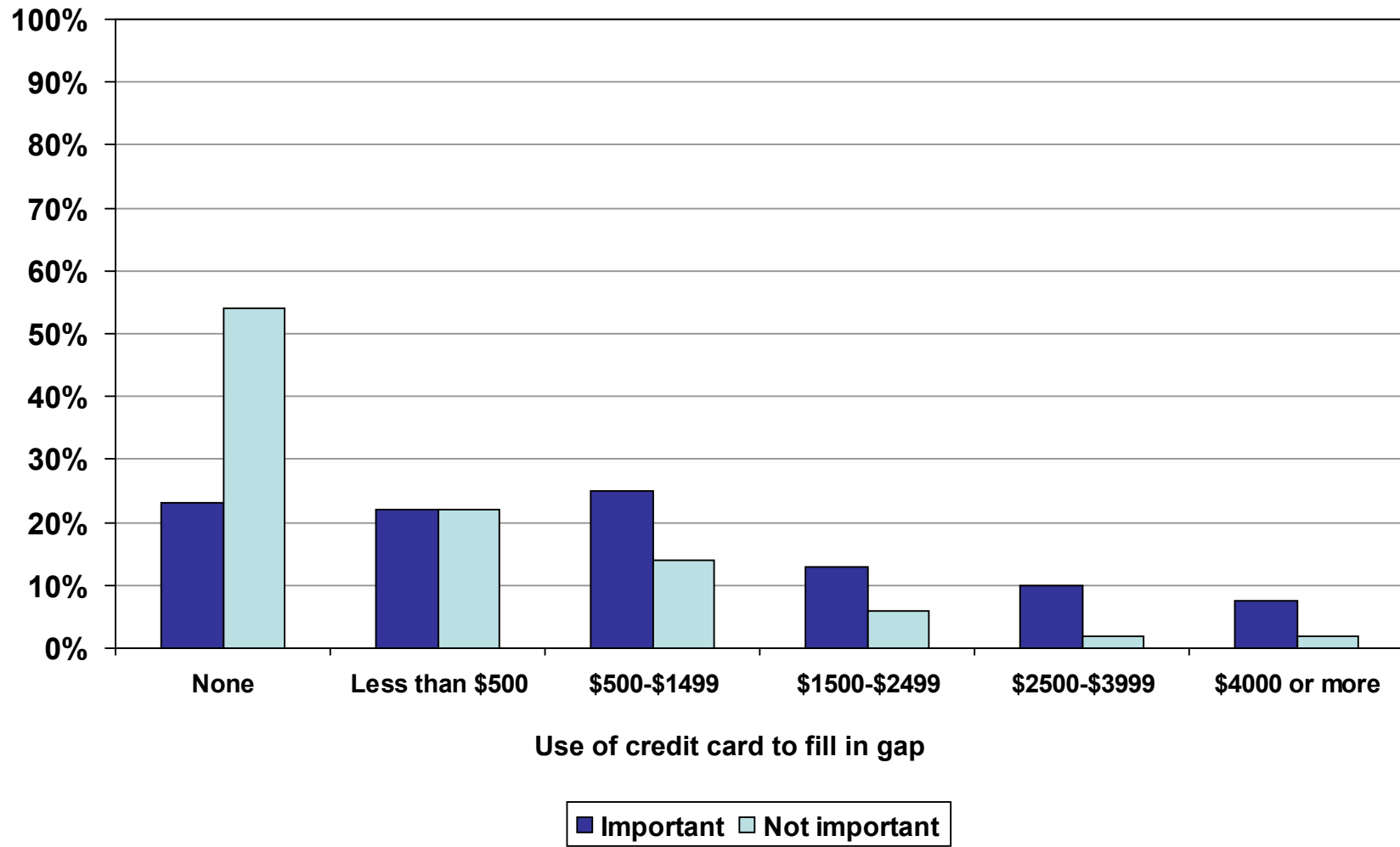
Graph 4. Importance of reason for obtaining first credit card: Percentage who indicated each reason was important



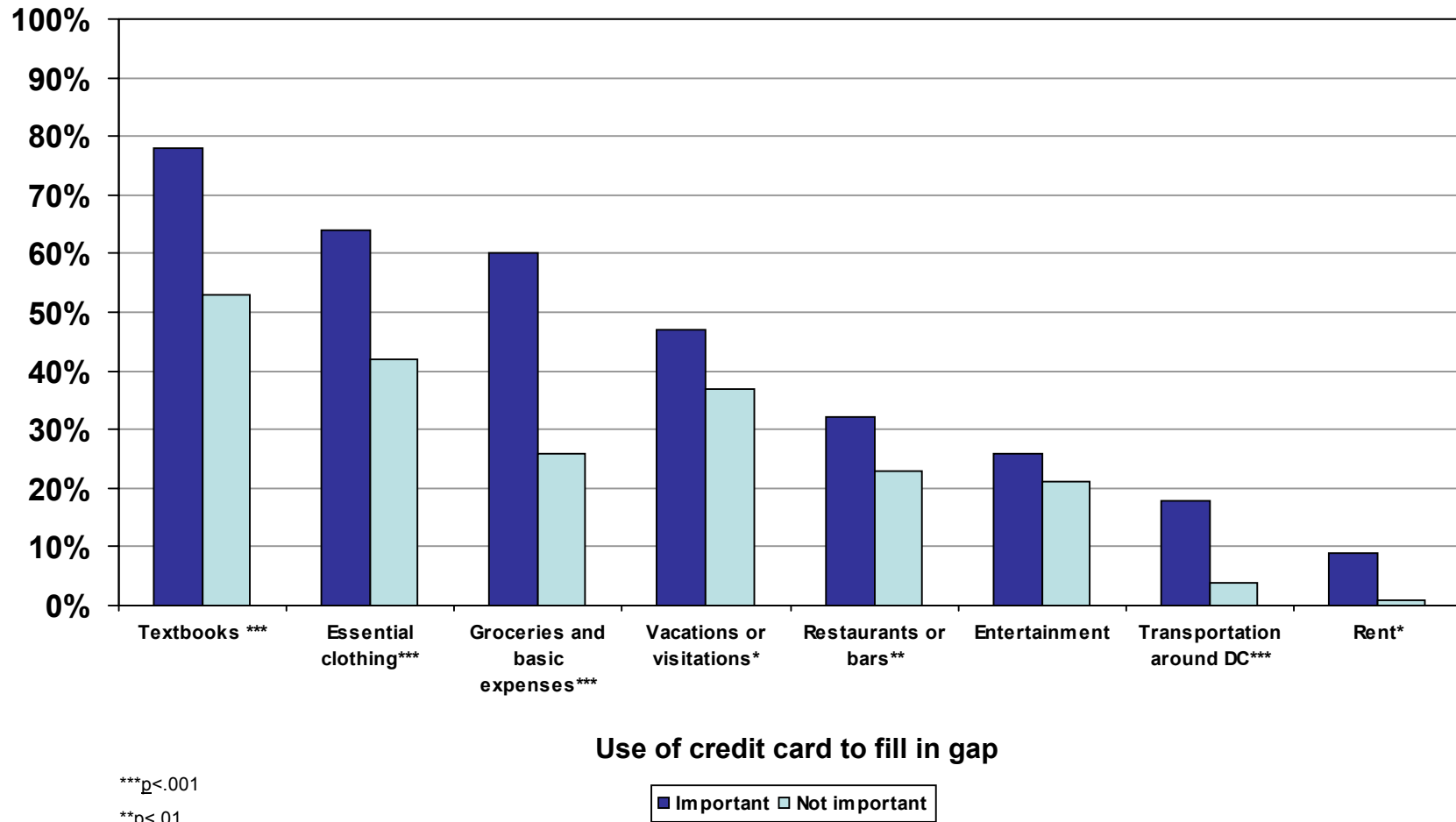
Graph 5. Credit card purchases made fairly often or regularly



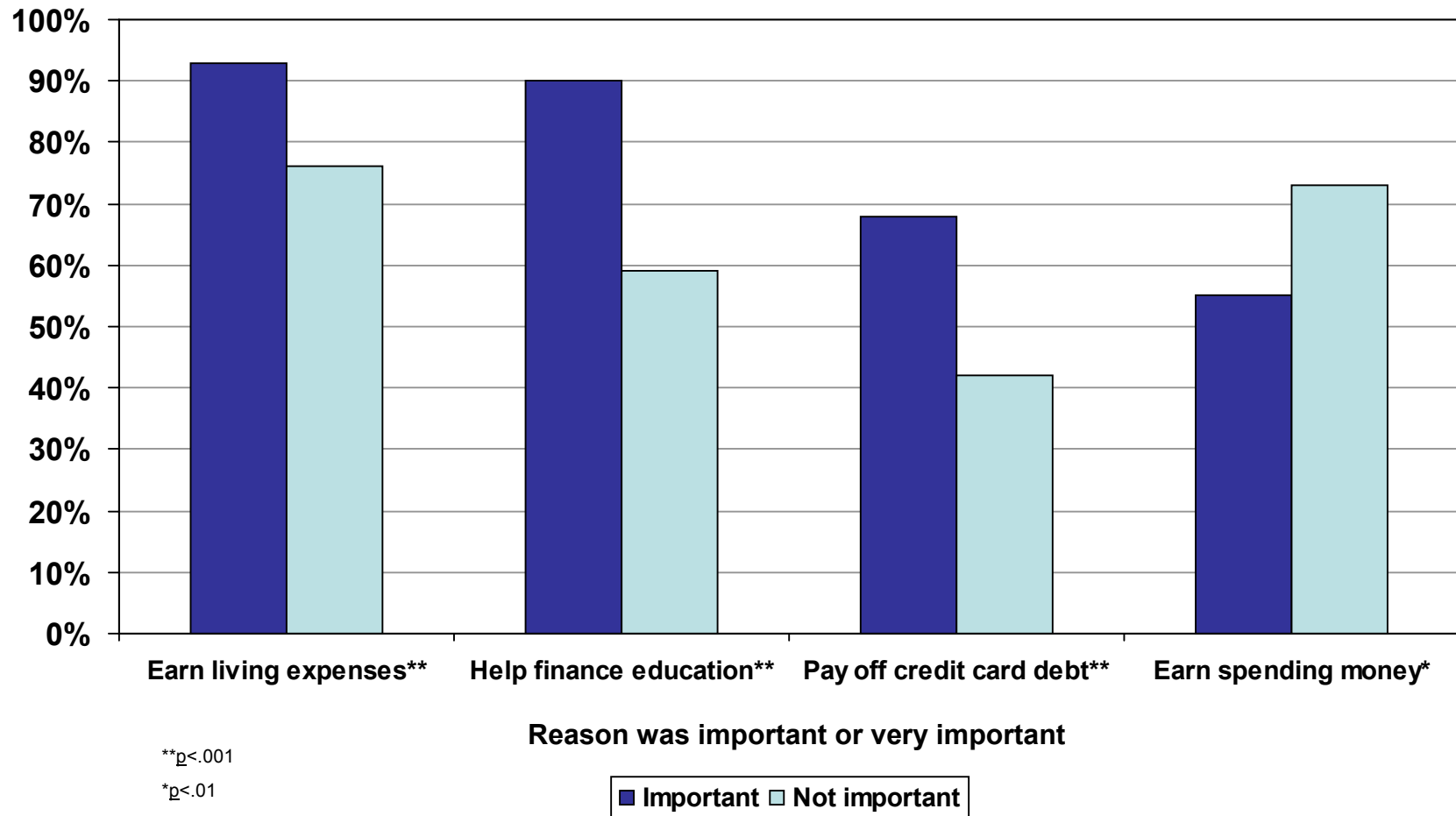
Graph 6. Comparison of credit card debt between those who indicated it was important or not important to obtain a credit card to fill the gap between financial aid and college cost



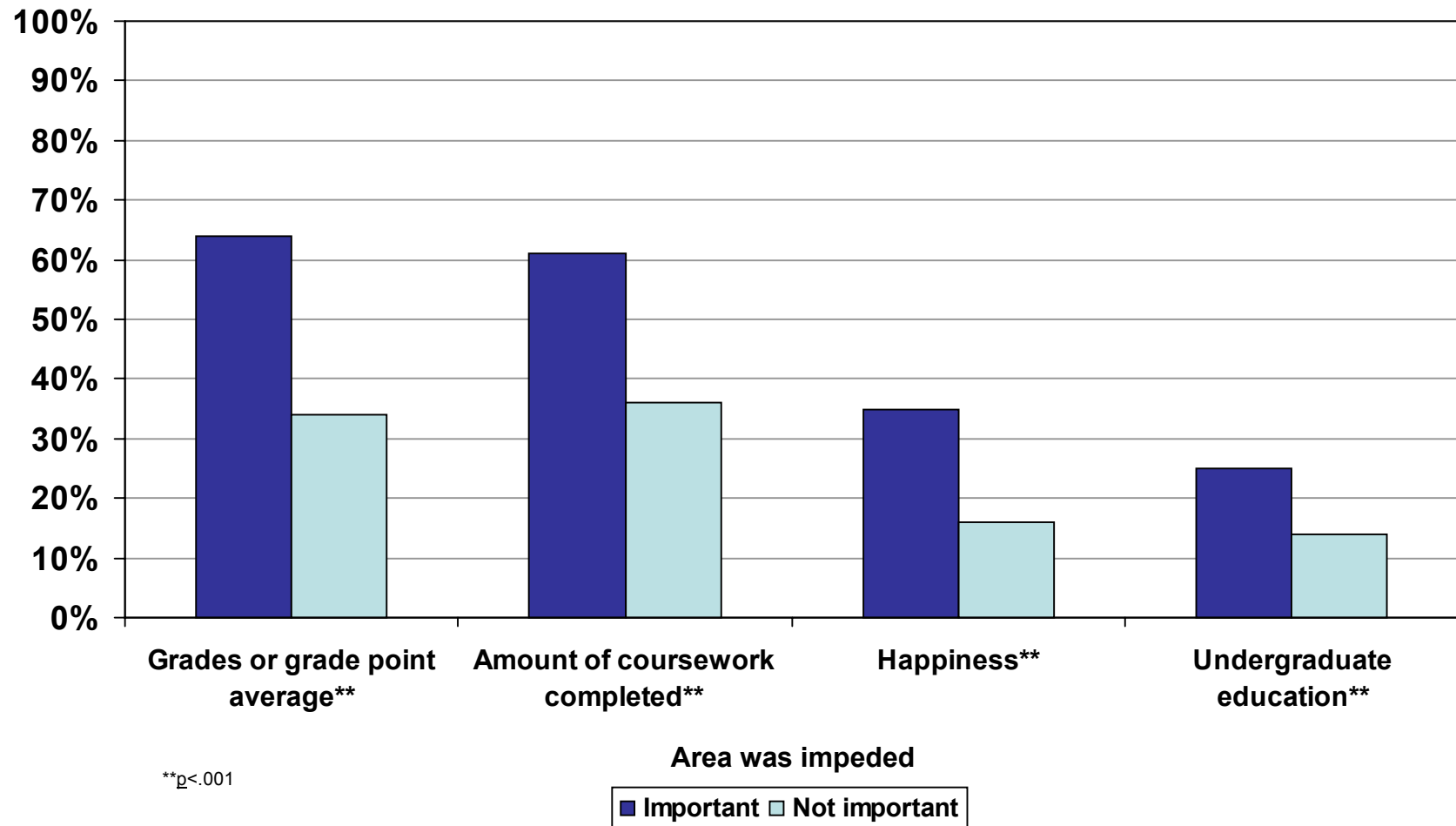
Graph 7. Comparison of credit card purchases between those who indicated it was important or not important to obtain a credit card to fill in the gap between financial aid and college cost



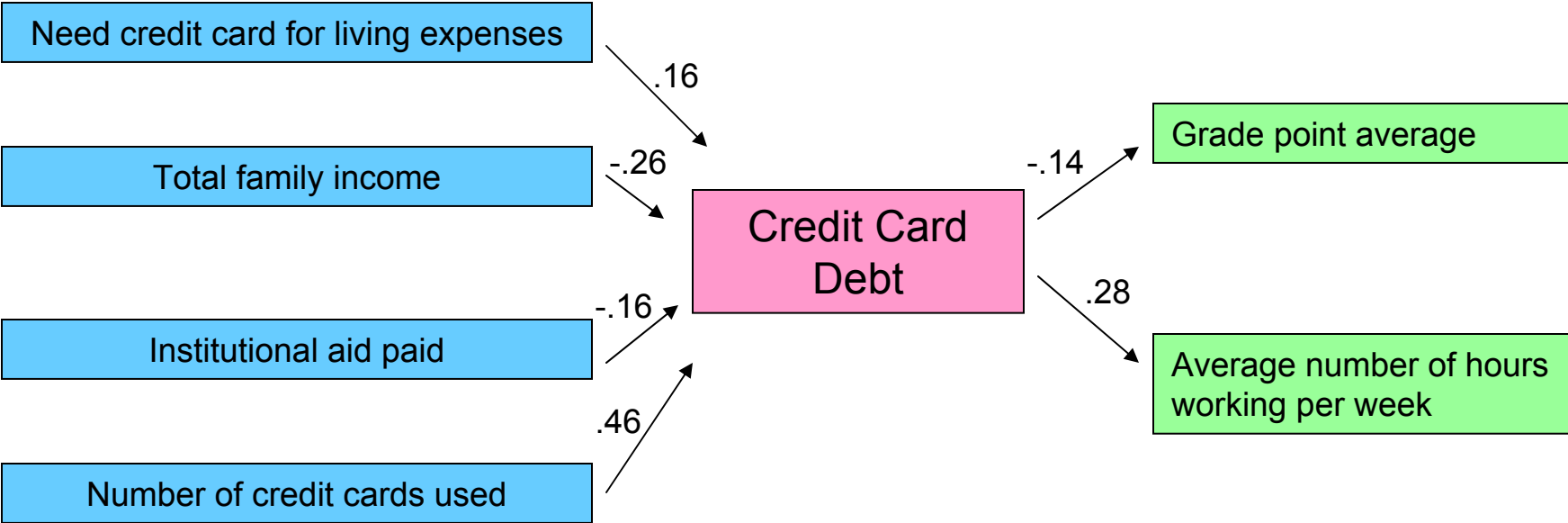
Graph 8. Comparisons between reasons given for working between those who indicated it was important or not important to obtain a credit card to fill in the gap between financial aid and college cost



Graph 9. Percent who indicated that paid employment impeded each area by whether it was important or not important to obtain a credit card to fill the gap between financial aid and college cost



The Consequences of Easy Credit



Chi-square (9, **N**=338) = 16.70, **p** < .054
Bentler & Bonett's (1980) Normed fit index = .94
Bentler & Bonett's (1980) Non-normed fit index = .93
Bentler's (1989) Comparative fit index = .97