

NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY

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# Business School



# NEWSLETTER

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# Research Matters

The following two papers were presented at the International Conference on Economics and Management of Networks (EMNet 2023). It was hosted by the University of Palermo, Sicily.

•**Cullen, M., Calitz, A. P. & Botha, A. (2023). The Importance of Networking for the Development of a Personal Brand. EMNet-23 (Economics and Management of Networks).**

Building and maintaining a personal brand is a critical differentiator for the proactive members of society. Equally important is communicating your personal brand through various networks. The ascent of the Internet and social media has amplified opportunities to build a personal brand virtually through online networking. The virtual space gives diverse stages to people to self-brand their own character with the assistance of the Internet. This study was quantitative, with 209 responses from an online survey that investigated how social media can be used as a networking platform to build a personal brand. The significant finding was that Social Media networking is a good platform for your personal brand, but not your professional brand.

•**Boucher, S., Cullen, M, & Calitz, A. P. (2023). Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Networks: A Nelson Mandela Bay Case Study. EMNet-23 (Economics and Management of Networks).**

Entrepreneurial ecosystems are characterised by their dense social networks of actors and factors located in a spatial context. The actors and factors co-create value individually and in a combined manner through networking, which in turn leads to positive spill overs that generate innovation and localisation economies. This ecosystem connectivity comprises of mechanisms, infrastructure and platforms that connect people, ideas and resources in a system to achieve results, as defined by Social Network Theory. Networks are recognised as critical components of entrepreneurial ecosystems. Entrepreneurial ecosystems need to be recognised, not as isolated local systems, but rather interconnected ecosystems and sub-ecosystems with emphasis on the networks that connect them through actors and factors. This study focused on entrepreneurial ecosystems and the networks therein, in Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB), South Africa, which suited a case study strategy.

Both papers were based on students' work. The first paper on Aylin Botha's MBA and the second on Dr Boucher's DBA.

We were invited to submit both papers to the Journal of Managerial and Decision Economics. They are both currently under review.



▲ Prof Margie Cullen



▲ Prof Andre Calitz, Dr Sasha Boucher, Prof Margie Cullen



▲ Dr Louise De Koker

Inventory planning is a critical function in FMCG companies, and forecasting is important to determine future demand accurately. Demand forecasting helps FMCG companies anticipate short- and medium-term risks. However, the real-time benefits of machine learning techniques within demand forecasting within South African FMCG companies are under-explored. The main goal of this study was to compare the forecasting ability of statistical forecasting methods and machine learning models in demand forecasting in the FMCG sector. A case study approach was followed, using sales data from a specific category in a selected FMCG company for 2014–2019. Moving Average (MA), Seasonal Autoregressive Integrated Moving Average (SARIMA) and Artificial Neural Network (ANN) models were used in the data analysis. The findings revealed that the ANN model is more accurate in predicting demand than MA and SARIMA models.

The Supplements category has consistently grown in the number of units sold and sales for the six-year period. The sales data for supplements showed a steady rising trend in accordance with price inflation. There is an increasing demand in baby products in the supplements category. Machine learning models are superior in predicting demand in the FMCG sector. For further research, we recommend using the Auto-Regressive Integrated Moving Average (ARIMAX) model for modeling demand when multivariate data is present.

The following paper was presented at the 16th International Business Conference, Swakopmund, Namibia 2023.

This paper compares a proposed set of sustainability ratios over two periods. The intention is to evaluate whether the proposed set of sustainability ratios were indeed used in practice. For the study, a quantitative content analysis of the integrated reports of FTSE/JSE Responsible Investment Top 30 Index companies for the years 2017 and 2022 was performed using a systematic review. A total of 43 sustainability ratios were reported by the participating companies in 2017 and 2022. Ten reported ratios showed an increase in reporting frequency in 2022 compared to 2017. The ratio with the highest reported frequency in 2022 was for women in management, followed by women in the workforce, historically disadvantaged South Africans in management, emission percentage change, water usage change, employee turnover and energy usage change. Trend ratios namely, (water, energy, emissions and waste) were reported in isolation without context. Some sustainability ratios proposed in theory were found to be in monetary values (for example, Emission cost / Sales), however, it was found in practice that similar ratios were presented in units (for example, Emissions tonnes / Revenue). The results confirmed that the proposed set of 43 sustainability ratios could be a starting point for a useable set of sustainability ratios.



▲ Dr Heidi Janse Van Rensburg

•Janse van Rensburg, H. & Struwig, M. 2023. **Assessing sustainability ratios reported by South African companies. 16th International Business Conference, Swakopmund, Namibia, 25-27 September.**



▲ Prof Paul Poisat

The following abstract is derived from the paper presented at the IBC Conference in September 2023. It is based on research done by an MBA Student Mr Bradley White and supervised by me. We jointly compiled the paper and I presented it at the IBC Conference. It is included in the proceedings of the conference.

**Title: Operationalising action learning for leadership development Bradley White[1], Prof. Paul Poisat[2]**

This phenomenological study seeks to understand the experiences and the extent that participants, mentors and departmental managers perceived that action learning developed the leadership competencies of participants, and specifically leadership competence aligned to the BASF Global Competency Model. The objective was to create career experiences and identify environmental influences that stifle or stimulate developmental growth through exposure to real-world practices while being supported by a facilitation and mentoring system that offered critical, constructive feedback.

The theoretical framework for the study was guided by the constructs of adult learning, action learning and leadership development as well as the link between learning, action learning and leadership development. Data was collected from 15 participants through the use of observations, action learning sessions and semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions, with the interviews transcribed and then analysed using Atlas.ti qualitative analysis software. (1) Learning transfer levers, (2) 70:20:10 model, (3) Facilitation and Mentoring, (4) Connections and setbacks, and (5) Successful Succession are the themes developed from the research findings.

These themes serve as critical success factors to operationalise action learning as a modern-day approach, capable of developing leadership at multiple levels and contexts while building collaborative partnerships and networks that aid in organisational development.



# Design Thinking Workshop



Smart cities leverage technology and data to enhance efficiency, sustainability, and the overall quality of life for residents. The concept of a smart city involves integrating various information and communication technologies (ICT) and Internet of Things (IoT) devices to optimise city operations and services. This statement formed the foundation of the Design Thinking Workshop held as a joint venture between the Nelson Mandela University Business School and Propella business incubator on the 28th of November 2023.

Attendees from various organisations within Gqeberha joined the Design Thinking workshop. The day had two specific outcomes, the first being an understanding of the 5 phases of design thinking and how to apply the phases to real-life problems. The second outcome was for the various groups to produce a solution to an existing problem that will contribute towards leveraging technology and data-driven solutions to enhance the efficiency, sustainability, and quality of life for residents within Gqeberha.

The groups identified a variety of considerations for smart cities solutions which included connectivity and infrastructure, sustainability, data security and privacy, financial investment, community engagement, scalability, digital inclusion and lastly a regulatory framework.

The implementation of smart city ideas and solutions requires collaboration among various stakeholders, including municipal bodies, private companies, and citizens with an aim to create an urban environment that is more efficient, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of its residents.

On behalf of the Propella Business Incubator and the Nelson Mandela University Business School, we would like to thank all the participants for their valuable contributions on the day.

# Orientation Day



The Business School welcomed our students back with an exciting orientation weekend. The highlight of the orientation was the 'Amazing Race' team building exercise that took place at the Boardwalk Mall , where both students and staff could take part in the fun

Our top teams can be spotted in the first row with our sponsor from ABSA.

# MMM Study Visit

Starting the year off on a good note as our Master of Maritime Management students chart their course to success. Our eleven students are anchored in determination, as they attend their first study visit for the year. Guided by our international lecturers, our second-ever intake for the MMM programme is eager to acquire a different perspective and the extensive knowledge that the programme has to offer.



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d, coffee, tea  
rinks allowed

se Note:  
d, coffee, tea  
rinks allowed



# Executive Education

## Feedback from the workshop

*"The programme gave a different perspective to PM. It elevated our thinking from the traditional operational perspective to a Project Leadership view. It was thought provoking and has made me think differently about how to improve my project management going forward."*

*"Prior to the course I was stuck in a 'project management box/process'. The course has opened my mind to start looking at the influences outside of this box."*

*"The programme was insightful. It allowed me to see project management in a different light. It showed me the benefits of pulling a project together with a clear scope and clear deliverables. Being able to create a project charter will allow me to consider all aspects of my projects and being able to present and communicate it to my leadership in a much clearer way."*

*"Going in I had no idea what to expect but I thoroughly enjoyed the style of lecturing. It made it very interesting."*

*"It was an excellent programme, much better than my expectations. The presenters were excellent and engaging."*

## Impactful Project Management for Professionals: Reflecting on the 4-day Strategic Project Management for Executives Short Executive Programme(SEP)

In the increasingly fast-paced world of modern business senior staff members are regularly faced with complex situations, the need to drive innovation and delivering top tier results, while managing and overseeing projects and teams. In recognition of the critical role of project management in the success of organisational goals the Business School has launched the "Strategic Project Management for Executives" SEP, as part of the Executive Education SEPs on offer.

The pilot SEP took place in the form of a 4-day workshop, at the Business School, from the 20th of February to the 23rd of February 2024, with senior level staff members from Isuzu SA, S4 Integration and The Black Management Forum in attendance. The core topics surrounding strategically leading, planning and executing projects as well as measuring and managing project performance, provided participants with the crucial skills and knowledge needed to be forerunners in executing organisational projects strategically with the purpose of achieving remarkable outcomes and results.

The programme was delivered by seasoned project management lecturers and professionals, Mr Dorrington Giyose and Dr Sam February. Both received high praise from participants. The week left participants impressed beyond their expectations and looking forward to using their newly acquired knowledge to lead their projects and teams with a broader and more strategic understanding of Project Management.



# Graduation

**Congratulations to our MBA and PDBA graduates!**

Dear Esteemed Graduates,

It is with immense pride and joy that I, along with the entire faculty and staff of the Nelson Mandela University Business School, extend our heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of you on the remarkable accomplishment of achieving your MBA and PDBA qualifications. Your journey to this momentous milestone has been one marked by dedication, perseverance, and a relentless pursuit of excellence. From the countless hours spent in lectures and group discussions to the late nights of study and preparation, your commitment to your academic and professional development has been truly commendable.

As you reflect on your achievements, we hope you take a moment to recognise the tremendous growth and transformation you have undergone during your time with us. Whether you began your journey with the PDBA and have now transitioned to the MBA programme or are planning to pursue the MBA in the future, your dedication to continuous learning and advancement sets a powerful example for all.

For those of you who have completed the PDBA programme, your journey does not end here but rather serves as a stepping stone to even greater heights of academic and professional success. Your decision to further your education and expertise speaks volumes about your commitment to personal and professional growth, and we have no doubt that you will continue to thrive as you embark on the next phase of your journey.

To those who have embarked on the MBA programme, we encourage you to approach this new chapter with the same level of enthusiasm, determination, and resilience that have brought you to this point. The MBA programme offers a wealth of opportunities for you to expand your knowledge, refine your skills, and make meaningful contributions to the field of business and beyond. On behalf of the entire faculty and staff of the Nelson Mandela University Business School, I extend our warmest congratulations once again. May you continue to soar to new heights, inspire those around you, and make a positive impact on the world. I leave you with this,

-----In the end, "vasbyt" is more than just a word; it is a philosophy, a way of life. It is about finding the strength to persevere, the courage to endure, and the wisdom to know that after every storm, there lies calm. It teaches us that within the heart of every challenge lies the seed of growth, resilience, and transformation, urging us to look beyond the present storm, towards the dawn of new beginnings. --- Cobus Oosthuizen, PHD

With best wishes for your future endeavours,

Dr. Sam A. F. February  
Head of Department , Nelson Mandela University Business School





▲ Our PDBA and MBA cohort that graduated April 2024

Taking leadership lessons into the workplace.

The work environment is constantly changing, and business needs to adapt the way in which leadership development training is done to match the needs of emerging managers. This was one of the several findings in the research of Dr Leola Britton, who graduated with a Doctorate in Business Administration from Nelson Mandela University Business School in Gqeberha in April 2024.

Human Resources specialist Dr Britton has been the Talent and Leadership Development Executive at Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa (CCBSA) in Johannesburg for the past 3 years. Her thesis titled "A leadership framework required for emerging managers within the new world of work", drew on insights from senior figures at a major law firm and international paper and pulp manufacturer.

### **Thesis:**

A leadership framework required for emerging managers in the new world of work

This study focused on developing leadership competency frameworks. Participatory research involving various stakeholders was done. Qualitative data was gathered to identify the components of the leadership frameworks that was ratified by the stakeholders to ensure alignment to best practice and the needs of the organisations. A development programme aimed at emerging leaders was designed to assess the leadership frameworks. The effectiveness of the leadership development programme was assessed. The stakeholder groups agreed that the leadership development programme addressed the needs of the organisations and there were positive improvements in the leadership competencies measured. Future research could benefit from the research and findings of this study.

Supervisor: Prof. P. Poisat



▲ Dr Leola Britton and her family



▲ Dr Leola Britton

Candice obtained a bursary from Transnet in 1996 to complete a National Diploma in Horticulture. She then went on to work as a Horticulturist at Transnet Freight Rail in Kimberley and was later appointed as the Technical Support Manager in 2012. In 2013, she enrolled for the Master in Business Leadership (MBL) at UNISA.

She moved to the Rail Network's regional office in Port Elizabeth in 2015, where she managed the Technical Support outputs for Rail Network, Cape Corridor. In 2018, she enrolled for a second Master degree (Master in Railway Operational Management) at Glasgow Caledonian University.

In 2021, she enrolled for a SLP 'Preparing for Doctoral Research' at Nelson Mandela University. She also completed an Advanced Postgraduate Supervision Capacity Development Programme at UNISA. In 2022, she started with the Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) at Nelson Mandela University.

### **Thesis:**

Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) in the South African transport state-owned enterprises.

In this doctoral thesis, a measuring instrument and comprehensive hypothetical model were developed. These can be used by management to create an enabling environment for both management and employees to engage and exhibit organisational citizenship behaviour characters. The findings of the study revealed that OCB is effectively influenced by employee trust and organisational commitment. OCB related to selflessness is also influenced by consideration of personal importance and OCB related to reliability of staff is effectively influenced by transparency, and job autonomy. The findings of this study provide the opportunity for Human Resources practitioners to develop policies and strategies to combat negative workplace environments and take the initiative in developing programs for the growth of organisational human capital.

Supervisor: Prof. NE. Mazibuko

Co-Supervisor: Dr. T. Ngxemeshe



▲ Dr Candice Calvert and her friend



▲ Dr Candice Calvert and her son

## Graduation Continued

Congratulations to our interns on their graduation! Your hard work, dedication, and perseverance have paid off, and you should be incredibly proud of this remarkable achievement.

As you step into the next chapter of your professional journey, carry with you the knowledge and skills you've gained, along with the memories and friendships you've made. Remember that this milestone is just the beginning, and your potential is limitless.

Wishing you all the best in your future endeavors. May you continue to grow, succeed, and make a positive impact wherever you go.



▲ Akhona Maldaka  
Bachelor of Visual Arts Honours



▲ Sinazo Madikana  
PGDip in Applied Economics



▲ Sonwabise Mama  
Adv Diploma in Public Relations



▲ Laura Nyamate  
Diploma in HR Management



▲ Nurah Slamang  
Adv Diploma in Public Relations

# Master of Maritime Management

The Nelson Mandela University (NMU) Business School had the privilege of hosting Ms Mukondeleli Johanna Mulaudzi, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ports Regulator, for a significant gathering, welcoming both first year and returning Master of Maritime Management (MMM) students. The purpose of her visit was to encourage collaboration between academia and industry, specifically in identifying research topics relevant to maritime economics, strategy, port management and business operations. The visit aimed to highlight the importance of partnership between Nelson Mandela University Business School and the Ports Regulator in advancing knowledge and innovation within the maritime sector.

During the visit, the Ports Regulator CEO delivered a keynote address focusing on current trends, challenges, and regulatory frameworks within the port industry. Following this, Nelson Mandela University MMM students, along with academics and relevant stakeholders, had an interactive dialogue, showcasing their expertise in areas such as port management and operations, general maritime management areas, maritime economics, logistics, and business operations.

Discussions throughout the day covered topics such as port efficiency, regulatory compliance, environmental sustainability, and technological advancements in port operations. The event also provided an opportunity for networking, knowledge exchange, and relationship-building among participants, fostering a sense of community and collaboration.



## SAIMI in partnership with the Nelson Mandela University - emerging researchers' workshop:

Dr Hadi facilitated a session on the 19 March 2024 that was aimed at building capacity through contributing to the development of a pipeline of emerging researchers that can contribute to the work and positioning of the Oceans Economy in South Africa. There were a number of emerging researchers, academics, maritime organisations and students who participated in the workshop, our MMM Student Mr Solomzi Tshona presented on his preliminary research focusing on Navigating Geopolitical Turbulence: Policy Imperatives for Safeguarding the Maritime Value Chain.

SAIMI and Nelson Mandela University will continue to host such sessions and initiatives as this promotes maritime advocacy, skills development and capacity development, and research and innovation aimed at promoting the development of emerging researchers in the Oceans Economy.



“Education is the most powerful weapon which you  
can use to change the world”

*Nelson Mandela (1918 – 2013)*



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