

FACULTY OF COMMERCE, LAW AND MANAGEMENT

DEAN: PROFESSOR J COHEN BCom Hons PhD (Witwatersrand)

Doctor of Philosophy

ABUBAKARI, Mohammed Gali

Management (WBS)

THESIS: An exploratory study on corruption in Ghana: A cultural perspective

This is an in-depth exploration of the cultural underpinnings of corruption in Ghana, employing the GLOBE cultural framework to develop a context-specific model for assessing corruption. His research investigated how cultural values, social norms, and institutional practices shape perceptions and manifestations of corruption. The study makes significant theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions to governance and management scholarship, offering culturally grounded insights that inform the design of effective, evidence-based anti-corruption strategies in developing economies.

Supervisor: Dr D Heil

BARNOR, Joel Aflah

Management (WBS)

THESIS: The performance of traditional and non-traditional forms of infrastructure procurement options in Africa

The thesis examines the two dominant means of financing infrastructure projects in Africa - either through public sector financing or through a public private partnership (PPP) model. He tests the prevailing notion that PPPs offer greater value for money than public sector financing. Examining a sample of infrastructure projects financed across Africa over the last twenty years, he finds that in fact there is no empirical evidence supporting the commonly stated idea that PPPs always offer greater value for money.

Supervisor: Associate Professor O Kodongo

BROOKBANKS, Darren Ackermann

Management (WSG)

THESIS: Towards the transformation of intelligence governance in South Africa

This PhD thesis explores South Africa's journey towards the transformation of intelligence governance. To achieve the most appropriate balance between efficiency and transparency, the governance of the intelligence sector in South Africa must be transformed through greater control and oversight. Transformation can be theoretically grounded in the philosophy of intelligence culture. Recommendations highlight the theoretical value of intelligence culture towards the transformation of intelligence governance in South Africa and provide a blueprint for what a PHILINT culture could look like in the country.

Supervisor: Professor A Van Nieuwkerk

BRUINTJIES, Coline Ray Christine

Law

THESIS: Socio-economic rights and the challenge of violence against women in South Africa

This PhD investigates the relationship between substantive equality, gendered socio-economic rights and poor women's vulnerability to violence in South Africa. It identifies gendered poverty and violence against women as enormous challenges that plague South Africa and explores whether better access to the goods and services guaranteed by the right of access to housing and the related services can play a role in addressing these challenges. The PhD specifically focuses on the role of the law and courts in addressing these intersecting issues.

Supervisor: Professor C Albertyn

CHIVIZHE, Takunda Victor

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Artificial Intelligence adoption and its effects on online retail marketing performance in emerging markets
Despite advancements in digital transformation, digital marketers in emerging markets struggle with strategies that enhance customer experience and personalise services in online retail. This thesis examined the effect of adopting AI digital assistants, chatbots, semantic analysis, image and voice recognition in South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria. Findings show a positive effect on service quality and customer satisfaction. Recommendations include that marketers adopt AI digital assistants that analyse real-time data to deliver tailored product recommendations, effectively replicating personalised in-store experiences online.

Supervisor: Dr Y Saini

CUDJOE, Senyo Frank Kofi

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Essays on bankruptcy prediction and systemic risk in financial institutions

The thesis explores the application of machine learning techniques in bankruptcy prediction for financial institutions integrating model explainability leading to data-driven risk management and early warning systems. The models address the lack of interpretability in other machine learning models and demonstrate the potential of state-of-the-art machine learning models in bankruptcy prediction. The study also investigated time-varying financial risk using GARCH and GAS frameworks, analysing systemic risk and identified systemically important financial institutions. The study contributes to improving risk forecasting and developing tools for financial stability assessment.

Supervisor: Associate Professor J Odei-Mensah

DAGADA, Rabelani

Management (WSG)

THESIS: Deindustrialisation of the South African Economy

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors which affect the deindustrialisation of the South African economy. The study found that a shortage of skilled labour thwarts reindustrialisation; some tax instruments discourage direct investment and reindustrialisation; and poorly conceived public policy leads to deindustrialisation. The researcher proposed five possible solutions and interventions to reindustrialise the economy. The study yielded theoretical, methodological and practical contributions. Recommendations were made which were aimed at various stakeholders and other scholars.

Supervisor: Dr F Lekaba

DERENGI, Lloyd Tawanda

Management (WBS)

THESIS: The role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in managing risks in the South African retail sector

This study investigated the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in managing socioeconomic, environmental, and reputational risks in the South African retail sector. This study was based in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Western Cape using three major retailers and their stakeholders. Findings suggest that CSR initiatives in social development, employee well-being, and environmental sustainability reduce business risks, strengthen stakeholder relationships, and enhance productivity. Overall, CSR serves as a strategic tool for sustainable business performance and socioeconomic development in South Africa.

Supervisor: Professor B Moyo

DERICK, Kambale Kahimba

Law

THESIS: The responsibility of the United Nations in peace operations: Revisiting the accountability versus immunity debate

The thesis examines United Nations responsibility for damages/injuries caused to individuals in peace operations, with a particular focus on the mechanisms for providing reparation. It highlights the discrepancy between normative developments and reality on the ground as victims are left to fend for themselves. By suggesting the amendment of Status-of-Forces Agreements, the study provides practical legal pathways that the UN and countries that are serious about protecting the rights of victims could resort to in fostering a culture of accountability.

Supervisor: Professor L Chenwi

KUFORJI, Olanrewaju Abiodun

Law

THESIS: The regulation of restrictive horizontal and vertical competition practices in Nigeria - A comparative analysis
Olanrewaju's thesis advocates for legislative reform in the regulation of anti-competitive practices in Nigeria. He identifies the inherent regulatory framework weaknesses where vertical and horizontal practices are treated the same contrary to international norms. Based on international best practices, he proposes law reform that would adequately distinguish between these practices in a manner that promotes competition in Nigeria.

Supervisor: Professor M Marumoagae

LAMUNO, Grace Flavia

Law

THESIS: A critical evaluation of the effectiveness of the corporate rescue procedure in Uganda: A comparative analysis

The candidate's thesis discusses the Ugandan business rescue procedures from a comparative perspective. She recommends overhauling the Ugandan corporate rescue legal framework. She argues that measures should be introduced to limit liquidations and save more companies in Uganda. She recommends a split-framework insolvency model that can accommodate large, medium, and small companies, which she presents as draft legislation on corporate rescue.

Supervisor: Professor M Marumoagae

LANGA, Mandlenkosi Andrew

Management (WSG)

THESIS: Disrupting masculinities, gender-based violence and unconventional socialisation at Kgosi Mampuru Prison

This thesis offers an original and compelling contribution to scholarship on gender-based violence and masculinities in South Africa. Drawing on feminist, postcolonial, and African-centred ethics, it analyses the emotional and structural conditions that shape violent masculinities within Kgosi Mampuru Correctional Facility. Through reflective and ethically grounded fieldwork, it reveals how incarcerated men confront harm and begin imagining alternative masculinities. By foregrounding emotional justice and resocialisation, it advances feminist scholarship and deepens methodological approaches to researching violence.

Supervisor: Associate Professor H Ndhlovu

LENGARAM, Ezekiel Ngitoria

Economics

THESIS: Essays on Tax effort and Fiscal Balance: A case of selected African Economies

The thesis addresses critical fiscal challenges in Africa, including low tax revenues, debt vulnerability, and political influences on budget balance. Employing state of the art econometric techniques on panel data, the study demonstrates how informality, economic complexity, electoral business cycles, and exogenous shocks such as COVID-19 shape tax capacity and fiscal sustainability in 25 countries. The findings offer actionable policy insights for strengthening revenue mobilization, institutional resilience, and economic transformation across African nations.

Supervisors: Associate Professor M Benhura and Dr N Mahonye

MAFULELA, Tulani Musawenkosi

Law

THESIS: Vicarious liability and corporate groups

This study problematizes how corporate groups are often structured to let the holding companies of multinational enterprises escape liability for harms caused by their global subsidiaries. This frequently leaves victims without effective remedies. To address this, the thesis proposes constitutionally informed reforms to the South African law of delict that enable liability for holding companies in defined cases. This thesis contributes novel insights to South African company law, constitutional law, and delict, while advancing global debates on business and human rights.

Supervisor: Associate Professor E Zitzke

MAMBURU, Mulalo Phathutshedzo

Economics

THESIS: On sovereign risk and the financial system in South Africa

This thesis explores local currency sovereign risk and its influence on the financial system in South Africa. It employs a measure of local currency sovereign risk in empirical analyses on the role of sovereign risk and exchange rate risk as drivers of changes in nominal bond yields, and the impact of sovereign risk on emerging-market banks through their holdings of government bonds. Finally, it considers the impact of fiscal policy and sovereign risk on the conduct of monetary policy.

Supervisor: Professor G Farrell

MARFO, Emmanuel

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Investment trends and strategies of African Philanthropic Organisations: The case of faith-based organisations in Ghana

This doctoral research examined how faith-based philanthropy in Ghana employs strategic investment to achieve social impact. His findings reveal that these organisations are increasingly adopting structured, accountable, and mission-driven investment strategies rooted in Social Investment Theory and Social Exchange Theory. The study advances understanding of how philanthropy integrates altruism, sustainability, and innovation to foster inclusive community development across Africa.

Supervisor: Professor B Moyo

MASHOENE, Motlanalo Kgodisho

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Financial technology and financial inclusion in emerging and developing economies

The thesis examines the relationship between FinTech and financial inclusion in 28 Emerging and Developing Economies. Constructing a novel index through PCA, the study employs System GMM to quantify FinTech's positive effect. It further reveals that institutional quality drives digital financial inclusion long-term and that such inclusion promotes growth and reduces poverty. The thesis provides robust, multi-method evidence for policymakers on leveraging technology for inclusive financial development.

Supervisors: Professor E Schaling and Dr G Tweneboah

MATEE, Lehlohonolo John Paul

Law

THESIS: Rethinking ownership and control of state-owned enterprises in Lesotho

Dr. Matee's thesis focuses on control and ownership of state-owned enterprises in Lesotho. The thesis makes substantial contribution towards critical issues facing Lesotho's economy and its broader contributions to corporate governance. It will also enhance and enrich academic discussions on corporate governance within SOEs in Lesotho, an area that has often been overlooked in scholarly debates and relegated to political rhetoric. A core contribution is the proposal of the 'Kharetsa' model, a unique, bespoke ownership and control model for Lesotho's SOEs. Further, the thesis potentially informs further policy and legislative interventions.

Supervisor: Associate Professor H Kawadza

MATTHEWS, Thandiwe

Law

THESIS: Advancing substantive equality in South Africa: Elite contestations surrounding constitutionalism, gender and the right to social assistance

For a thesis which explores elite contestations surrounding constitutionalism, socio-economic rights and social policy as a mechanism of redress for historical injustices that are a direct outcome of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa. Drawing on social assistance as a case study, she finds that South Africa's current approach overlooks the gendered power dynamics that impact the realisation of socio-economic rights, subsequently hindering the achievement of substantive equality.

Supervisors: Professor C Albertyn, Professor CIM Arts and Dr JD Handmaker

MBELE, Ayanda Mvuyisi

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Antecedents to the success of clinical decision support systems in healthcare within a limited resource context

This thesis employed a multi-case research approach to investigate the factors influencing the success of Clinical Decision Support Systems in healthcare. It highlights how public-private partnerships, context-sensitive design, and digital accountability help overcome resource constraints. The study provides empirical, methodological, and theoretical insights, offering a practical roadmap for healthcare practitioners, managers, and policymakers to enhance the quality of clinical care and system efficiency in resource-constrained settings. It contributes to understanding how digital strategies can optimise healthcare delivery under constrained conditions.

Supervisors: Professor B Armstrong and Associate Professor T Carmichael

MBULI, Siphephelo Lindamalindisa

Law

THESIS: Legal aspects of the current framework regulating directors' and senior managers' indemnification and directors' and officers' liability insurance in South Africa

Siphephelo writes about: 'The challenge for companies and policymakers in South Africa to develop innovative approaches that promote a healthy balance between two equally valid and competing interests: holding directors accountable for egregious conduct, and protecting them from liability for honest errors of judgment. His concern is for the relooking and re-envisioning of the current legal enforcement framework under the Companies Act 71 of 2008 that does not deal fully with the director liability problem, which has become more pressing in South Africa.'

Supervisor: Professor T Mongalo

MOHATONYANE, Letsie Elliot

Economics

THESIS: Household finance and wealth inequality in South Africa: Evidence from the national income dynamics study survey

Letsie's thesis examines how household balance sheet components shape South Africa's wealth inequality. It finds that business assets heighten concentration, while real estate and diversification promote equity and financial resilience. By offering a fresh perspective on the production and reproduction of inequality in South Africa, the study expands household finance research in a highly unequal economy, introduces new indicators of diversification and life event impacts, and offers a comprehensive account of factors driving inequality, including education, employment, and race.

Supervisors: Associate Professor M Benhura and Associate Professor T Gwatidzo

MOKOENA, Khethang

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Non-linear effects of government size and institutional quality on macroeconomic performance in Sub-Saharan African countries

This study examined the non-linear effects of the size of government and quality of institutions on the macroeconomic performance of Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries. The evidence is that government size and institutions have threshold effects on output volatility and inflation. The threshold estimates can be used by the authorities in formulating fiscal policies to reduce output volatility and inflation in SSA, thereby contributing to sustainable economic growth in countries. This can then be leveraged to enhance social security for the benefit of the unemployed, children, the disabled, and the elderly.

Supervisor: Professor E Schaling

MONAMETSI, Gladness Lennie

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Liquidity dynamics of exchange traded funds in developing markets

This study sought to ascertain the effects of Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) on the liquidity of emerging capital markets. To this end, the study analyzed the effect of the introduction of ETFs on the liquidity of underlying assets; explored the liquidity risk associated with ETFs; and examined the effects of ETFs on market efficiency. The results showed that ETFs are broadly associated with reduced liquidity; and play different roles in price formation, with varying impacts on short- and long-run efficiency.

Supervisor: Associate Professor O Kodongo

MTHUNZI, Mncane

Management (WBS)

THESIS: The corporate perspective on facilitating economic inclusion in large companies in South Africa

The candidate's doctoral research presents a pioneering investigation into how large corporations in South Africa can transition from mere compliance to becoming genuine agents of economic transformation. His body of work offers a bold, empirically grounded and theoretically integrated corporate framework that advances academic scholarship and promotes systemic inclusion and economic justice in the real world.

Supervisor: Dr M Matshabaphala

NDEGWA, Ephraith Igoki

Law

THESIS: Towards a comprehensive anti-corruption strategy in Kenya in the wake of the 2010 constitutional dispensation

This thesis critically evaluates Kenya's post-2010 anti-corruption legal regime. It examines the scope of public sector corruption, the measures adopted, and the structural gaps that weaken enforcement. It contends that, although integrity has been constitutionalised and specialised bodies created, weak accountability and an unenforceable code of conduct perpetuate systemic corruption and allow impunity in public office. Using Integrated Social Contract Theory, the study exposes the gap between law and practice and advances reform proposals, drawing on comparative insights to bolster Kenya's anti-corruption framework.

Supervisor: Dr K Moyo

NKOMONDE, Lindo

Management (WSG)

THESIS: The coding of Black Economic Empowerment and redistribution failure in post-apartheid South Africa

The study provides a critical analysis of the stated aim of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) policy to redress the racialised economic inequities of the apartheid past. The study conclusion is that when law is enacted for the specific purpose of being a catalyst for economic transformation, but redistribution proves ineffective, that it is important to enquire if the legal conceptualisations of a deracialised economy effected through redistribution are actually consistent or in contradiction with those found in government policy.

Supervisor: Professor R Van Niekerk

NKOSI, Nomsa Phindile

Economics

THESIS: Essays on household energy poverty, energy transition, and women bargaining power in South Africa
Comprising three interrelated essays, Ms. Nkosi's doctoral thesis makes a significant contribution to understanding household energy poverty and transitions in South Africa. The first essay identifies household income thresholds shaping movement toward cleaner energy, the second examines the association between women's decision-making authority and the adoption of modern fuels, and the third estimates the effect of old-age pensions on reducing energy poverty. Together, the thesis provides a unified analysis of the structural, gender, and policy drivers of energy poverty and transition.

Supervisors: Associate Professor D Kutela and Associate Professor J Dikgang

OKOFO-DARTEH, Daniel

Business Sciences (Management)

THESIS: Roles of dynamic capabilities, managerial mental models, digital transformation and organizational flexibility in SME performance

This thesis provides fresh insights into how dynamic capabilities shape SME performance. Using a cross-country, cross-sectional design, it shows that the effect of dynamic capabilities is contextual. SME owner-managers' mental models and digital transformation sequentially enhance performance, advancing dynamic capabilities, upper echelons, and affordance actualization theories. Organizational flexibility further differentiates this effect. The study offers guidance for practitioners and policymakers in the digital era, emphasizing capability development and supportive digitalization-based policies to strengthen SME resilience and performance.

Supervisors: Associate Professor T Anning and Dr N Radebe

ONDIEK, Hanna Atieno

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Social entrepreneurship and women's economic and social empowerment in Kenya

This study explores how social entrepreneurship fosters women's economic and social empowerment in Nairobi. Grounded in Empowerment Theory and the Capability Approach, and informed by social capital and African feminist lenses, it analyses 39 interviews with women social entrepreneurs. Findings reveal that innovation, collective networks, and negotiated agency translate social entrepreneurial practice into layered empowerment outcomes, advancing autonomy, participation, and opportunity within Kenya's urban socio-economic landscape.

Supervisor: Associate Professor J Mati

RATSIMANETRIMANANA, Radomalala

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Human capital and business performance of Malagasy entrepreneurs: The influence of perceived behavioural control and transaction costs

The thesis provides a unique entrepreneurship human capital perspective by examining the effects of experiential knowledge and prior knowledge on performance while accounting for the moderating role of perceived behavioural control and the mediating role of transaction costs. The study took place in Analamanga, the central region of Madagascar where a sample of 465 self-employed individuals were surveyed. The study's positive findings and novel insights have significant impact for research-based policies, specifically tailored to the unique socio-economic landscape of Madagascar.

Supervisor: Professor B Urban

SAKA, Abraham Nii Adoteye

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Essays on financial inclusion and women empowerment: The African perspective

This thesis constructs a financial inclusion index for sub-Saharan Africa using the principal component analysis and investigates the short-term and long-term drivers of financial inclusion. The study found that though the average financial index is low in Africa, there is an upward trajectory in recent years. Further, it explores the threshold effect of financial inclusion on economic growth, income inequality, and women empowerment and found that financial inclusion positively impacts economic growth, income inequality and women empowerment after threshold points.

Supervisor: Professor E Schaling

SALIFU, Shaibu

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Essays on philanthropy and women economic empowerment in Ghana

This thesis comprises three empirical essays that examine philanthropy's role in advancing women's economic empowerment in Ghana. It investigates the effects of corporate foundations on women's financial inclusion, the impact of philanthropic initiatives on female labour force participation, and the relationship between philanthropic giving and financial inclusion. Drawing on qualitative and quantitative data, the study highlights how Ubuntu-inspired philanthropy can support inclusive development and offers actionable insights for enhancing gender-responsive philanthropic practice in Ghana's socio-economic context.

Supervisors: Professor B Moyo and Associate Professor J Mati

SENANU, Bright

Marketing

THESIS: Reconstructing information (A) symmetry in marketing: The consumer outcomes of wellbeing and illbeing
This doctoral thesis redefines the concept of information asymmetry within marketing by introducing the constructs of Customer-Brand Information Asymmetry (CBIA) and Symmetry (CBIS). Employing a mixed-methods approach, it demonstrates that CBIA contributes to consumer illbeing through mechanisms such as distrust and uncertainty, while CBIS fosters trust and eudaimonic wellbeing. The study pioneers validated measurement tools and reveals the nuanced effects of information dynamics across varied market contexts. It makes significant theoretical, methodological, and policy contributions, advocating for transparent, equitable, and human-centric marketing practices that address both digital overload and informational scarcity in global consumer ecosystems.

Supervisor: Associate Professor T Anning

SHONGWE, Mbongeni Welcome

Management (WBS)

THESIS: The interplay between liquidity gluts, credit markets, and economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa
This study comprehensively analyzes liquidity gluts across Sub-Saharan Africa using advanced econometric methods. The research found that excess liquidity significantly impacts economic growth through specific transmission mechanisms, with institutional factors playing crucial moderating roles. Key findings revealed ineffective coordination between monetary and fiscal policies hampers liquidity management. The study discovered that targeted financial regulation improvements and strategic promotion of productive investments are essential for managing excess liquidity effectively, ultimately supporting sustainable economic development and enhanced financial stability throughout the region.

Supervisor: Professor I Alagidede

SIMELANE, Phumelele Nolwazi Carol

Management (WSG)

THESIS: Skilled emigration from the South African petrochemicals sector: Determinants, retention strategies and implications

Phumelele Nolwazi Carol Simelane's doctoral research addresses South Africa's critical loss of engineering talent from the petrochemical sector. Her study exposes the economic, political, and organisational forces driving skilled emigration and demonstrates how these weaken national development and industrial innovation. Through rigorous mixed-methods research, she proposes practical retention and policy strategies to sustain vital technical expertise. Her work offers powerful, evidence-based insights for rethinking talent management and strengthening South Africa's industrial and economic resilience.

Supervisor: Professor N Pophiwa

TACKIE, Nii Nookwei

Marketing

THESIS: Advancing blockchain use in marketing: The impact of permission-based blockchain technology on marketing and customer behavioural outcomes

This thesis offers pioneering insights into how permission-based blockchain technology transforms marketing outcomes. Using a rigorous longitudinal experimental design, the study reveals that blockchain significantly improves customer engagement and firm trustworthiness, which in turn mediate positive behavioural outcomes. Importantly, it shows that privacy concerns differentially influence these effects, advancing Legitimacy and Customer Value Theories. The study provides essential insights for practitioners and policymakers navigating the digital age, shifting focus from personalisation to trust building mechanisms.

Supervisor: Associate Professor T Anning

THAKUR, Cherese

Law

THESIS: Filling the accountability vacuum: Judicial activism and restraint in cases concerning state capture, corruption and egregious public maladministration in South Africa

Over the last two decades the South African judiciary has frequently been called upon to fill an 'accountability vacuum' in cases concerning state capture, corruption and egregious public administration. This thesis argues that, guided by the constitutional limits on their powers as well as the need to safeguard the institutional security of the judiciary, the courts have successfully steered a course between activism and restraint in such cases.

Supervisor: Professor C Hoexter

VESTER, Amanda

Management (WBS)

THESIS: Navigating drone-based ethical decision making: A technoethics framework for the responsible use of drone technology within the cold supply chain industry of South Africa

This study explores the ethical implications of drone adoption within South Africa's cold supply chain industry. Grounded in a technoethics framework, it employs a scoping literature review and qualitative interviews with senior decision-makers to examine emerging ethical concerns linked to commercial drone use. The research proposes a scalable and adaptable ethical decision-making framework to help mitigate ethical risks while leveraging the commercial benefits of drone technology. The study contributes to responsible innovation and the ethical navigation of unmanned systems in evolving logistics environments.

Supervisor: Professor E Schaling

ZENELABDEN, Nouran Abbas Mostafa

Economics

THESIS: Energy transition and household well-being: Fuel stacking, power reliability, and solar adoption dynamics
The thesis significantly contributes to energy transition literature by empirically investigating household energy decisions in South Africa. Zenelabden combines energy justice theory with advanced econometrics to reveal surprising findings on fuel stacking and health impacts. It displays scholarly sophistication by addressing complex policy issues with provincial implications. Methodologically, it excels by using a double machine learning approach for household energy decisions. The findings advance theoretical literature and offer practical implications for sustainable development policies in the global South.

Supervisors: Associate Professor J Dikgang and Associate Professor A Oyenubi